Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 7, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Wednesday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

"We cannot allow inconvenience to be a reason to take our eye off the ball and what we need to do for COVID. Doing the right thing is oftentimes hard," the Governor said. "We cannot go back to normal, not in the midst of this pandemic. We will get there, but we have to stay strong."

'The Fast 4 at 4'

First Lady Britainy Beshear on Wednesday highlighted a variety of issues of importance to Kentuckians and the commonwealth.

1. **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**
   Today, First Lady Beshear highlighted Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is recognized nationally in October.

   "Breast cancer is one of the leading health crises for women in the United States, and unfortunately too many of us know someone who has been impacted by this disease," the First Lady said. "One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime, and the American Cancer Society estimates that 3,800 Kentucky women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2020."

   First Lady Beshear noted that early detection greatly reduces the risk of death and stressed the importance of mammograms for women ages 40 and older.

   "Providers are encouraging patients to continue their routine screening schedules even during the current pandemic," she said. "Get in touch with your provider to discuss a plan to stay current on your screenings while also taking precaution against the coronavirus."

   The First Lady said uninsured or underinsured women can receive a mammogram screening through the Kentucky Women's Cancer Screening Program by calling 844-249-0708 or visiting the program's webpage (https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dwh/Pages/cancerscreening.aspx).

   For additional support and resources, you can contact the Kentucky Cancer Program at 877-326-1134

or by visiting KYCancerProgram.org (https://www.kycancerprogram.org/portal).

2. **Coverings for Kids**
   Back in August, First Lady Beshear and Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman launched Coverings for Kids, an initiative to collect and distribute masks for students as they return to in-person instruction.

   “Since that day, I have been so proud to see people all across the commonwealth step up in response to our call-to-action,” the First Lady said. “I haven’t been surprised though, because that’s what we do on Team Kentucky. We look out for one another, and support each other when we are in need.”

   She noted that face coverings remain the best line of defense against COVID-19 that everyone can take. The Coverings for Kids initiative is providing this crucial tool to families in need and an extra pool of resources for teachers and schools.

   “I want to extend a huge thank you to everyone that has made mask donations to their school districts,” First Lady Beshear said. “Thanks to your generosity, over 40,000 masks have been donated to Kentucky school districts.”

   With most of Kentucky schools returning to some form of in-person instruction by the end of this month, Coverings for Kids is making one last push before closing out the program Oct. 30.

   For information on how to make and donate masks to the program, click here (https://governor.ky.gov/coveringsforkids).

3. **Vote!**
   The First Lady urged Kentuckians to make a plan to vote, either by mail, in person for early voting or in person on Nov. 3 for the General Election.

   “Andy and I chose to vote absentee this year, and while we didn’t all get to go to the polls together, we still made a commitment to making our voices heard in this election,” she said. “I returned my ballot at a drop box, and Andy returned his through the mail. Both ways were easy and safe.”

   Registered voters have until Friday to request an absentee ballot. After that, in-person early voting begins Oct. 13. More information is available on the state’s online Voter Information Portal (https://vrsws.sos.ky.gov/ovrweb/govoteky).

   In addition, more than 190,000 Kentuckians have had their voting rights restored because of the executive order Gov. Beshear signed days after taking office. These Kentuckians, convicted of non-violent and non-sexual felonies, who have repaid their debts to society through completed sentences, can participate fully in our democracy. Visit CivilRightsRestoration.ky.gov (http://CivilRightsRestoration.Ky.Gov) to check your eligibility.

4. **Mask Up Kentucky!**
   In addition to the Coverings for Kids program, the First Lady continued to stress the importance of everyone wearing face coverings, noting that Gov. Beshear on Tuesday announced he again has renewed the state’s executive order (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20201006_Executive-Order_2020-856_Reneweal_Face-Coverings.pdf) requiring facial coverings for another 30 days.

   “Right now, as we continue to see high case numbers, it is so important to practice kindness to others and to set a good example by wearing your mask when you are out in public,” First Lady Beshear said.

   She encouraged Kentuckians to spread the word on social media using #MaskUpKY and #MaskUpKentucky hashtags. Kentuckians who use the hashtags receive a #TeamKY mask if their post is featured as part of the Governor’s daily 4 p.m. news conference.

Case Information

Editor’s note: Due to an upload of a significant backlog of case data from Lexington-Fayette County, the majority of today’s cases are from weeks past. The actual number of new cases today without the backlog is 926.

As of 4 p.m. Oct. 6, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 76,587 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 2,398 of which were newly reported Wednesday. Three hundred and fifty-eight of the newly reported cases were from children ages 18 and younger, of which 38 were children ages 5 and under.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported five new deaths Wednesday, raising the total to 1,218 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Wednesday include a 68-year-old man from Fayette County; an 80-year-old woman from Greenup County; a 65-year-old man from Harlan County; a 79-year-old man from Henderson County; and a 75-year-old woman from Whitley County.

“Sadly, today we have lost five additional Kentuckians, and we expect the next several weeks that these numbers will go up as the number of cases go up,” the Governor said. “Each one is an important individual whose family loves and misses them.”

As of Wednesday, there have been at least 1,568,542 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was 4.21%, and at least 12,800 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus. Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, said the additional uploaded case data from Lexington-Fayette County did not affect today’s positivity rate.

For additional information, including up-to-date lists of positive cases and deaths, as well as breakdowns of coronavirus infections by county, race and ethnicity, click here (https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/COVID19DailyReport.pdf). To see all recent daily reports, click here (https://chfs.ky.gov/Pages/cvdaily.aspx).

Information about COVID-19 and schools is also being made available. To view the reports, click here for K-12 (https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/K-12cv19report.pdf) and here for colleges and universities (https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/CollegeandUniversitycv19.pdf).

Dr. Stack Update

Dr. Stack offered more detailed information Wednesday on the state of the commonwealth’s fight against the coronavirus. He also provided insight into the reporting of cases in Fayette County.

Dr. Stack said the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department, with assistance from the Kentucky Department for Public Health, has developed a way to enter more than 1,900 of Lexington’s COVID-19 cases into a state system. This will allow the state’s reported COVID-19 case numbers for Lexington to more closely align with Lexington’s cumulative case count.

“We are appreciative of the community’s understanding as we moved through this delay,” Dr. Stack said. “As previously stated, the delay only existed with data entry; there were no delays in contacting positive cases and close contacts in Lexington.”

Child Care

Eric Friedlander, secretary of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, spoke Wednesday about Kentucky’s efforts to shore up child care practitioners and facilities as they deal with the restrictions necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic.

“It’s been a difficult year for child care,” he acknowledged. “The coronavirus closed all licensed, certified and registered facilities and impacted children, families and employees of these facilities as well as the owners of these businesses.”

Earlier this year, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) was paid through enrollment. Programs that had to close due to COVID-19 were able to receive subsidy funds to support their program for staff salaries or fixed expenses.

With funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Division of Child Care, a function of the Department for Community Based Services, offered every licensed, certified and registered child care program in the state a sustainment stipend of $225 per child based on the program's total capacity, which is determined by the Division of Regulated Child Care.

"We're happy to report that CHFS will make a one-time grant to licensed day cares and certified homes in the amount of $130 per child," Secretary Friedlander announced.

The funding will help pay employee wages; facility mortgage or rent payments; facility utility payments; facility insurance payments; the child care program's obligated portion of employee benefit insurance; and food, personal protective equipment and cleaning materials.

Memorial

As he has since the beginning for the COVID-19 crisis in the commonwealth, Gov. Beshear continues to put a spotlight on the Kentuckians who we've lost.

Today he spoke about Michael Reynolds, a 58-year-old from Louisville who died Oct. 6 after battling the coronavirus.

"His niece, Ms. Fisher, shared that Michael could always be found spending time with his family and friends, listening to music, watching sports and shopping," the Governor relayed. "She bragged, 'He had the biggest and best wardrobe anyone has ever seen.' He was known for his sense of style and for always talking about his children, grandkids, fiancé and friends. He loved them all so much."

Ms. Fisher asked that we share the story of her uncle to stress the seriousness of COVID-19.

More Information

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at governor.ky.gov (https://governor.ky.gov/news), kycovid19.ky.gov (https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19) and the Governor's official social media accounts Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/GovAndyBeshear/), Twitter (https://twitter.com/GovAndyBeshear) and YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/c/GovAndyBeshear).

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and summaries of the Governor's news conferences at teamkentuckytranslations.com (file://govfs03/press/Press%20Releases/teamkentuckytranslations.com).

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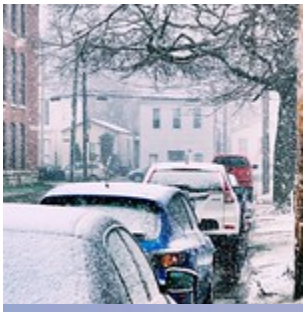
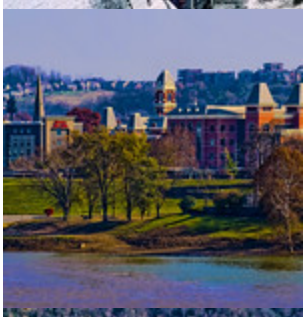
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/7372926@N06/47218320672/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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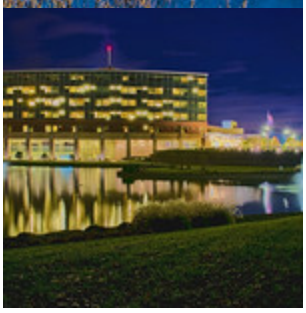
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/32275086277/in/pool-773339@N20)

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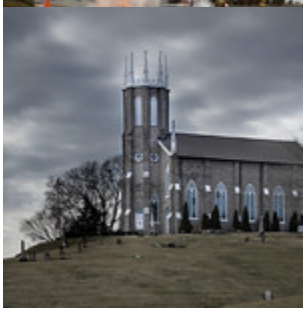
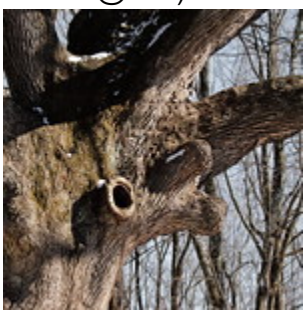
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/mcconnell_springs_photo_journal/46864760851/in/pool-773339@N20)
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