Kentucky Department for Public Health Issues Advisory for Recent Travelers to States, One U.S. Territory Reporting High Rates of COVID-19

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 20, 2020) – The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) today issued an advisory for Kentuckians who have traveled to states reporting high numbers of COVID-19. The advisory recommends a 14-day self-quarantine for travelers who went to any of eight states reporting positive testing rate equal to or greater than 15% for COVID-19 testing. The advisory also includes one state quickly approaching a positive testing rate of 15% and one U.S. Territory.

States were identified from data reported to Johns Hopkins University of Medicine Coronavirus Resource Center. (https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/testing-positivity) They include Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Nevada, South Carolina and Texas. The rate of positive patient tests in Mississippi is nearing 15%, so travelers to Mississippi are also asked to voluntarily self-isolate for 14 days. Puerto Rico is the U.S. Territory that has been added.

Dr. Steven Stack, Kentucky's Public Health Commissioner, stressed that this is a recommendation and not a mandate. "I am appealing to Kentuckians who have traveled to these states or to Puerto Rico to consider the interest of your health and the health of others. Please, if you have been to any of these places, stay home for 14 days, starting from the date you left that location."

He added that people planning to visit these destinations in the near future would be wise to reconsider their travel plans.

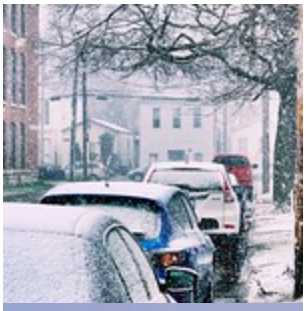
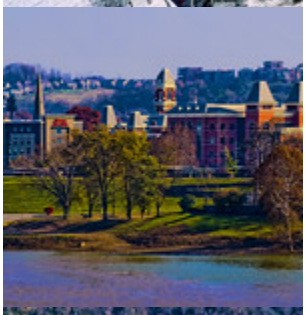
"Avoid going to these areas, if you are able," Dr. Stack said. "If plans can't be changed, self-quarantine after getting back to Kentucky."

He cautioned that this list could change, and he asks the public to remain aware.

Briefly, home quarantine includes these steps:

- Remain at home and avoid all in-person activities. This includes work, grocery stores and pharmacies, public events and public places.
- Do not have visitors in your home.
- If you live in a home with other people, stay in a separate room. If this is not possible, wear a face mask when you are in the same room and stay at least six feet away from others.
- Wash your hands and use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often. Do not share personal items such as dishes, cups, forks, spoons and towels.
- Do not leave home except to seek medical care. If you need to see a provider for reasons other than a medical emergency, please call in advance and discuss the care you need.
- In the event of a medical emergency, call 9-1-1. Indicate that you are in home quarantine for novel coronavirus exposure. Keep a face mask on until you are asked by a health care provider to remove it.
- Do not use public transportation or ride-share services.
- Check yourself for fever twice a day and record it in a log or piece of paper.
- Contact your local health department for additional help, including arranging for food and other essential deliveries if you are in need.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include a fever of greater than 100.4 degrees; respiratory symptoms, such as shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, and loss of smell or taste. If any of these symptoms are present, the person experiencing them should get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible. A list of testing sites is posted on the kycovid19.ky.gov (https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19) site.

-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/7372926@N06/47218320672/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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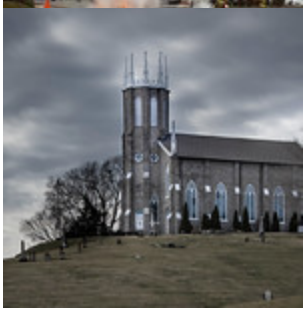
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)

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