



**OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR**  
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Crystal Staley**  
**502.545.3714**  
**502.564.2611**

**Sebastian Kitchen**  
**502.330.0799**  
**502.564.2611**

**Gov. Beshear: Long-Term Care Task Force Working to Protect  
Kentuckians**

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

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 18, 2020)** – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced the state's new Long-Term Care Task Force and provided key updates on how the commonwealth and Kentuckians are working to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

"I know it feels like we've been at this a while, but we've got to do what it takes to win and you are doing an amazing job," Gov. Beshear said when speaking to Kentuckians during his 5 p.m. daily, online briefing. "We will get back to a new normal and eventually we'll get back to just normal."

Gov. Beshear said the Long-Term Care Task Force is working to protect some of the Kentuckians who are most vulnerable to COVID-19 and the health care workers who serve them.

"Health care-associated infections (HAIs) are an important public health and safety issue," the Governor said. "The task force is partnering with outside agencies to coordinate and maximize the efficiency of HAI prevention efforts across Kentucky."

"This is personal. One of the deaths reported was a friend. This is a beautiful, wonderful person we have lost," said Eric Friedlander, acting secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. "This is personal and it should be personal to us all. Long-term care facilities are our biggest challenge. These places are most at risk. Infection control is our number one area of focus, and this is a task force comprised of people who want to get things done."

**State, Kroger testing update**

Gov. Beshear also provided an update on testing efforts and said four new sites would come online next

week in Madisonville, Paducah, Somerset and Pikeville. He said testing in Kenton County went really well and that they tested nearly 900 Kentuckians. Additional testing updates will be announced likely on Wednesday.

Those seeking to obtain a test can get location and registration details at [KROGERHEALTH.COM/COVIDTESTING](https://www.krogerhealth.com/covidtesting).

Those eligible for the tests include people exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, shortness of breath and cough; health care workers and first responders who may have been exposed to coronavirus; and anyone with mild symptoms who also may have been exposed to COVID-19.

The testing is done free of charge. The overall goal of the partnership is to conduct 20,000 tests over the next five weeks. Test results are expected within approximately 48 hours.

### **Benchmarks for reopening the commonwealth's economy**

Friday, Gov. Beshear [announced benchmarks](#) that the commonwealth must meet in order to start reopening the state's economy while keeping Kentuckians safe from the novel coronavirus. He reviewed those steps Saturday, which reflect federal guidance announced Thursday by the White House. Gov. Beshear said the state's seven benchmarks would determine the phases for reopening parts of the economy.

Benchmark criteria for Kentucky to move to the first stage:

- 14 days where cases are decreasing
- Increased testing capacity and contact tracing
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) availability
- Ability to protect at-risk populations
- Ability to social distance and follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on large gatherings
- Preparedness for possible future spike
- Status of vaccine and treatment

For more information on the White House's criteria and all three proposed phases of reopening, visit [\[whitehouse.gov/openingamerica\]](https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica)whitehouse.gov/openingamerica.

### **Case information**

As of 5 p.m. April 18, Gov. Beshear said there were at least [2,707 coronavirus cases](#) in Kentucky, 206 of which were newly confirmed.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear also reported seven new deaths Saturday, raising the state's toll to 144 deaths related to the virus.

Gov. Beshear continued to encourage Kentuckians to light up their homes and businesses green for those we have lost as a sign of compassion and renewal.

The seven newly reported deaths include a 78-year-old woman from Pike; a 95-year-old woman from Jefferson; a 96-year-old man from Grayson; a 95-year-old woman from Jefferson; an 83-year-old man from Butler; an 85-year-old woman from Kenton and a 90-year-old man from Campbell.

At least 1,174 people have recovered from COVID-19 in Kentucky. Gov. Beshear said this was great news and that about 46% of Kentuckians with the virus have recovered.

To date, at least 32,225 people have been tested. At least 1,059 people have ever been hospitalized with 274 currently hospitalized.

At least 534 have ever been in the ICU with at least 155 people currently in the ICU.

Gov. Beshear also offered an update on the racial breakdown of COVID-19 patients and victims, which unfortunately highlights existing disparities in health and health care access.

The Governor said with about 78% of the known cases accounted for, 79.30%

of Kentuckians who tested positive were Caucasian, 12.33% were African-American, 4.8% were multiracial, 3.43% were Asian and 0.14% were Native American or Alaskan Native.

The Governor also said with about 69.99% of the known cases accounted for, 93.11% of people who tested positive were non-Hispanic and 6.89% were Hispanic.

On fatalities attributed to the coronavirus, with about 82.64% of the known cases accounted for, Kentucky deaths are about 78.15% Caucasian, 21.00% African-American and 0.84% Asian.

On fatalities attributed to the coronavirus, with about 81.95% of the known cases accounted for, Kentucky deaths are about 99.15% non-Hispanic and 0.84% Hispanic.

### **More information**

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.

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](#).

Watch the Governor's social media accounts at 5 p.m. ET each day for his regular briefing. Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and daily summaries of the Governor's press conference at [tinyurl.com/kygovespanol](http://tinyurl.com/kygovespanol) (Spanish) and [tinyurl.com/kygovtranslations](http://tinyurl.com/kygovtranslations) (more than 20 additional languages).

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.

**Team Kentucky hashtags for social media** #TeamKentucky, #TogetherKY, #Patriot and #HealthyAtHome.

###

TEAM  
KENTUCKY



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