



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Crystal Staley

502-545-3714

Sebastian Kitchen

502-330-0799

502-564-2611

Gov. Beshear: Beginning of the End of the Pandemic is Here

Governor celebrates first vaccines in Kentucky, shares eviction relief, school guidance updates

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 14, 2020) – On Monday, Gov. Andy Beshear celebrated that COVID-19 vaccinations have begun in the commonwealth.

The Governor watched as five doctors and nurses from UofL Health [first received the vaccine this morning](#). Soon after, other health care workers from UofL Health, Baptist Health Lexington and the Medical Center at Bowling Green began receiving inoculations. To learn more, see the [full release](#) and these [photos](#) (credit: Scotty Perry/Bloomberg) and [video](#) (credit: UofL Health). “Today is the most exciting day that I’ve had, I think that we as a commonwealth have had, since March 6, when we had our first diagnosed COVID case,” said Gov. Beshear. “Today marks the beginning of the end of COVID-19. We are going to defeat this virus in 2021. This is a moment that we have hoped for and prayed for. The effectiveness of this Pfizer vaccine and the Moderna vaccine that’s going to follow is nothing short of a modern medical miracle.

“We are so proud of our corporate citizen UPS that is going to supply much of the eastern United States with this vaccine.

“This evil virus has taken over 2,000 Kentuckians, but now we know that victory is in sight. If we are smart and we work hard between now and when we can get everyone vaccinated and we don’t do rash things like eliminate protections that we have in place, we can save so many lives.”

Seven Kentucky hospitals are expected to receive vaccine shipments tomorrow: Baptist Health Corbin, Baptist Health Louisville, Baptist Health Madisonville, Norton Hospital, Pikeville Medical Center, St. Elizabeth Healthcare Edgewood and University of Kentucky Medical Center.

“We know the vaccine is vitally important to getting back to normal, and we are thankful to be a part of this effort to eradicate COVID-19,” said Baptist Health Corbin President Anthony Powers. “We stand ready to play a key role in this crucial initiative as we begin vaccinating our front-line health workers and our community as more supplies of vaccine become available over the next several months.”

“At Baptist Health Louisville, we are grateful for the opportunity to offer this vaccine to our front-line employees, who are caring for our most vulnerable patients. They have been there for our community, and now we want to be there for them,” said Baptist Health Louisville President Larry Gray. “We eagerly look forward to the day that the vaccine is more readily available to provide needed protection for all of our families and neighbors.”

“Baptist Health Madisonville has been working tirelessly to care for our community throughout COVID-19,” said Baptist Health Madisonville President Robert Ramey. “We are excited and grateful to be chosen as one of the first locations in the commonwealth to have the opportunity to vaccinate our health care heroes to help stop the spread and devastation caused by this virus.”

“We appreciate Gov. Beshear for prioritizing health care workers. After months of being on the front line of this pandemic, we are ready for the promise of a vaccine,” said Russell F. Cox, president and CEO, Norton Healthcare. “We are eager to receive our first shipment of the vaccine and are committed to being responsible stewards of this process.”

The Governor also announced that the state's \$15 million Eviction Relief Fund has spent \$12.3 million since the application opened Sept. 8 to help 3,254 households stay healthy in their homes.

"We've also spent over \$1 million of *Team Kentucky* Fund dollars to pay for rent in 2021 – that helps 1,752 households," said Gov. Beshear. "Today at 5:30 p.m. EST we will reopen applications for the *Healthy at Home* Eviction Relief Fund, and it will stay open until all funds are exhausted, which we think could be between 24 and 48 hours. This reopening will be for past due rent for March through December 2020 only, not future rent. We estimate about \$1.4 million will be available."

When CARES Act funding is exhausted, the applications will again close.

Kentuckians can [apply here](#).

Finally, the Governor announced [new public health guidance for Kentucky schools](#). He said there would be no change in the way the incidence rate will be calculated for each county; instead, the recommendations and requirements for each color-coded zone from the Kentucky Department for Public Health are changing in the following ways:

1. Adjustments of red/orange county recommendations.
2. Every school must provide a meaningful virtual option that cannot negatively impact virtual students' GPA, class rank or any other educational opportunity or recognition.
3. Schools must accommodate all educators and employees who fall into a high-risk category with a virtual option.
4. [Healthy at School guidelines](#) will be mandatory starting on Jan. 4, 2021.
5. KDPH recommends returning to in-person learning no sooner than Jan. 11, 2021.
6. Continue daily reporting.

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 14, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 1,802
- New deaths today: 17
- Positivity rate: 8.58%

- Total deaths: 2,224
- Currently hospitalized: 1,712
- Currently in ICU: 441
- Currently on ventilator: 243

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Boone and Warren. Each of these counties reported 50 or more new cases; Jefferson County alone reported 346.

The new red zone counties for this week can be found [here](#). Community leaders, businesses, schools and families in these counties should all follow [red zone reduction recommendations](#), as well as other orders and guidance.

Those reported lost to the virus today include a 74-year-old man from Bath County; a 92-year-old woman from Calloway County; a 92-year-old woman and an 81-year-old man from Fayette County; a 61-year-old woman and two men, ages 69 and 83, from Hopkins County; two women, ages 37 and 74, and a 77-year-old man from Jefferson County; a 77-year-old woman from Jessamine County; a 67-year-old man from Lawrence County; two men, ages 55 and 59, from Oldham County; and three women, ages 66, 83 and 84, from Washington County.

The Governor said [different Kentucky regions](#) have between 53% and 73% of hospital beds already in use; in addition, Kentucky regions have between 51% and 94% of ICU beds already filled.

Memorial

On Nov. 25, Kentucky lost William Orban Manns of Mt. Sterling. He was only 65 years old. He tested positive for COVID-19 on Nov. 16, along with his entire family. His daughter, Pamela, said they were all tested ahead of her upcoming procedure, and they were shocked to learn they had contracted the virus because they did everything right. They live on the same property, quarantined together, always wore masks and only left home for the occasional errand or grocery run.

“Pamela said her father quickly declined due to complications and was taken to UK Medical Center for treatment. The team at UK took great care of William, keeping the family regularly updated. But it was hard for Pamela, William’s only daughter, to understand the seriousness of the situation – because this was her dad. The hero to her and her three children – which William himself cared for as if they were his own,” said Gov. Beshear. “One night the doctor FaceTimed the family where they said the loved each other. Little did they know it would be the last time they saw him, as hours later William passed away. Our thoughts and

prayers are with William's entire family as they mourn his loss and still recover from the virus themselves. Team Kentucky is with you."

More Information

To view the [full daily report](#), [incidence rate map](#), [new statewide requirements](#), testing locations, long-term care and other congregate facilities update, school reports and [guidance](#), [red zone counties](#), [red zone recommendations](#), the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and other key guidance visit, kycovid19.ky.gov.

###