



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### World AIDS Day is Dec. 1

*This year's theme - Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 30, 2020) – Dec. 1 is World AIDS Day – an opportunity to remind us that AIDS remains one of the most devastating worldwide epidemics. This year's theme is designated as ***Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility***.

Designated on Dec. 1 every year since 1988, World AIDS Day is an international day dedicated to raising awareness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, supporting those living with the disease, educating those trying to prevent transmission of the disease and remembering those who lost the battle to HIV disease.

“World AIDS Day serves as a reminder that HIV has not gone away and that there is a still vital need to increase awareness, fight prejudice and discrimination and improve education among Kentuckians, said Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH). “It is an opportunity for both public and private partners to come together to spread updated information about the status of the current COVID-19 pandemic and encourage progress in HIV prevention, treatment and care.”

Approximately 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV today. About 14 percent of them (one in seven) do not know it and need testing. In 2018 there were 36,400 new infections in the U.S. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates 33 million people worldwide have died of AIDS since the start of

the epidemic and in 2019, 690,000 had died of HIV-related illnesses worldwide and 38 million were living with HIV. With improved treatments, death rates have significantly declined and many persons living with HIV are living near normal lifespans.

As of Dec. 31, 2019, a total of 11,081 cumulative HIV infections among Kentuckians had been reported to the DPH's HIV/AIDS Surveillance Program. Currently, Kentucky averages approximately 350 new HIV infections a year.

The Kentucky HIV Hotline (844-294-2448) is available 24/7, providing free and confidential help staffed by health care professionals.

For more information on HIV  
visit <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dehp/hab/Pages/default.aspx>.

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*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and health care programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*