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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gov. Beshear: Daily Case Total Falls by 1,000, State Surpasses 3 Million Tests

AMA files brief with U.S. Supreme Court backing Governor's COVID-19 restrictions

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 8, 2020) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear heralded some positive signs in Kentucky's fight against the coronavirus: Daily, week-over-week positive cases fell by 1,000 Tuesday and the commonwealth surpassed more than 3 million COVID-19 tests administered.

"We have built in the last nine months a system that provides over 350 testing locations, that has now done more than 3 million tests in a state that 4.4 million people," the Governor said.

Gov. Beshear also highlighted a new [amicus brief](#) filed with the U.S. Supreme Court by the American Medical Association and the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness.

The brief emphasizes that Gov. Beshear's recent orders had detailed scientific rationale:

“The public health order at issue in this case, which temporarily ordered the closure of all Kentucky schools from kindergarten through high school for in-person learning, was based on sound scientific considerations.

“The Declaration of Dr. Steven J. Stack, M.D., Commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, gives a detailed scientific explanation for the temporary in-person closure of Kentucky schools, grades K-12. It also explains why other Kentucky institutions may face fewer restrictions. Dr. Stack’s declaration is based on solid medical reasoning, which is largely apparent from the declaration itself. The district court, however, asserted that Dr. Stack and the Governor had inadequately explained why K-12 schools should close, while other institutions can remain open.”

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 8, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 3,114
- New deaths today: 20
- Positivity rate: 9.56%
- Total deaths: 2,102
- Currently hospitalized: 1,760
- Currently in ICU: 416
- Currently on ventilator: 207

The Governor noted that different Kentucky regions have between 54% and 87% of hospital beds already in use; in addition, Kentucky regions have between 61% and 96% of ICU beds already filled.

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Warren, Kenton and Boone.

The red zone counties for this week can be found [here](#). Community leaders, businesses, schools and families in these counties should all follow [red zone reduction recommendations](#), as well as other orders and guidance.

Those reported lost to the virus today include a 92-year-old woman and a 92-year-old man from Bullitt County; two men, ages 52 and 72, from Boyd County; a 74-year-old woman from Fayette County; a 58-year-old man and a 74-year-old

woman from Hopkins County; a 35-year-old woman and a 90-year-old man from Jefferson County; two men, ages 56 and 71, from Johnson County; two men, ages 37 and 83, from Lee County; a 78-year-old man from Marshall County; a 62-year-old man from Nelson County; an 87-year-old woman from Owsley County; two women, ages 78 and 90, and a 79-year-old man from Pike County; and a 66-year-old man from Scott County.

Get Covered 2021

Today, Gov. Beshear proclaimed Dec. 10, 2020 as “Get Covered Day” and joined a broad coalition of other states, health care groups and health care providers in launching Get Covered 2021.

“Get Covered 2021 is a national effort to encourage mask-wearing and to substantially increase the number of people with health coverage,” the Governor said.

Get Covered 2021 emphasizes:

- Practicing the three Ws to reduce risk of COVID-19: Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Watch your distance. Together, these can help keep you and your community healthy and safe;
- Cover Yourself and Your Family. Renew your health coverage. If you haven’t already, visit kynect.ky.gov. It will point you to health care options and financial resources to help you get covered; and
- Cover Everyone. Support efforts to increase access to affordable, meaningful health coverage for all Kentuckians.

In Kentucky, 239,000 residents are currently uninsured. More than half – 175,000 – qualify for financial help to pay for health coverage or coverage through Medicaid.

“Health care is a basic human right,” Gov. Beshear said, “and we are committed to working quickly and diligently to getting health coverage for as many Kentuckians as possible.”

Gov. Beshear also recognized CHFS Deputy Secretary Carrie Banahan for her role as national co-leader of the Get Covered Day initiative.

“Carrie was instrumental in the implementation of the state health benefit exchange in 2014 and helped with the relaunch of the new kynect.ky.gov health coverage, benefits and community resources portal,” the Governor said. “She is also leading the relaunch of our state-based exchange, which will be in place for 2022 benefits enrollment.”

Memorial

Today, Gov. Beshear spoke about the life of Henderson resident Louise Connell, who died at 93 on Thanksgiving Day just 10 days after testing positive for COVID-19.

“The heartbreaking fact about this memorial is Louise was living in a long-term care facility and likely would have been one of the first to receive one of the life-saving vaccines this month,” the Governor said.

Louise was a mother of three, a grandmother to four and a great-grandmother to nine children. She was married for 70 years to her childhood sweetheart, Oliver, who passed away in 2016. She is remembered as a loving, good person who always took care of others. She worked for years as a nursing assistant at Methodist Hospital, and was a member of Audubon Baptist Church.

Louise loved Christmas. It was her favorite holiday because she loved that her little house on Pope Street was always full of people and full of love.

“Today we lift her family and loved ones in prayer as they continue to mourn this loss,” Gov. Beshear said. “And we recognize these are people being taken from us, not just numbers, who might still be here today if we all decided to do the right thing – especially now that we see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

More Information

To view the [full daily report](#), [incidence rate map](#), [new statewide requirements](#), testing locations, long-term care and other congregate facilities update, school reports and [guidance](#), [red zone counties](#), [red zone recommendations](#), the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and other key guidance visit, kycovid19.ky.gov.

New [requirements](#) impact restaurants, bars, social gatherings, indoor fitness and recreation centers, venues and theaters, professional services and schools. See the full executive orders [here](#) and [here](#).

Audio public service announcements about the new requirements (created in partnership with RadioLex) are published here

in: [Bosnian](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Japanese](#), [Korean](#), [Spanish](#) and [Russian](#).

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