Gov. Beshear Takes Additional Steps to Protect, Assist Kentuckians during COVID-19

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Governor asks superintendents to keep schools closed through at least April 20, delays tax filing deadline to July 15
Visit the Governor's Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/GovAndyBeshear/videos/644691246364408/) *page to watch today's news conference*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 20, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear announced more actions on Friday to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and assist Kentuckians trying to manage difficulties because of the virus. Gov. Beshear requested school superintendents keep schools closed for in-person classes until at least April 20 and delayed the state's income tax filing deadline until July 15.

"We are being called to change our lives – to change our lives to protect those around us. And it's something that's going on all around the world. This is our test as a generation," said Gov. Beshear. "This is our time to show that we put our neighbors and our country ahead of just a bottom line. That we don't look to be the exception; we look to be the volunteer. We look to be the person that will step up and do what it takes."

Gov. Beshear also thanked businesses, including bourbon distillers, for assisting with the response to COVID-19.

Gov. Beshear urged Kentuckians to be cautious of rumors and to depend on proven and good sources of news, including governor.ky.gov (https://governor.ky.gov), 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).

The Governor asked people to follow orders not to gather in public and to follow social distancing by staying at least six feet apart from others.

"At this point in Kentucky, there is no place we should have crowds," he said.

Case information
As of 5 p.m. March 20, the state's COVID-19 patient information includes 63 who have tested positive. Click here (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/COVID19_Case-Information.pdf) for the list with details. Additional cases and demographics of other cases mentioned were not known by 5 p.m. ET Friday, so not all cases are listed.

New actions

Schools
Gov. Beshear, who hosted a conference call Friday afternoon with school superintendents to answer their questions, requested they cease in-person classes until at least April 20, which is an additional two weeks from his original request. All 172 districts have stopped in-person classes to stop the spread of the virus.

Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Assistance
The SBA and Gov. Andy Beshear have worked to qualify the entire state for SBA disaster certification. With that certification now in place (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200320_SBA_Notice-of-Declaration.pdf), small businesses, for-profit contractors and private non-profits anywhere in Kentucky that have been harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic are eligible to apply for low-interest SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans.

Businesses should also work with their banks, credit unions and other lenders. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has encouraged financial institutions to assist and work with customers in a "prudent manner," especially borrowers and customers from the most affected industries.

SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans applications can be completed and filed online at www.sba.gov/disaster (http://www.sba.gov/disaster). The SBA is also mobilizing call centers to assist in the loan-application process. Call 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339) or e-mail disastercustomerservice@sba.gov (mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). To view a copy of the SBA fact sheet, click here (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200320_SBA_EIDL-Fact-Sheet.pdf).

Unemployment insurance
Gov. Beshear asked those who have started their unemployment insurance applications this week to finish them by tomorrow, Saturday, March 21, at 11:59 p.m. to ensure their data is saved for the week. Otherwise, the application process will have to be redone.

The unemployment rate in the state for the last week is more than 30 times what it was last year at this time, which was about 2,000 per-week.

Extended tax filing deadline
Gov. Beshear mirrored a move by the federal government by delaying the tax filing deadline by three months from April 15 to July 15.

Hand sanitizer
Gov. Beshear thanked Kentucky's bourbon distillers, who are working with the state to produce and distribute hand sanitizer.

"They are doing their part to try to increase the supply that is out there and we thank them for it," the Governor said.

Respirators donated
Gov. Beshear reached out to businesses to help meet the state's need for industrial grade respirators as the state tries to move to mobile testing. The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce put out a call to businesses and many responded.

Toyota provided 1,827 N95 masks while Gray Construction and AE Electrical Solutions delivered 50 and 40 masks, respectively.

"The more we have the more that we can do and the more we have the more we'll be able to get to large scale testing," Gov. Beshear said in thanking businesses for their role in helping the state to respond.

Yesterday, Gov. Beshear thanked plumbers and pipefitters for donating respirators.

Yesterday's actions

On Thursday, Gov. Beshear:

- Reinforced the ban on public gatherings (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200319_Order_Mass-Gatherings.pdf), including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities.
- Said that restaurants that have an active liquor license, that are also doing food delivery or carry out, may also deliver sealed alcoholic beverages, in their original containers to customers. This change allows the state to give restaurants a much-needed boost to help their bottom lines. To read a copy of the order, click here (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200319_Order_Permitting-Carryout-and-Drive-Thru-Sales.pdf).
- Issued interim guidance for establishing partnerships between approved health care facilities and limited-duration child care programs to support child care for employees of health care entities, first responders (Law Enforcement, EMS, Fire Departments), corrections officers and Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) workers. The guidance is online at chfs.ky.gov (https://chfs.ky.gov/Pages/cvres.aspx).

Other actions by Gov. Beshear

Gov. Beshear has continued to take decisive action since the first case was confirmed in Kentucky. To read the full list of actions Gov. Beshear has taken to protect Kentuckians and limit the spread of the coronavirus, visit governor.ky.gov/covid19 (https://governor.ky.gov/covid19).

More information

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourages people to follow these steps to prevent illness (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fprevention-treatment.html). Kentuckians who want advice can call the state hotline at 1.800.722.5725 or call their local health care provider. To read Gov. Beshear's news releases and watch other news regarding COVID-19 visit governor.ky.gov (https://governor.ky.gov/news). To listen to questions from Kentuckians and media and answers from Gov. Beshear watch his news conferences online on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/GovAndyBeshear/) and YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChRbM-FLeKV4tKUwlMf6XNg).

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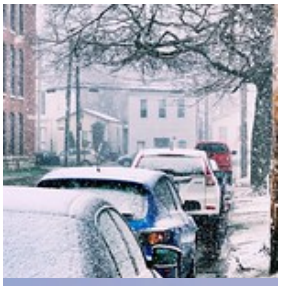
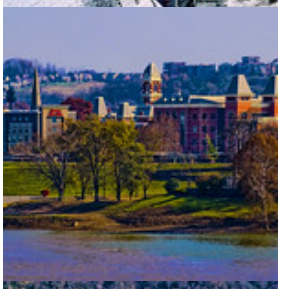
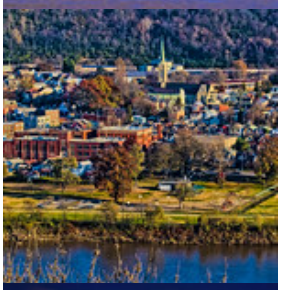
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/7372926@N06/47218320672/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184413071/in/pool-773339@N20)
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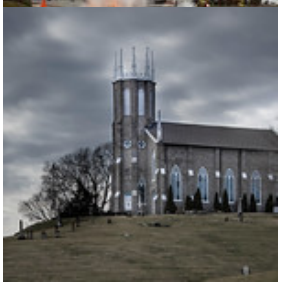
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)

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