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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear Urges Vigilance as Kentucky Takes First Reopening Step

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

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 26, 2020) – On Sunday, Gov. Andy Beshear asked Kentuckians to remain vigilant in the fight against the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) as the state takes an initial step toward reopening certain health care operations Monday.

“Tomorrow is the first day since this virus hit that instead of adding restrictions, we are reopening some areas,” the Governor said. “We are starting with health care for some very simple reasons. First, people have not been able to go in to some types of visits and important appointments to keep themselves healthy. And people can grow unhealthy or have other issues that are unrelated to COVID-19.

“Second, we need to get our health care industry moving again because as we want to test more people we will need our health care industry to be operating at a greater level to make that happen. And third, in thinking about how to do this gradually in a way that protects people, in a way that we can always take a temperature as we move forward, health care is the place to start.”

Gov. Beshear says the phased reopening of health care services is the first step under the [Healthy at Work](#) initiative he introduced to help businesses restart operations safely when the time is right.

The initiative set out [public health benchmarks](#) for reopening Kentucky's economy. These benchmarks closely follow the [White House's Guidelines for Reopening America](#).

On April 27, health care practitioners can resume non-urgent/emergent health care services, diagnostic radiology and lab services in:

- Hospital outpatient settings;
- Health care clinics and medical offices;
- Physical therapy settings, chiropractic offices and optometrists;
- Dental offices (but with enhanced aerosol protections)

"From a public health standpoint, from a medical standpoint, we would probably prefer to wait even longer before lifting any restrictions," Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner for the Department for Public Health, said. "But we're trying to balance competing societal needs: people's need to get back to work, people's need to perform other important functions in society, people's need to pursue their lives, with the need to keep people safe."

This guidance does not apply to long-term care settings, prisons and other industries or other settings for which separate guidance has already or will be provided in the future. This guidance does not apply to elective surgeries or procedures, which will be addressed in a subsequent phase.

Dr. Stack emphasized that this is a [phased, gradual reopening of services](#) and that a COVID-19 surge may require adjustment.

For full guidance on criteria for reopening and new best practices, [click here](#).

Testing sites and eligibility

Gov. Beshear is urging Kentuckians to fill up all available testing slots at multiple sites throughout the commonwealth. Anyone can now sign up for the free COVID-19 testing. For more information on drive-through testing, visit kycovid19.ky.gov.

"This week we have more testing statewide than we have ever had before," the Governor said.

Update on voting in primary election

Gov. Beshear and Secretary of State Michael Adams have announced new voting guidelines for the June primary. [Click here](#) for more information.

Census update

Gov. Beshear reminds Kentuckians can fill out their Census at my2020census.gov or by phone at [844-330-2020](tel:844-330-2020) (English) or [844-468-2020](tel:844-468-2020) (Spanish).

Case information As of 5 p.m. April 26, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 4,074 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 202 of which were newly confirmed.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear also reported three new deaths Sunday, raising the state's toll to 208 deaths related to the virus.

The deaths include two women, both age 88, from Adair County and an 88-year-old woman from Jackson County.

"They are people that are truly missed by their friends and by their family," the Governor said. "Let's make sure we give them just as much effort tonight, lighting our homes up green and our places of business. Let's make sure that we ring bells tomorrow at 10 a.m. These are three Kentuckians we've lost, and we need to show that color of compassion."

At least 1,511 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](#).

More information Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at governor.ky.gov, kycovid19.ky.gov and the Governor's official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and daily summaries of the Governor's news conference at tinyurl.com/kygovspanol (Spanish) and tinyurl.com/kygovtranslations (more than 20 additional languages).

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