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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Gov. Beshear: Strong Actions Required to Protect Kentuckians from
COVID-19**

*47 positive cases; 6-year-old tested positive; 64-year-old male with underlying conditions is
second death reported*

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

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 19, 2020) – To protect as many Kentuckians as possible from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), Gov. Andy Beshear announced more actions he is taking to reduce the spread of the virus.

“We are going to make it through this,” Gov. Beshear said. “We might go through harder times before we make it through this. But, in facing it, it is about us doing it together – as Team Kentucky. This is our challenge and as Kentuckians we can pass that test.”

Gov. Beshear dismissed rumors about a state “forced lockdown” and urged Kentuckians to only depend on proven and good sources of news, including governor.ky.gov, kycovid19.ky.gov and the Governor’s official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Gov. Beshear thanked the many people who are willing to step up, including plumbers and pipefitters who were answering the call to round up industrial respirators to send to the state to help aid health care professionals. The Governor also said at least eight labs in the state are up and running and went over information to help Kentuckians with unemployment insurance and health care needs, which is available online.

“I want everyone who can to let their employees work from home,” said Gov. Beshear. “Especially, with all of the child care options shutting down, we need everyone who can to work from home.”

The Governor also told everyone to stop trying to be the exception to the rules, and asked everyone to volunteer to help and follow them.

Case information

As of 5 p.m. March 19, the state's COVID-19 patient information includes 47 who have tested positive. A second child, a 6-year-old in Jefferson County, has tested positive. A 64-year-old male in Jefferson County passed away and since tested positive. The man's death is the second in the state connected to the virus.

27	F	Harrison, <i>recovered</i>
69	M	Jefferson
67	F	Harrison
40	F	Fayette
68	M	Harrison
46	M	Fayette
60	M	Harrison
54	F	Harrison
31	F	Fayette
51	M	Harrison
56	M	Montgomery
80	F	Jefferson
68	F	Jefferson
66	M	Bourbon, <i>passed away</i>
53	M	Nelson
67	F	Jefferson
47	M	Fayette
31	M	Fayette
49	M	Clark
73	F	Jefferson
54	M	Jefferson
51	M	Montgomery
34	F	Jefferson
33	F	Out of State
74	M	Jefferson
66	M	Jefferson
69	M	Lyon
88	F	Bourbon
Infant		Jefferson, <i>verbal confirmation</i>
27	F	Clark
51	M	Daviess
26	F	Fayette
61	F	Franklin
50	M	Harrison
	F	Henderson
66	F	Kenton
59	F	Pulaski
73	M	Warren
61	F	Christian
	F	Fayette
45	F	Jefferson

Additional cases and demographics of other cases mentioned were not known by 5 p.m. ET Thursday.

“We’re going to see new cases every day. That is why we are taking the steps we’re taking,” the Governor said. “We need everyone to heed this guidance and not be the person spreading the virus.”

New actions

Thursday, Gov. Beshear announced new actions he has taken to protect Kentucky families from the virus.

Child care facility exceptions for health care workers, first responders

Interim guidance was issued for establishing partnerships between approved health care facilities and limited-duration child care programs to support child care for employees of health care entities, first responders (Law Enforcement, EMS, Fire Departments), corrections officers and Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) workers. The guidance is online at chfs.ky.gov and directly linked below.

- [Interim Guidance for Verification of Employment for Child Care within a Limited Duration Center](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Limited Duration Child Care Programs](#)
- [Requirements for Approved Child Care Programs During Emergency Period](#)
- [Temporary Emergency Child Care Notification content example](#)

Reinforced ban on all public gatherings

The Governor has already recommended all mass public gatherings end, but today the state’s Public Health Commissioner Dr. Steven Stack and acting secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Eric Friedlander issued a formal letter banning all mass gatherings. [To read the letter click here](#). The measure states what Gov. Beshear has previously recommended, including:

- All mass gatherings are hereby prohibited.
- Mass gatherings include any event or convening that brings together groups of individuals, including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities.

“I am a person of deep faith, I am a deacon in my church and this is a hard decision,” Gov. Beshear said. “This is not a test of faith. This is something we must do to keep each other safe.”

“I have been inspired by men and women who lead faith communities across our commonwealth as they have done the best they possibly can to practice adaptive leadership as we have faced this unprecedented crisis,” said the Rev. Corrie Shull, senior pastor of the Burnett Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville. “Men and women of faith are following the excellent leadership of our Governor and we are complying as best we can to mitigate against the spread of this virus. Our faith community is doing our best to make church happen, but in creative ways. Just because we cannot gather does not mean church stops. In the midst of this crisis, people of faith are finding outstanding ways to spread hope, faith and love. Please hear the wise words of our governor, of national leadership and the CDC – please do not put our most vulnerable at risk.”

- For the avoidance of doubt, a mass gathering does not include normal operations at airports, bus and train stations, medical facilities, libraries, shopping malls and centers, or other spaces where persons may be in transit. It also does not include typical office

environments, factories, or retail or grocery stores where large numbers of people are present, but maintain appropriate social distancing.

Any gathering, regardless of whether it is a mass gathering prohibited under the order, shall to the extent practicable implement Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, including:

- maintaining a distance of 6 feet between persons;
- encouraging good hygiene measures, including regular, thorough handwashing, and providing adequate hygiene materials, including hand sanitizing options;
- encouraging people who are sick to remain home or leave the premises; and
- regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

The Department for Public Health has delegated to local health departments the authority to take all necessary measures to implement this order.

While other states have provided a specific limit on number of people, Kentucky is not, but rather mandating space between people. The letter is consistent with CDC and White House recommendations to limit gatherings of people. It does not close offices, factories or retail, but those businesses need to follow best practices of social distancing.

Revenue flexibility for restaurants

Gov. Beshear said that restaurants that have an active liquor license, that are also doing food delivery or carry out, may also deliver sealed alcoholic beverages, in their original containers to customers. This change allows the state to give restaurants a much-needed boost to help their bottom lines. To read a copy of the order, [click here](#).

Yesterday's actions

Yesterday, Gov. Beshear issued [new guidance](#) on closing public-facing businesses and suspended all charitable gaming licenses, closing bingo halls temporarily, to protect patrons at those establishments. The Governor also announced 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.

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. yesterday, all government offices are closed to in-person services. Visit individual cabinet websites for updates and opportunities for virtual services. The Governor told Kentuckians 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. For detailed information on yesterday's announcements [click here](#).

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.

More information

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourages people to follow these [steps to prevent illness](#). 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. To listen to questions from Kentuckians and media and answers from Gov. Beshear watch his news conferences online on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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