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Gov. Beshear Provides Update on Vaccines, Contact Tracing

Nearly 54,000 more vaccine doses expected the week of Jan. 11

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 5, 2020) – On Tuesday, Gov. Andy Beshear updated Kentuckians on vaccination and contact tracing progress in the commonwealth.

“2021 is going to be the year that we defeat the coronavirus. It’s going to take months. We are still going to sustain heartbreaking losses along the way. But vaccines are here. The first two that received emergency approval are highly effective. And I’m working day in and day out, along with the Department for Public Health and many others in state government, to get them out even faster,” said Gov. Beshear. “That is my primary mission right now.”

The Governor announced the state is expected to receive an additional 53,800 initial vaccine doses the week of Jan. 11: 27,300 from Pfizer and 26,500 from Moderna. Kentucky is also expected to receive 57,000 initial doses this week. These numbers do not include booster doses sent to Kentucky for people who have already received an initial dose.

At least 66,582 initial vaccine doses have already been administered in Kentucky.

Mark Carter, Cabinet for Health and Family Services executive policy advisor, updated Kentuckians on the state's contact tracing program.

Sixty out of 61 local health departments use the state's contact tracing system. Since mid-May, the state has hired 1,200 more contact tracing staff members, raising the total number of staffers to more than 1,600.

The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act designated \$78 million for the statewide contact tracing system, of which \$47.7 million, or 61% has already been spent. The rest of the funding will be spent before Dec. 31, 2021.

Contact tracers successfully contacted 94,000 Kentuckians identified as having been exposed to the virus, helping prevent further spread of the virus, avoiding hospitalizations and saving lives.

Carter estimated that, at minimum, contact tracing efforts have prevented more than 2,000 hospitalizations and 400 deaths.

In addition, Carter estimated that prevented hospitalizations saved more than \$31 million in health care costs, on top of saving families from the physical, mental and emotional toll of a hospitalization.

Carter also said that contact tracing staff had conducted 258,000 daily check-ins with Kentuckians infected or exposed to COVID-19.

Finally, Carter spoke about some of the challenges that have prevented contact tracers from reaching even more exposed Kentuckians, including delayed adoption of the statewide system and a dramatic increase in cases which overwhelmed local health departments and slowed the time between exposure and being called by a contact tracer.

"While we all are anxious to be vaccinated, until we can be, we have to do the things we always harp on: wearing a mask, social distancing, getting tested if you feel sick, washing your hands and participating in contact tracing," said Carter. "If we can do that, we'll get to the vaccine and we'll get through this pandemic together."

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 5, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

New cases today: 1,781

New deaths today: 23

Positivity rate: 11.4%

Total deaths: 2,772

Currently hospitalized: 1,760

Currently in ICU: 430

Currently on ventilator: 215

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Warren and Kenton. Each of these counties reported 60 or more new cases; Jefferson County alone reported 314.

To see a list of those reported lost to the virus today, [click here](#).

More Information

To view the [full daily report](#), [incidence rate map](#), 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.

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