



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 Provides Update on COVID-19

Visit the Governor's [Facebook](#) page to watch today's news conference
FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 21, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Monday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

"We need two things as we go forward fighting COVID," the Governor said. "We need that strength and endurance knowing that it is going to end and we've got to be strong enough to do the right thing until it ends. We also need to have flexibility, knowing that this virus can pop up in an area and absolutely take off."

'The Fast 4 at 4'

Gov. Beshear on Monday highlighted a variety of issues of importance to Kentuckians and the commonwealth.

1. Flu shots

Gov. Beshear began Monday's news conference by stressing the importance of all Kentuckians who are able receiving a seasonal flu shot do so. Because we are still engaged in a very active fight against the coronavirus, health experts are warning that a bad seasonal flu outbreak might spark a "twindemic" that could overwhelm health care systems.

“This season, more than ever, we need to ensure that every Kentuckian who can gets that flu shot,” the Governor said. “We don’t want to be dealing with COVID-19 and a widespread flu outbreak this season.”

2. **Voting and Census**

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 and to fill out a U.S. Census form.

“Remember, you have to register to vote by Oct. 5 at 4 p.m. local time,” the Governor said. “Democrats and Republicans have stepped up this year to come up with a plan to let you vote safely.”

He reminded Kentuckians that if they have concerns about COVID-19, they can go online right now to request an absentee ballot at [GoVoteKy.com](https://www.govoteky.com).

He spoke of 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.

“We only have a limited number of days left to fill out the 2020 census. If we don’t fill this out, our dollars go to another state,” said Gov. Beshear.

3. **Delta Regional Authority Grants**

Today, Gov. Beshear announced \$4,755,270 in grants from the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) to update infrastructure, expand broadband and health care access, improve economic development opportunities and more in communities across Western Kentucky.

The investments will fund 11 projects that will create or retain 80 jobs, provide workforce training for 433 Kentuckians and will improve the lives of 32,400 families.

“These 11 projects will make a great difference for infrastructure, economic development, health care and education, which are all priorities as we build a brighter, better Kentucky,” the Governor said. “We are grateful to the local leaders who made these projects possible and for DRA’s continued investment in Kentucky.”

The grants will fund projects in Fulton, Henderson, Hopkins, Logan and Todd, Trigg and Webster counties, as well as in Elkton, Greenville, Henderson, Madisonville and Paducah.

For more information and to view the full news release, [click here](#).

4. **Mask Up Kentucky**

Gov. Beshear also stressed the continued importance of everyone wearing face coverings, calling it the single most important thing all of us can do to fight COVID-19.

“This is our greatest and most important tool for getting back to everything we want to do,” the Governor said. “Do the right thing: Mask up.”

He also encouraged Kentuckians to spread the word on social media using #MaskUpKY and #MaskUpKentucky hashtags.

Case Information – Monday, Sept. 21

As of 4 p.m. Sept. 21, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 61,917 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 406 of which were newly reported Monday. Sixty-seven of the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which nine were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was only five months old.

“Last week, we had our second-highest number of cases by week,” the Governor said. “We really want to see this overall number of cases come down. Our positivity rate is going down, which is great news. But those overall numbers are too high. We’ve got to do what it takes to have fewer new weekly cases.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported one new death Monday, raising the total to 1,112 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The death reported Monday was a 77-year-old woman from Scott County.

“Thankfully, today we only have one new death to announce,” the Governor said. “But her family is going to be missing her. Let’s light our homes up green and ring those bells just as much when we lose one individual.”

As of Monday, there have been at least 1,131,075 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was 3.77%, and at least 11,283 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](#).

Case Information – Sunday, Sept. 20

Due to limited reporting on the weekends, some updated information is now available from Sunday, Sept. 20.

As of Sunday, there were 1,126,235 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was at 3.62% and at least 11,259 Kentuckians had recovered from the virus.

For a detailed look at coronavirus case information from Sunday, Sept. 20, [click here](#).

Lost Wages Assistance

Gov. Beshear announced Monday that Kentucky has applied for three more weeks of Lost Wages Assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Each week will be paid separately.

“Today, we have applied for three additional weeks of unemployment insurance coverage of the extra \$400 a week for those that qualify,” said Gov. Beshear. “If accepted by the federal government, those that qualify for those additional dollars will receive their \$400 extra for the weeks of Aug. 22, Aug. 29 and Sept. 5.”

Eligibility criteria for the program:

- Individuals who receive at least \$100 per week in unemployment insurance compensation for each week covered by FEMA’s Lost Wages Assistance program; and
- Individuals who have self-certified that they are unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Testing Guidance

Today, Gov. Beshear spoke about changes in the testing guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that has caused some confusion.

“If you’ve been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, you ought to get tested. The CDC has changed their website to stress this again,” the Governor said. “We’ve been providing this guidance the whole time. If you have been exposed, make sure that you get tested.”

To view the CDC’s testing guidance, [click here](#).

Gov. Beshear also continued to encourage Kentuckians to take advantage of the nearly 260 testing locations throughout the commonwealth.

“There are testing locations everywhere,” he said. “Make sure you are getting tested regularly.”

For more information or to find a testing site, [click here](#).

Long-term Care Facilities

Eric Friedlander, secretary of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, provided an update Monday on the state’s long-term care facilities following new guidance from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

“To save lives, Gov. Beshear took decisive, swift action in March, issuing an executive order, stopping most visitation in long-term care facilities,” Secretary Friedlander said. “Actions were also taken from the Office of the Inspector General to curb residents’ exposure to the coronavirus. This included limiting providers’, volunteers’, suppliers’ and vendors’ presence in the facilities and aligning residents with a limited number of caregivers.”

He noted that months of fighting the coronavirus have been difficult for residents, employees and friends and families of people residing in our long-term care facilities.

“New guidance is allowing the use of the same COVID-19 county positivity rate information that school districts are using to determine whether in-person learning is recommended,” Secretary Friedlander said. “Long-term care facilities are also using this data to determine the degree to which indoor visitation can take place.

As long as no new cases have been confirmed in the previous two weeks, visitation can be expanded to more than end-of-life visits.”

He said restrictions on physical touching and communal dining will be eased, while robust testing of staffers, providers and vendors will continue.

Secretary Friedlander said CMS also has approved use of Civil Monetary Penalty funds to purchase tents for outdoor visitation and/or clear dividers to create physical barriers to reduce the risk of transmission of the coronavirus.

“We will continue to monitor this situation closely, as the national case count for COVID-19 is increasing,” Secretary Friedlander said. “With schools reopening and more people mixing, Kentucky may also see an increase.”

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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