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Gov. Beshear Seeks Help of All Kentuckians in COVID-19 Fight

Kentucky adopts new CDC guidance recommending use of cloth masks
Visit the Governor's [Facebook](#) page to watch today's news conference

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 4, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Saturday said the efforts of all Kentuckians are needed in the fight against the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The Governor is asking all Kentuckians to continue to fight the spread of the virus by following his [10-step guidance](#), which includes practicing social distancing and staying *healthy at home*. Gov. Beshear says these efforts have the potential to save the lives of as many as 11,000 Kentuckians.

“How great would it be if we could look back five years from now and say, ‘Well, it wasn’t easy, but we did what it took and we saved 11,000 lives,’” Gov. Beshear said. “I think that’s something worth sacrificing for. I know it’s something worth sacrificing for.”

The Governor said social distancing is the key to blunting a surge in cases and urged Kentuckians not to let their guards down during a weekend filled with favorable weather.

Gov. Beshear also reiterated the need for churches and other houses of worship to forego holding in-person services, following reports that some intended to continue hosting congregations.

“If you are still holding mass gatherings, church or otherwise, you are spreading the coronavirus and you are likely causing the death of Kentuckians. It’s that clear,” he said. “My church is incredibly important to me. My faith is incredibly important to me. It’s an important part of our families’ lives. We care about each other in this state, and our faith guides us and gives us the wisdom to do the right thing to protect each other.”

This guidance is critical as it has become harder and harder to locate personal protective equipment (PPE) and other essential equipment for health care workers and health care facilities.

“We were trying to buy any ventilator we can, but virtually every order is getting bought out either by the federal government or being sent directly to one of the hot spots,” the Governor said. “It’s a challenge, but we go to work and we fight for everything we can get each and every day.

“We’re looking for ways we can manufacture PPE and critical equipment. If you are a Kentucky company and you think you can do any of this, give us a call. If we create our own manufacturing base to create PPE, we will be in a better place than just about any other state. If you can manufacture it, we will buy it.”

A new hotline (1-833-GIVE PPE) and website (giveppe.ky.gov) streamline the entire donation process. In addition, PPE donations now will be accepted at all 16 Kentucky State Police posts across the commonwealth and at Transportation Cabinet offices in Louisville and Lexington.

The Governor said a good window into how maintaining social distance helps reduce infections can be found looking at the regular seasonal influenza numbers in Kentucky.

“Flu also spreads in a way to where if you practice social distancing, it cuts down on cases of the flu. And, Kentucky, you’ve done that,” Gov. Beshear said, noting a significant drop off in new seasonal flu cases reported since social distancing was widely adopted.

In an added measure, Gov. Beshear said Kentucky is adopting on a voluntary basis the new guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommending that people wear cloth masks in some situations.

“No one outside of a health care provider ought to be wearing an N95 mask. If you are doing that, it means that someone who desperately needs it doesn’t have it,” the Governor said. “Our same test of being a good neighbor when it comes to testing and hospital beds applies here now too. If you are wearing a surgical mask, we ought to really think about whether there is a health care provider that should have that.”

Gov. Beshear also stressed that wearing a cloth mask is a measure to be added to social distancing, not to replace it.

The new CDC guidance on masks can be found [here](#).

While the sacrifices and changes to our daily lives are great, the Governor said everything Kentuckians are doing brings us closer to the day that the COVID-19 fight is won.

“We are going to get through this. We are going to get through this together,” said Gov. Beshear. “It’s going to be a tough road. It’s going to be difficult days. But we’re going to make it. We’re going to come out on the other side and rebuild. We’re going to be a prosperous Kentucky where we can all get out and see each other and celebrate birthdays, anniversaries together again. We will get there again.”

Acting secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Eric Friedlander addressed how the state is taking extra steps to help Kentuckians with needed benefits.

“To get Medicaid coverage, we have taken a 20-page application and made it one,” Secretary Friedlander said. “We want anyone who does not have insurance to sign up. By getting coverage, you are helping everyone, including our health care professionals.”

Case information

As of 5 p.m. April 4, Gov. Beshear said there were at least [917 cases of COVID-19](#) in Kentucky, 92 of which were newly confirmed.

Officials have confirmed that more than 16,663 people have been tested, but the Governor said that the real number of tests likely was larger as there is some lag in reporting from different labs.

There were three new deaths reported Saturday, raising the state’s toll to 40 deaths related to the virus.

“While three is certainly less than we’ve had the last two days, these are three people who are loved and cared about by their family and their friends. That loss is just as important as any loss that we’ve reported.”

He said the new deaths included a 56-year-old woman from Fayette County, a 52-year-old woman from Bullitt County and an 81-year-old man from Boone County.

Gov. Beshear talked about one of Kentucky’s coronavirus victims, sharing his story as detailed by Mandy McLaren in The Courier-Journal of Louisville.

She wrote about 49-year-old bricklayer [ARon Jordan](#) from Ashland, who fell ill while on a worksite in Detroit and died on March 31.

“He was in Detroit, doing a job, and insisted he be helped up there and quarantined up there, to not bring it home to his family. Now think about that,” Gov. Beshear said. “He made a decision even in his last moments in life that he would protect them rather than maybe get that connection, that closer connection that maybe would have helped him during that period. It’s the type of sacrifice and his family’s sacrifice that they are making in their most difficult time to make sure this is very real for all of us.”

Read about other key updates from the week by visiting Gov. Beshear’s website, [governor.ky.gov](#).

More information

Gov. Beshear has taken decisive action to protect all Kentuckians since the first case was confirmed in the commonwealth. To read the full list of actions Gov. Beshear has taken to limit the spread of the coronavirus, visit [governor.ky.gov/covid19](#).

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages people to follow these [steps to prevent illness](#). Kentuckians who want advice can call the state hotline at 800-722-5725 or call their local health care provider. To read Gov. Beshear’s news releases and watch other news regarding COVID-19 visit [governor.ky.gov](#).

Each day at 5 p.m. ET, Gov. Beshear holds briefings for Kentuckians that are streamed online at his [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages.

Gov. Beshear continues to urge Kentuckians to be cautious of rumors and depend on proven and good sources of news, including [governor.ky.gov](#), [kycovid19.ky.gov](#) and the Governor’s official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Team Kentucky hashtags for social media

#TeamKentucky, #TogetherKY, #Patriot and new Saturday #HealthyAtHome.

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*For official news and updates from the Beshear/Coleman administration,
visit [governor.ky.gov/news](#).*

