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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. 1, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Tuesday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the commonwealth.

'The Fast 4 at 4'

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

1. Gov. Beshear on Tuesday highlighted National Poll Worker Recruitment Day, established by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, as Kentucky and other states face a shortage of people signing up to work during the coming general election. "In a normal year, nearly 15,000 poll workers are needed in Kentucky, and the need is even greater during COVID. Kentuckians are stepping up," the Governor said. "We now have more than 3,100 signed up to volunteer. If you want to sign up, visit elect.ky.gov. If you're healthy, if you're in a place that can do this safely, you will be helping democracy."
2. Gov. Beshear encouraged all Kentuckians to make a plan to vote, either by mail, in person during early voting or in person on Election Day. The Governor reminded voters they now can go to www.GoVoteKy.com to request an absentee ballot for the Nov. 3 general election, if they are concerned about COVID-19 and voting. "And to honor our poll workers, let's make sure we show up and vote," said Gov. Beshear.
3. The Governor again spoke about the importance of every Kentuckian taking time to fill out a U.S. census form, stressing the once-per-decade count's link to funding for schools

and child welfare. “The dollars that help lead us into the future are in large part determined by the census. The number of people we have in Congress is determined by the census,” said Gov. Beshear. “It only takes a couple of minutes and it helps Kentucky and all of America.”

4. Finally, Gov. Beshear offered a preview of some announcements planned for tomorrow. “Tomorrow we’re going to have a number of announcements about really exciting projects that invest in Eastern Kentucky that are going to help us make sure we emerge from this pandemic in a strong way and that we bring every part of this commonwealth with us,” said Gov. Beshear.

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Sept. 1, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 49,185 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 807 of which were newly reported Tuesday. One hundred and fifty of the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which 24 were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was only 27 days old.

“The virus is certainly spreading more through our kids,” said Gov. Beshear. “That’s concerning. So keep getting tested. It helps us stop the spread, especially through our asymptomatic folks.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported 15 new deaths Tuesday, raising the total to 948 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Tuesday include a 78-year-old woman from Calloway County; two women, ages 71 and 85, and two men, ages 87 and 88, from Campbell County; a 73-year-old man from Fayette County; a 55-year-old woman from Grayson County; a 70-year-old man from Harlan County; a 77-year-old woman and an 83-year-old man from Jefferson County; two men, ages 73 and 81, from Lincoln County; a 79-year-old woman from Monroe County; a 67-year-old man from Owen County; and an 80-year-old woman from Pulaski County.

“Tough day that we have 15 new deaths. If we have over 4,000 cases a week, we’re going to lose people we care about,” said Gov. Beshear. “Let’s make sure we remember that these people are all beloved. We can’t ignore this. These are Kentuckians. They are each members of a family.”

As of Tuesday, there have been at least 887,547 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 4.40%. At least 10,417 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](#).

Processing Unemployment Claims

Gov. Beshear announced Tuesday he again is extending Ernst & Young's contract, which began in July, to help process unemployment insurance claims.

"Today, I'm announcing we will extend our partnership with EY through the end of the year," the Governor said. "As a reminder, EY is one of the big four accounting and consulting firms and has significant experience in unemployment insurance claims. The firm has helped other states with UI problems and has the personnel, skill, experience and resources to help Kentucky get the job done."

Gov. Beshear said that in nine weeks, EY helped Kentucky process more than 141,000 claims. By extending the contract through the end of the year, the Governor said officials expect to get through about 70,000 disputed claims awaiting adjudication.

Gov. Beshear was joined by Amy Cabbage, deputy secretary of the Labor Cabinet, who provided further details.

"The first phase of the contract was for a four-week term, and when that initial term ended successfully with the processing of approximately 61,000 initial and continuing claims, we extended the EY contract for another five weeks to help us resolve continuing claims," Deputy Secretary Cabbage said.

She said the new contract is worth about \$4.9 million.

Deputy Secretary Cabbage noted the original EY contract as well as the extensions all are being funded with money from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and would not affect the state's normal budget.

She said that in mid-August Kentucky applied for and has been approved to use outside help like EY contractors to write letters of determination, a time-sensitive process that has slowed many claims.

"Kentucky is only the second state to turn to outside help to issue determinations," Deputy Secretary Cabbage said.

She said EY will provide 100 staffers to assist in preparing the written determinations for four weeks, and then 25 staffers for another 12 weeks.

"We believe this will cut the time to issue the pandemic-related backlog of adjudications by approximately half," Deputy Secretary Cabbage said.

Dr. Stack Update

Today, Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, offered an update on the coronavirus in Kentucky.

“On the good news, the test positivity rate continues to be less than 5%,” said Dr. Stack. “But we still want to get it much lower than that.”

He said that despite that, the threat posed by COVID-19 remains significant in the commonwealth.

“Cautionary news: Kentucky still hovers at a plateau of about 150 new cases per day per million people in the state,” said Dr. Stack. “At that rate, there’s a lot of disease spread widely throughout Kentucky. If we were to have it take off in an unrestrained manner, there’s a much bigger impact than there would be if we were at a lower plateau. It’s absolutely imperative that you wear your mask, watch your space and wash your hands. And if you have symptoms or a high risk exposure, you should get tested.”

More Information

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at governor.ky.gov, 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.

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