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Gov. Beshear: Communities Must Work Together to Stop Spread of COVID-19

Red zone recommendations will be successful if everyone does their part
FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 28, 2020) – On Wednesday, Gov. Andy Beshear said community leaders, schools, businesses and families [listed](#) in [red zone counties](#) each Thursday on [kycovid19.ky.gov]kycovid19.ky.gov should follow [new recommendations](#) the following Monday through Sunday to stop the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.

“It takes an entire community to protect the most vulnerable, to keep our schools open and to keep our economy running,” said Gov. Beshear. “What we need to see is that when a county hits red, everybody comes together in a coordinated effort.”

When a county gets out of the red zone, schools can reopen, businesses have more flexibility, nursing homes can accommodate visitors and Kentuckians are able to enjoy more activities with loved ones. Most important, fewer people get sick or die from COVID-19.

“This will not just protect nameless, faceless people somewhere in Kentucky. It will protect the people you see every day,” said Gov. Beshear.

“This is the worst our incidence rate map has ever looked and every indication would suggest that it’s going to get worse before it gets better,” said Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Department for Public Health. “This is a human problem. A global problem. Everyone wants it to be over. But if we get cavalier about it, it’s like being at a casino – the house always wins. The virus is the house. When everyone flaunts the guidelines, they don’t work.”

Case Information

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

1. New cases today: 1,864
2. New deaths today: 14
3. Positivity rate: 6.07%
4. Total deaths: 1,442
5. Currently hospitalized: 927
6. Currently in ICU: 235
7. Currently on ventilator: 110

The top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Hardin, Nelson, Pike, Kenton and Warren. A list of today’s 64 red counties can be found [here](#).

Those reported lost to the virus today include an 83-year-old man from Boyd County; an 80-year-old man from Breathitt County; a 61-year-old woman from Christian County; a 95-year-old woman from Fayette County; a 93-year-old woman and a 91-year-old man from Henderson County; an 87-year-old woman and three men, ages 70, 80 and 81 from Jefferson County; two women, ages 80 and 82, from Kenton County; a 64-year-old woman from Knox County; and an 85-year-old woman from Lee County.

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

The Governor said the White House recommends keeping mask mandates in place, ensuring physical distancing, avoiding public crowds and private gatherings and ensuring that retail establishments are complying with guidelines. The Oct. 25 White House COVID-19 report said “current transmissions are linked to home

gatherings” and that family members and friends may be asymptomatic but still contagious.

Surge Testing Begins

The Governor announced a new testing project today with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as the state sees record-high numbers of new COVID-19 cases. Up to 200 tests tomorrow and 300 tests each day after are available to Kentuckians at the Kentucky Exposition Center – Lot C in Louisville, from Oct. 29-31 and Nov. 2-6.

An additional testing location in Lexington will be announced soon and will open Nov. 16. Kentuckians can expect PCR test results within two or three days. Each patient receiving a test gets a pack of five cloth face coverings provided by HHS. Kentuckians can register for a test now [here](#).

“Go vote early and get your COVID-19 test all at the same time,” said Gov. Beshear.

Long-Term Care Facilities Update

Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Eric Friedlander updated Kentuckians on the state’s long-term care facilities. By the end of this week, approximately 330,000 Kentucky-sponsored surveillance COVID-19 tests will have been administered in long-term care facilities. Residents and staff in red counties are tested twice a week; those in orange counties are tested weekly.

“Thank you to long-term care staff members for your continued hard work and dedication,” said Secretary Friedlander. “Thanks to our residents, families, loved ones, providers, vendors and all who help support these very Kentuckians who hold such a special place among all of us.”

Secretary Friedlander said at Thomson-Hood Veterans Center in Wilmore, the largest facility operated by the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, 54 veterans are currently positive and tragically, 11 have been lost to COVID-19. Twenty-three staff are currently positive.

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is providing surveillance testing: Twice a week, PCR testing is being administered and on top of that, facilities are using Binex antigen testing for rapid results. Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs Strike Teams have been deployed, staffed by health professionals from

several states and representing the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

“We have to do our part. We have to wear our masks. We have to follow the guidelines. That’s the best way we can give back to our veterans and protect them,” said Secretary Friedlander.

Fast 4

Today, Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman celebrated 2,500 nominees for Kentucky Teacher of the Year Awards, including middle and high school teacher honorees, Christopher McCurry, from Lafayette High School (Fayette County) and Laura Peavley from Westport Middle School (Jefferson County), and 2020 Kentucky Teacher of the Year Donnie Piercey from Stonewall Elementary School (Fayette County).

Next, she announced that Kentuckians now have the ability to complete the GED program virtually through Kentucky Skills U at no cost.

“You will remember in January, we announced the Free GED Program. I am proud to announce 1,032 people successfully earned their GED during the first six months of 2020. That is 1,032 Kentuckians bravely taking control of their future by furthering their education,” said Lt. Gov. Coleman. “As a teacher, I cannot begin to tell you what a big deal this is. I know the difference a high school diploma or a GED can make in a person’s life and future.”

The Lieutenant Governor, a former civics teacher, reminded Kentuckians they have six more days to vote. Voters can visit govoteky.com to find the status of an absentee ballot, ballot drop box locations, local polling places, sample ballots and more. Finally, Lt. Gov. Coleman said wearing a mask is not only a way to prevent yourself from catching the virus, it’s a way to prevent others from catching the virus. It is a patriotic act and a tangible show of love for your neighbors.

Virginia Moore Update

In a [video update](#), American Sign Language interpreter Virginia Moore shared the wonderful news that she is now cancer-free. She reminded all Kentuckians to get regular cancer screenings.

“Team Kentucky’s kindness lifted me up and gave me the strength to go through this. It was overwhelming and just remarkable,” Moore said. “Let’s take that

kindness and support and give it to everyone out there who is battling the coronavirus.”

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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