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**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19**

*Visit the Governor's [Facebook](#) page to watch today's news conference*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 3, 2020)** – Gov. Andy Beshear on Thursday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the commonwealth.

The Governor also noted that his next planned COVID-19 update will be Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 4 p.m. EDT.

### **'The Fast 4 at 4'**

Gov. Beshear began Thursday's briefing by highlighting a variety of issues of importance to Kentuckians and the commonwealth.

"We've got some really good news about things going on in Kentucky," said Gov. Beshear. "It's important during these times that we also see the hope, the positivity and the new businesses investing in Kentucky every single day."

#### **1. Eastern Kentucky Grants**

Gov. Beshear today announced \$2,356,381 in grant funding for four infrastructure projects that will improve utility services in Eastern Kentucky communities. The grant funding was awarded to Floyd, Harlan and Johnson counties and the cities of Paintsville and Salyersville. To read the

full news release, [click here](#).

On Wednesday, Gov. Beshear also [announced](#) grant funding for four other projects in Eastern Kentucky that will also create new economic opportunity in the region. Those receiving funds were Breathitt County, Knott and Perry counties, Wayne County and Hindman. Since December, the Governor has awarded nearly \$29 million in grants for Eastern Kentucky; more than \$3.8 million was awarded over the past two days.

**2. Tompkinsville Bypass Opens**

Gov. Beshear announced that local officials held a socially distanced ribbon cutting ceremony today with state and federal leaders for the opening of the Tompkinsville Bypass in Monroe County. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) facilitated the event.

The \$28.5 million project relieves traffic congestion, reducing large commercial truck traffic in downtown Tompkinsville. The bypass road also provides greater economic opportunity with improved access to the industrial park and airport.

**3. Voting**

Gov. Beshear again encouraged all Kentuckians to make a plan to vote, either by mail, in person during early voting or in person on Election Day.

“Several hundred thousand Kentuckians have already requested absentee ballots,” said Gov. Beshear. “If you’re concerned about COVID-19, get yours at [GoVoteKy.com](#). You can also vote early or on Election Day in person where we will have public health precautions in place.”

**4. Airport Improvement Grants**

Today, Gov. Beshear highlighted that this week, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced the award of \$1.2 billion in airport safety and infrastructure grants to 405 airports across 50 states and six U.S. territories. Kentucky received \$94,544,603 of the total for nine airports across the state. Gov. Beshear said that he would have more details next week.

“This is a huge amount of money coming in for some of our largest, but also some of our growing, airports,” said Gov. Beshear. “When we talk about new opportunities, we want to see them everywhere.”

## **Case Information**

As of 4 p.m. Sept. 3, Gov. Beshear reported that the number of positive coronavirus cases has now surpassed 50,000, with at least 50,885 cases in Kentucky, 906 of which were newly reported Thursday. One hundred twenty-four of the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which 17 were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was a two-month-old baby from Henderson County.

“COVID is a once-in-100-year pandemic and we’ve got to take it seriously. We’re seeing a rough week this week,” said Gov. Beshear. “While our positivity rate is going down, we’re still seeing some high numbers. Today we’re reporting 906 new cases of COVID-19. That’s our third-highest total since the very beginning.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported 10 new deaths Thursday, raising the total to 976 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Thursday include a 52-year-old man from Barren County; five women, ages 60, 72, 72, 79 and 85, and two men, ages 70 and 73, from Jefferson County; and an 88-year-old woman and 76-year-old man from Lewis County.

“We have people in their 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s on today’s report,” said Gov. Beshear. “These families don’t have the option of being tired. We can’t be tired either. We’ve got to be there for them.”

As of Thursday, there have been at least 902,446 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 4.53%. At least 10,547 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus.

For additional information, including up-to-date lists of positive cases and deaths, as well as breakdowns of coronavirus infections by county, race and ethnicity, [click here](#). To see all recent daily reports, [click here](#).

Information about COVID-19 and schools is also being made available. To view the reports, [click here for K-12](#) and [here for colleges and universities](#).

## **Wilde Brands**

The Governor was also joined today by executives from Wilde Brands Inc., a producer of high-protein, keto-diet-friendly snack chips made from all-natural chicken breast, to announce plans for the company’s \$9.78 million, 50-job production and distribution facility in Clark County. To read the full news release, [click here](#).

## **Derby Update**

Today, Gov. Beshear announced that about 130 Kentucky National Guard soldiers and airmen will support the Kentucky Oaks and the Kentucky Derby, just like they have in some form since the 1950s. The Governor said in recent years about 220 soldiers and airmen helped to provide public security during the Derby.

“This year, we’re going to have a smaller Guard presence,” said Gov. Beshear. “They’re going to operate traffic again and access control points that are not in the designated area of the organized protest. This is something that we have done every year.”

## **Dr. Stack Update**

Today, Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH), offered an update on the expected timeline for COVID-19 vaccinations.

“KDPH, with Kentucky Emergency Management and local health departments, is working to create our plans in partnership with the federal government, as well as state and local governments, so that when a safe and reliable vaccine is available we can deploy that in a timely manner to everyone who is eligible for it,” said Dr. Stack. “But, I’ve said this repeatedly and I’ll say it again, there will not be a vaccine for virtually everybody this calendar year. There are some corners that cannot be cut.”

He also addressed newer testing methods, explaining, “There’s been a lot of discussion about different types of tests, trying to get more rapid tests, and there’s some exciting science and possibilities in this. But they are not a panacea. They can be useful tools.”

## **More Information**

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at [governor.ky.gov](http://governor.ky.gov), [kycovid19.ky.gov](http://kycovid19.ky.gov) and the Governor’s official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and summaries of the Governor’s news conferences at [teamkentuckytranslations.com](http://teamkentuckytranslations.com).

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