



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Crystal Staley

502-545-3714

Sebastian Kitchen

502-330-0799

502-564-2611

Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19

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

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 13, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Thursday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the commonwealth.

"Wearing a facial covering is absolutely critical to what we want to be able to do in the commonwealth moving forward," said Gov. Beshear. "Protect lives, protect people's health, protect the economy and ultimately get our kids back to in-person classes."

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Aug. 13, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 37,686 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 785 of which were newly reported Thursday. Twenty-five of the newly reported cases were from children ages 5 and younger.

"We know that we have a lot of work to do to create the type of safe environments that we need to," said Gov. Beshear. "Wearing a facial covering is working. Other steps are working. But we need you to stick with it. We cannot make decisions that are going to cause a significant spread."

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported six new deaths Thursday, raising the total to 796 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Thursday include a 56-year-old man from Carter County; an 80-year-old woman from Fayette County; two women, ages 82 and 89, and a 92-year-old man from Jefferson County; and a 74-year-old man from Taylor County.

“Let’s make sure we continue those green lights and ringing those bells,” said Gov. Beshear. “That’s for these families. Let’s honor those we’ve lost.”

As of Thursday, there have been at least 730,362 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 5.67%. At least 8,965 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus.

“We had more than 100,000 kids test positive nationwide just in the last couple weeks of July. We are seeing an explosion of positive tests among our young people,” said Gov. Beshear. “We cannot experiment with the health of our children.”

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](#).

Dr. Stack Update

Today, Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, demonstrated how the commonwealth’s recent actions against COVID-19, including the statewide face coverings mandate, have flattened our curve of cases in comparison with other Southern states, like Georgia.

“When some of these states barreled forward, in Kentucky, we had a very measured and phased approach,” said Dr. Stack. “I think what we see is that the mask mandate is what impacted and hopefully flattened our curve.”

Dr. Stack also discussed how starting the K-12 school year virtually will give districts more time to prepare for a safe reopening later in the fall, as public health officials continue to learn more about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in classrooms, cafeterias, school buses and other spaces.

“Some schools have had to quarantine many students within days of kicking off the school year. I very much support the decision that the Governor made. I respect it’s a very difficult decision, but our disease burden for COVID-19 is at its all-time high,” said Dr. Stack. “We need to get kids back to school but we need to get kids back to school safely.”

Finally, Dr. Stack reminded Kentuckians that while the world is still waiting for a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine, each of us can already protect ourselves, our families and our communities

from another illness by getting our annual flu vaccine. Dr. Stack has also previously urged parents to keep children on their regular schedule for all other required and recommended vaccines.

“Get your flu shot. We need everyone to do this. We have to keep influenza as suppressed as we possibly can,” said Dr. Stack. “In a bad year with influenza, our hospitals are strained just keeping up with flu patients.”

State Launches New Website to Support Nonprofit Organizations

Today, Gov. Beshear and Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Secretary Eric Friedlander announced many nonprofits now have free access to the state's new volunteer recruitment and management website, Volunteer Kentucky.

The new website, through Serve Kentucky, a CHFS agency, aims to provide efficient volunteer recruitment and management system, facilitating Kentuckians' search for, and response to service opportunities within their communities. The site will also help better track volunteerism in Kentucky.

“Kentuckians are generous people and are always stepping up to give back and help one another in a safe way during these unprecedented times,” Gov. Beshear said. “Through this new platform, more of our nonprofits have the ability to recruit new volunteers to help support many worthy causes.”

For more information, [read the full release](#).

Virtual Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Abandoned Mine Lands Pilot Projects

Gov. Beshear and Rep. Harold “Hal” Rogers (KY-05) hosted the first-ever virtual ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda Thursday to celebrate the completion of Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Pilot Program economic development and tourism-related projects in Perry, Floyd and Clay counties.

They also applauded the beginning of new construction at the EastPark Industrial Site spanning Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Greenup and Lawrence counties. The projects are a result of multiple investments, including more than \$14 million in Abandoned Mine Lands Pilot Program grants.

Gov. Beshear praised the projects as a positive step for the region, which has seen coal severance funds diminish.

“I am committed to bringing economic opportunity to all regions of Kentucky, to create good jobs and make life better for every Kentucky family,” Gov. Beshear said. “We’ve already made great strides in bringing greater investment to the region. In the coming months and years, more and more of these projects will continue, bringing jobs and economic diversity to Eastern Kentucky.”

To learn more, [read the full release](#).

Nearly \$4 Million Approved in CARES Act Reimbursements for Local Governments

In collaboration with the Department for Local Government (DLG), today, Gov. Beshear announced 15 Eastern Kentucky governments were approved for \$3,891,092 in reimbursements from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act for local governments with expenses related to COVID-19.

“Our local governments have been lifelines in our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why this funding is so important,” said Gov. Beshear. “We are grateful for their hard work and dedication to keeping Kentuckians safe.”

For more information, [read the full release](#).

School Opening Guidance

On Monday, Gov. Beshear, in consultation with Kentucky teachers and school administrators, announced new guidance asking schools to wait until Sept. 28 to begin in-person classes.

The Governor said the decision was driven by four factors: Kentucky’s cases being near a peak, an increase in infection rates among children across the U.S., the experience of school districts in other states and families continuing to travel to hotspots for vacations against the advice of health officials.

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 teamkentuckytranslations.com.

###