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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear Takes Decisive Action to Limit Spread of COVID-19

Guidance for closure of public-facing businesses, government offices

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 17, 2020) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced additional steps to contain and limit the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

“It’s my job to protect my family and friends, but I believe it’s all of our civic duty to protect our communities,” Gov. Beshear said. “I will use every resource in this state, every dollar at my disposal, every personnel that we have, to do everything we can to protect everyone’s loved ones if we see a spike that is significant. Kentucky, we’ll need your help. We’ll need your help staying calm. We’ll need volunteers and we know you’ll respond. We will get through this together.”

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. He also delivered a special message to children, offering tips to relieve stress and anxiety, maintain a routine and stay active.

Gov. Beshear's new actions include:

Issued guidance on closing public-facing businesses

Tuesday afternoon, Gov. Beshear issued an [executive order outlining specific steps all public-facing businesses should take](#) regarding closures, which include:

- By 5:00 p.m. on March 18, 2020, all public-facing businesses that encourage public congregation or, that by the nature of the service to the public, cannot comply with CDC guidelines concerning social distancing, shall cease all in-person operations.
- These public-facing businesses that must close include entertainment, hospitality and recreational facilities, community and recreation centers, gyms and exercise facilities, hair salons, nail salons, spas, concert venues, theaters, and sporting event facilities.
- Those businesses providing food, food processing, agriculture, industrial manufacturing, feed mills, construction, trash collection, retail, grocery and consumer goods, home repair/hardware and auto repair, pharmacy, and other medical facilities, biomedical and healthcare, post offices, insurance, banks, gas stations, laundromats, veterinary clinics and pet stores, warehousing, storage, and distribution, public transportation, and hotel and commercial lodging may remain open, subject to limitations provided in prior orders, but must to the extent practicable implement Centers for Disease Control guidance, including:
 - maintaining a distance of 6 feet between persons;
 - ensuring employees practice appropriate hygiene measures, including regular, thorough handwashing;
 - ensuring that employees who are sick remain home; and
 - regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Gov. Beshear said the overriding goal of the order is to minimize in-person interaction, which is the primary means of transmission of COVID-19. The immediate implementation of the order is necessary as patrons of public-facing businesses gather in large numbers, in close proximity to each other and in enclosed spaces, endangering the health of customers and staff.

“For those out there trying to find an exception, if you’re not truly engaging in social distancing, if you are not taking those steps, it will force further action,” Gov. Beshear said. “Not that we want to take it, but we have to protect everybody. It’s all of our duties. Look for ways to be a part of the solution as opposed to being an exception to what we’re putting out there.”

Child Care

Gov. Beshear said 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.

Acute and Psychiatric Care Visitation

To limit the spread of COVID-19, Gov. Beshear advised all acute care facilities to discourage all visitors except for end-of-life circumstances. He also advised psychiatric facilities to restrict visitation, only allowing it if deemed medically necessary by the attending physician, administrator and the medical director.

Long Term Care Visitation

Gov. Beshear also recommended personal care homes, assisted living, senior care facilities and intermediate care facilities limit visitation only to loved ones that are receiving end-of-life care.

Adult Day Health Centers

To slow the spread of COVID-19, Gov. Beshear issued interim guidance to require the temporary closure of all licensed adult day care centers across the state. This emergency closure will begin on March 20.

Closure of in-person government services

As of 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, all government offices are closed to in-person services.

“We are having to take some tough steps, but it’s absolutely necessary,” Gov. Beshear said. “We are going to take them. We are going to get through it. We are going to restock, rebuild, whatever it takes to get back to where we were.”

As of 6:30 p.m. March 17, the state’s COVID-19 patient information includes 27 cases:

- 27 F Harrison, *recovered*
- 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, *passed away March 15*
- 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, *tested in Lexington*
- 69 M Lyon
- 66 M Jefferson

Gov. Beshear also announced all 16 passengers from the Grand Princess cruise ship have returned home.

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 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. They are also urged to visit 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://www.governor.ky.gov).

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