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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Gov. Beshear Marks Solemn Milestone as State Surpasses 1,000 Kentuckians Lost to Coronavirus**

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

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 9, 2020)** – Gov. Andy Beshear on Wednesday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) and marked the solemn milestone of losing more than 1,000 Kentuckians in the global pandemic.

"Tonight and tomorrow's briefings are going to look a little different, because we've hit a tough and unfortunate milestone in Kentucky," the Governor said. "We have the painful news that we have now lost over 1,000 Kentuckians – our mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, sisters, brothers, neighbors – to COVID-19.

"Compared with most other states, that number of casualties is fairly low, and that's a testament to the people of Kentucky and the actions that they've taken, but it's hard to be proud and excited about this news.

"To honor these individuals and their grieving families, we're going to have another wreath-laying ceremony tomorrow. It will be an opportunity for those families and

all Kentuckians to express the pain and the grief that we feel and to honor the people we've lost.”

With Kentucky hitting six months since its first case and surpassing more than 1,000 deaths, Gov. Beshear [ordered all flags on state buildings in the commonwealth to fly at half-staff](#) for the next week, and said there will be a wreath-laying by the Kentucky State Police Honor Guard in the Capitol rotunda at 10 a.m. Thursday and he will speak directly to Kentuckians at 5:30 p.m. Thursday. “We’ll spend about 15 minutes talking over this loss, our fight to date and how we must do at least a little bit better to make sure we come out of this crisis with as many of our family members with us as possible, that we come out in a way where we can be proud of what we have done and how we have faced this very difficult disease,” the Governor said.

Gov. Beshear emphasized that the most important action we all can take to fight the coronavirus is to wear a mask. He pointed to the [latest report from the White House Coronavirus Task Force](#), which like each of the previous reports, directly states that Kentucky should keep the statewide mask requirement in place. Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, said that the death toll should bring home the seriousness of the coronavirus crisis for everyone.

“In the United States of America, in roughly the last six months, more than 190,000 Americans have died from COVID-19. To put that in context, the city of Louisville is about 620,000 or so, so it’s like 30 percent of the city of Louisville has died in the last six months across the country,” Dr. Stack said. “People talk about the numbers, where there are inconsistent or where there are inaccuracies, but deaths are pretty clear. The implications to the United States of America are pretty substantial and profound. Now in Kentucky, today we crossed over a big milestone, with over 1,000 Kentuckians who’ve lost their lives from the coronavirus. And that’s a tragedy and a tragedy for their families. It’s a smaller tragedy than we might otherwise have had had we not taken the steps over the last six months we would have had larger totals like they’ve had in other states and in other areas. So I’m grateful that we’ve had the opportunity to blunt the harm but the harm that’s happened is substantial nonetheless.”

### **Case Information**

As of 4 p.m. Sept. 9, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 53,977 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 667 of which were newly reported Wednesday. Eighty-eight of

the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which 16 were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was only 2 months old.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported 16 new deaths Wednesday, raising the total to 1,013 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Wednesday include a 62-year-old man from Bell County; two men, ages 61 and 77, from Bullitt County; a 92-year-old woman from Calloway County; a 94-year-old woman from Fayette County; a 76-year-old man from Garrard County; four men, ages 50, 66, 79 and 86, and a 70-year-old woman from Jefferson County; a 71-year-old man from Lincoln County; a 90-year-old man from Owen County; an 84-year-old woman from Rowan County; and two men, ages 81 and 87, from Scott County.

“Sixteen new deaths put us over the 1,000 lost number,” the Governor said. “It feels pretty devastating. It doesn’t mean that, given the opponent we are facing, we haven’t done a good job. It just means that we have to recognize how much this hurts those around us.”

As of Tuesday, there have been at least 937,153 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 3.84%. At least 10,725 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](#).

### **Remembrance**

As casualties topped 1,000 on Wednesday, Gov. Beshear again noted numbers alone do not accurately reflect the depth of losing a family member or friend to the coronavirus. He shared another personal story of a Kentuckian lost in this fight.

“Yesterday, we lost EJ Mike, a 58-year-old front-line worker. He was a physician’s assistant at Louisville VA Medical Center,” the Governor said. “But more important, he was a loving father to his twin girls, who are only 13. EJ fought hard for 6 weeks at Norton Brownsboro, during which time he was on a ventilator.”

Gov. Beshear said he and his staffers learned of EJ's loss Tuesday, only an hour after he had passed.

"We spoke to a friend and read online messages from co-workers and loved ones who called EJ an inspiration and an amazing person who always put others before himself," the Governor said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with his two daughters, his family, friends and the community he built at the Louisville VA."

### **More Information**

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](#).

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and summaries of the Governor's news conferences at [teamkentuckytranslations.com](http://teamkentuckytranslations.com).

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