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COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Gov. Beshear Working to Protect Kentucky Families from COVID-19**

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

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 18, 2020)** – Gov. Andy Beshear Wednesday announced more actions he is taking to help combat the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and protect Kentuckians.

“This is our duty. This is the challenge that we face in our lifetimes,” Gov. Beshear said of people doing their part to stop the coronavirus. “None of us have seen anything like this before, but I believe we are up to it. I believe we can do this, but we can only do this when we all do it together. This is a test of the type of neighbors that we are willing to be and I know we are going to get past it.”

Gov. Beshear reminded Kentuckians to remain calm, have faith and to continue doing their patriotic duty by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines to protect the most vulnerable, which includes seniors and those with chronic conditions including heart, lung or kidney disease.

“We cannot lose our compassion, even when we are asking people to stay away from each other. We must continue to take care of each other,” Gov. Beshear said. “I want to encourage everyone to continue to try and spread good news and model good behavior. The way we make sure we defeat coronavirus is by being good people.”

Gov. Beshear's new actions include:

Gov. Beshear suspended all charitable gaming licenses, closing bingo halls temporarily, to protect patrons at those establishments after having previously issued [new guidance](#) on closing public-facing businesses. He said the overriding goal of the order is to minimize in-person interaction, which is the primary means of transmission of COVID-19.

The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) will extend certification periods for all recipients of all public assistance programs (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/SNAP or formerly food stamps, Medicaid, Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program/K-TAP, and State Supplementation) for three months. Those households whose certification periods end in May will automatically be extended to August, June to September, and so on. Job search, work and participation requirements are temporarily suspended for SNAP able-bodied adults without dependents, the Kentucky Works Program, and the Child Care Assistance Program.

“We want everyone to sign up for the programs we have, those who are underemployed or unemployed,” said Eric Friedlander, acting secretary for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. “Those who are eligible and not already signed up, we want to help you apply. We ask you to visit our website and call us so we can help you with your health benefits.”

- For all public assistance programs access the benefind website at <https://benefind.ky.gov> or by calling the DCBS call center at 1-855-306-8959.
- For Medicaid only, call the Kentucky Healthcare customer service line at 855-459-6328 or contact an application assister through the Kentucky Health Benefit Exchange website at <https://healthbenefitexchange.ky.gov>

The Governor also announced that the state is working with federal partners to continue Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) payments on behalf of qualified families during the mandatory closure period. The state will also be covering copayments typically covered by families. He [also provided updates on acute and psychiatric care visitation, long-term care visitation, adult day health centers and the closure of in-person government services.](#) As of 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, all government offices closed to in-person services. Visit individual cabinet websites for updates and opportunities for virtual services.

Gov. Beshear told people there is no need to withdraw money from banks, which he said are safe. He encouraged banks and their customers to take steps to limit contact with people.

As of 5 p.m. March 18, the state’s COVID-19 patient information includes 35 cases (some of which all of the demographics were not available immediately):

27	F	Harrison, <i>recovered</i>
67	F	Harrison
69	M	Jefferson
40	F	Fayette
68	M	Harrison
46	M	Fayette
60	M	Harrison
54	F	Harrison
31	F	Fayette
56	M	Montgomery
66	M	Bourbon, <i>passed away March 15</i>
67	F	Jefferson
51	M	Montgomery
80	F	Jefferson
53	M	Nelson

68	F	Jefferson
51	M	Harrison
47	M	Fayette
31	M	Fayette
73	F	Jefferson
49	M	Clark
54	M	Jefferson
34	F	Jefferson
74	M	Jefferson
33	F	New York, <i>tested in Lexington (not included in Kentucky total)</i>
69	M	Lyon
66	M	Jefferson
88	F	Bourbon
8 months		Jefferson
	F	Jefferson
		Franklin
		Harrison
		Kenton
		Warren
		Clark
		Fayette

Unfortunately, one of the latest cases is an 8-month-old in Jefferson County. Gov. Beshear said the case of an infected child is very rare, but said the child is being treated at home.

“We’re going to see new cases every day. That is why we are taking the steps we’re taking,” the Governor said.

### **Other actions by Gov. Beshear**

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

### **More information**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourages people to follow these [steps to prevent illness](#). Kentuckians can find regular updates and resources including more information about when to seek medical attention and courses of action for those in counties with positive cases at [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov). They are also urged to visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus) for up-to-date information. Kentuckians who want advice can call the state hotline at 1.800.722.5725 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](https://governor.ky.gov).

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