COVID-19 Alert - For the latest information on the novel coronavirus in Kentucky, please visit kycovid19.ky.gov (https://kycovid19.ky.gov)

Gov. Beshear Provides Kentuckians COVID-19 Vaccine Update

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Vaccines reached long-term care facilities today; new vaccine dashboard unveiled for Kentuckians

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 21, 2020) – On Monday, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that during the day, several long-term care facilities in the commonwealth began administering the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

“Again, our goal is to get everyone in long-term care facilities vaccinated by March 1,” said Gov. Beshear. “If we do that, we cut off 66% of the deaths that we have been experiencing. We also reduce hospitalizations and we free up more health care capacity. That means patients who do come in to the hospital get more attention and access and we improve their health outcomes.”

For more information, read the full release. (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=526) Kentuckians can also view images of the first long-term care residents (https://governor.ky.gov/imagelinks/LTCF_Vaccinations.zip) in Kentucky who were able to receive the vaccine.

The Governor highlighted a *Washington Post* report (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/12/19/death-every-30-seconds/) that, currently, an American dies from COVID-19 every 33 seconds. The report emphasized the virus’ severity across the United States, but recognized Kentucky’s unique success in one aspect of the fight against it: Kentucky is the only state in the nation where fewer intensive care unit beds are in use today than were in use three months ago.

The Governor was joined virtually by Dr. Ashley Montgomery-Yates, Interim Chief Medical Officer for Inpatient Services at UK HealthCare. Dr. Montgomery-Yates is also a physician in the COVID unit and the director of the ICU recovery clinic where she works directly with COVID-19 patients at the University of Kentucky Hospital.

“This pandemic has affected all of our lives in a myriad of different ways,” said Dr. Montgomery-Yates. “But I’m excited that one of the positive things that has come out of this global crisis is that the scientific community has come together to roll out in a record amount of time – in a way that has been safe and effective – a new and novel vaccine that is going to change the way we see, develop and distribute vaccinations forever.

“I know that there have been some fears about the vaccine, but from the medical community, we see this as an incredibly safe and an incredibly well thought out vaccine. I had a little arm soreness after the COVID-19 vaccine, but honestly, the flu shot caused more soreness for me. We’ve now vaccinated about 2,000 people here at UK. I feel very confident in the safety.

“The workers on the COVID unit are exhausted. This has been a war. But as news of the vaccine has come, there’s a renewed energy, there’s a renewed sense of hope that this is going to end.”

Dr. Montgomery-Yates also talked about how she approaches conversations about the vaccine with her children.

“Both my children would say they don’t particularly enjoy shots and needles, but they feel privileged to live in a place where they are offered that opportunity to get vaccines like this one. They understand that just like going to the doctor for other things, vaccines help keep them healthy. It’s the same reason that we don’t eat 15 bowls of ice cream for dinner,” said Dr. Montgomery-Yates. “I’ve told them, ‘it’s not horrible, it’s very quick, and it will save your life, the life of your grandmother, your aunt, your classmates – it’s not just about us.’”

Today, Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, introduced a new vaccine dashboard on kycovid19.ky.gov (kycovid19.ky.gov) where Kentuckians can learn more about the vaccine, its planned distribution stages and progress of its rollout across the state. Eighty hospitals in Kentucky will receive the Moderna vaccine this week.

“This will show the total number of doses that have been shipped to the state; it will show the total number of Kentuckians who have been vaccinated; and it will show the total number of doses remaining to be deployed,” said Dr. Stack. “These numbers do not include the numbers that go to the long-term care facility immunization, at least not currently. Those get assigned over to CVS and Walgreens and show up in a different tracking methodology.”

Finally, the Governor commented on the new COVID-19 relief bill the federal government is expected to pass tonight. State governments are expected to receive financial assistance for vaccines, contact tracing, testing, schools, transportation, rental assistance, nutrition and child care.

“This bill also includes another round of the paycheck protection program for small businesses. I will say, I don’t think it’s going to be enough for small businesses. I’m certainly looking at additional relief that we can provide here in Kentucky,” said Gov. Beshear. “There also appears to be an extension of unemployment benefits for those who are about to fall off.”

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 21, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 1,988
- New deaths today: 15
- Positivity rate: 8.64%
- Total deaths: 2,412
- Currently hospitalized: 1,580
- Currently in ICU: 411

- Currently on ventilator: 231

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Kenton and Boone. Each of these counties reported 80 or more new cases; Jefferson County alone reported 376.

Those reported lost to the virus today include an 87-year-old man from Bullitt County; a 75-year-old woman and a 74-year-old man from Caldwell County; a 72-year-old woman from Clark County; a 68-year-old man from Fayette County; an 83-year-old woman from Hopkins County; an 82-year-old woman from Jefferson County; a 61-year-old woman from Johnson County; two women, ages 76 and 92, from Livingston County; an 88-year-old woman from Muhlenberg County; a 92-year-old woman from Ohio County; an 87-year-old woman and an 88-year-old man from Owsley County; and a 61-year-old woman from Webster County.

Memorial

Today, the Governor announced that Kentucky lost another front-line hero to COVID-19. On Nov. 10, Bloomfield City Police Chief Scott Dennis was taken to Flaget Memorial Hospital in Bardstown. Only nine days later he was put on a ventilator.

“He wanted everyone to know he was going to ‘fight this virus’ – which he did, with the bravery he displayed throughout his life and career,” said Gov. Beshear. “Unfortunately, after his courageous battle with the virus, Chief Dennis passed away on Dec. 4 due to complications from COVID-19.

“Chief Dennis was a hero. Throughout his life he put himself on the line to protect the people of Kentucky and their families. For the past eight years he served the city of Bloomfield, and was named Chief of Police in 2016.

“‘What makes a loyal friend? Just ask those fortunate enough to be friends with Scott,’ his family said. He was many things, but most of all he was a good man. Chief Dennis leaves behind his wife of 22 years, Mary Ann Dennis, his daughter Brystal and two sons, West and Colt. His family shared it was a blessing to have had such an incredible husband, father, friend and colleague. He will leave behind a legacy that will be remembered, and truly missed, by all those who loved him.”

More Information

To view the full daily report (https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/COVID19DailyReport.pdf), incidence rate map (https://chfs.ky.gov/Pages/cv19maps.aspx), testing locations, long-term care and other congregate facilities update, school reports and guidance (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20201214_COVID-19-Mode-of-Instruction-Metrics-for-K-12-Education.pdf), red zone counties (https://chfs.ky.gov/Pages/cv19maps.aspx), red zone recommendations (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/Red-Zone-Reduction-Recommendations.pdf), the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and other key guidance visit, kycovid19.ky.gov (https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19).

See all of the Kentucky Department for Public Health’s winter holiday guidance here: English full guidance (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/2020_Guidance-for-Holiday-Celebrations_KDPH.pdf), one-pager (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/2020_Guidance-for-Celebrating-Winter-Holidays_KDPH.pdf) and single slide (https://governor.ky.gov/ImageLinks/2020-Winter-Holiday-Guidance.png) and Spanish full guidance (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/2020_Guidance-for-Holiday-Celebrations_KDPH_es.pdf), one-pager (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/2020_Guidance-for-Celebrating-Winter-Holidays_KDPH_es.pdf) and single slide (https://governor.ky.gov/imagelinks/2020-Winter-Holiday-Guidance_es.png).

Kentuckians can also listen to recorded PSAs about the holiday guidance (created in partnership with RadioLex (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/radiolex.us)) here: Bosnian (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/bosnian-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020), Chinese (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/chinese-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020), English (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/english-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020), French (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/french-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020), Japanese (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/japanese-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020), Korean (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/korean-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020), Persian (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/persian-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020) and Spanish (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/spanish-gov-beshear-covid-19-update-dec-17-2020).

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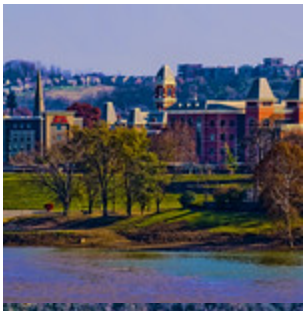
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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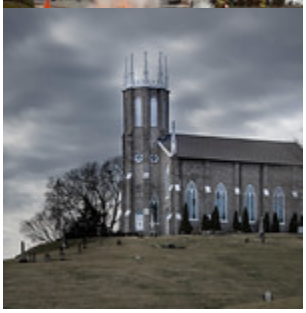
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)
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