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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear: 68 Red Zone Counties Need to Operate on COVID-19 Reduction Plan Next Week

*Governor urges counties to implement **new recommendations** Monday through Sunday*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 29, 2020) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear urged every Kentuckian in 68 [red zone counties](#) to up their game in the fight against COVID-19 and follow nine [recommendations](#) beginning Monday, Nov. 2, through Sunday, Nov. 8, to reduce the spread of COVID-19 as cases flare in those areas. “This is a type of outbreak where we can’t deny our way out of it, we can’t rationalize our way out of it, we can’t try to find excuses for not following the guidance,” said Gov. Beshear.

Schools, businesses, community leaders and Kentuckians in red zone counties – [published](#) every Thursday afternoon on [kycovid19.ky.gov]kycovid19.ky.gov – should follow [the below recommendations](#) the upcoming week.

Red Zone Reduction Recommendations:

- Employers should allow employees to work from home when possible
- Government offices that do not provide critical services need to operate virtually

- Reduce in-person shopping; order online or pickup curbside as much as possible
- Order take-out; avoid dining in restaurants or bars
- Prioritize businesses that follow and enforce the mask mandate and other guidelines
- Reschedule, postpone or cancel public events
- Do not host or attend gatherings of any size
- Avoid non-essential activities outside your home
- Reduce overall activity and contacts, and follow existing guidance, including the [10 Steps to Defeat COVID-19](#)

The Governor said that new White House guidance suggests “current transmissions are linked to home gatherings,” where Americans are not as likely to wear masks around people from outside of their household. With broad community spread and transmission in the state, the Governor said it is crucial that communities work together to follow these new recommendations on top of existing requirements.

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Thursday, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 1,821
- New deaths today: 19
- Positivity rate: 6.04%
- Total deaths: 1,461
- Currently hospitalized: 969
- Currently in ICU: 234
- Currently on ventilator: 120

The Governor noted this is the highest number of new cases ever reported on a Thursday, and the third-highest number of new cases ever reported in a single day.

The top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Hardin, Kenton and Warren.

Today’s red zone counties are listed [here](#), alphabetically and by incidence rate.

Those reported lost to the virus today include a 68-year-old man from Adair County; a 75-year-old man from Calloway County; a 93-year-old man from Casey County; an 81-year-old man from Daviess County; a 65-year-old man from Fayette County; two women, ages 83 and 88, and two men, ages 88 and 90, from Jefferson County; a 73-year-old man from Jessamine County; a 72-year-old man from Lee County; a 61-year-old woman from McLean County; an 80-year-old woman from Meade County; a 71-year-old man from Muhlenberg County; a 68-year-old woman from Rowan County; a 58-year-old man from Russell County; a 68-year-old woman from Shelby County; an 87-year-old woman from Warren County; and an 89-year-old woman from Whitley County.

Gov. Beshear reminds Kentuckians to light their homes and businesses up green to show compassion for those lost to COVID-19.

Unemployment Insurance Updates

Amy Cabbage, the Governor's general counsel, today talked about a new way of reporting unemployment insurance (UI) claims. In order to best serve those claimants who have been waiting the longest, the cabinet is now sorting claims by date of filing.

Cabbage said that Labor Cabinet Secretary Larry Roberts, at the Governor's direction, has [requested from the U.S. Department of Labor \(US DOL\)](#) the ability to waive the obligation to obtain repayment of mistakenly-paid benefits that may have occurred after the federal government changed their eligibility guidance. "We have not heard back from U.S. DOL but remain hopeful we will be allowed some flexibility on these overpayments," Cabbage said. "If granted, we will be able to provide significant relief to many Kentuckians."

As a part of a project to upgrade the UI computer system to be more user-friendly, there are some upcoming dates the system will be down for claimants. Kentuckians will not be able to file a claim or claim benefits during these planned outages: Friday, Nov. 6, and Saturday, Nov. 7; Thursday, Nov. 26, through Saturday, Nov. 28; and briefly after business hours on Dec. 15.

Cabbage also warned Kentuckians to be on the lookout for email scammers using this fake account: PUA@unemployment.usdol.gov. She said scammers are trying to obtain personal information and shared tips to avoid the scam:

- Never respond to an email unless it is from a [ky.gov](#) domain and is clearly marked as coming from a Kentucky Office of Unemployment Insurance (OUI) employee.
- Know that you will never be asked to click on a link in an email from OUI.
- Know that unless you initiate contact with U.S. DOL you should not receive any emails from U.S. DOL about your claim.

Fast 4

Today, Gov. Beshear highlighted significant support for Eastern Kentucky families.

- Two new projects at the Pikeville Medical Center (Pike County) and the King's Daughters Health System (Boyd County) have been selected for more than \$8 million in funding through the Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Pilot grant program. To read the full release, [click here](#).

"These grants will bring real improvements to the lives of our people in Eastern Kentucky. My administration knows that health care is a basic human right, and it has never been more important than now, as we battle this global health pandemic," said Gov. Beshear, who has made improving Kentucky's health a central initiative of his administration.

- Kentucky has received the largest Appalachian Regional Commission investment in a single state in decades, totaling more than \$36.5 million. The funding supports 34 projects to improve economic diversification in Kentucky's 54 Appalachian counties. To read the full release, [click here](#).
- Gov. Beshear announced that the section of U.S. Highway 460 from the intersection with Kentucky Highway 80 at Beaver, near Elkhorn City, to the Virginia state line is set to officially open to traffic Nov. 16. To read the full release, [click here](#).
- Gov. Beshear [congratulated](#) Colby Hall, the new executive director of [Shaping Our Appalachian Region](#). Hall, a native of Somerset and a University of Kentucky graduate, will guide the agency, which is focused on moving the Appalachian region forward through entrepreneurship and innovation.

The Governor celebrated [Nova Steel's](#) \$70 million investment for a steel tube manufacturing facility expected to create 110 full-time jobs at the Kentucky Transpark in Bowling Green. The Governor reminded Kentuckians to follow the

Kentucky Department for Public Health's [guidance for a safe Halloween](#) and highlighted a few Kentuckians who are masking up and sharing their photos with the #MaskUpKY hashtag.

More Information

To view the full daily report, incidence rate map, testing locations, long term-care and other congregate facilities update, school reports, the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and other key guidance visit, kycovid19.ky.gov.

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and summaries of the Governor's news conferences at teamkentuckytranslations.com.

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