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Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 6, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Tuesday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

"This story of Team Kentucky, of fighting this international pandemic and thus far doing better than most, has come down to all of us sacrificing and all of us stepping up when we need it the most," the Governor said.

'The Fast 4 at 4'

Gov. Beshear on Tuesday highlighted a variety of issues of importance to Kentuckians and the commonwealth.

1. **Manufacturing Month**
   Today, Gov. Beshear issued a proclamation recognizing October as Manufacturing Month in Kentucky.

   "While it's one thing to issue this proclamation, it's another to truly recognize how profound an impact manufacturing has on Kentucky's economy, its communities and its families," the Governor said. "Manufacturers in Kentucky employ about 260,000 people, full-time."

   He noted that Kentucky's manufacturing base far outstrips the national average, with 13% of the commonwealth's workforce employed in manufacturing versus 8.5% nationally. Kentucky is home to approximately 4,500 manufacturing facilities, from Fortune 500 companies to mom-and-pop operations.

   "We produce dryers, aerospace composites, dump truck bodies, laundry baskets, concrete blocks, duct tape, pet food, construction cranes, cars, trucks and SUVs, cheese, craft beer, railroad ties, running shorts so much more," Gov. Beshear said.

   He noted that many of these same companies have aided the commonwealth's coronavirus response by retooling or ramping up to produce crucially needed personal protective equipment (PPE) for Kentucky's first responders.

   "These companies make barriers, masks, gowns, disinfectant, face shields, intubation boxes, ventilator components and, of course, hand sanitizer," Gov. Beshear noted. "PPE producers and their employees are true heroes in this epic fight against the coronavirus."

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The Governor said his administration continues to work to bring in new manufacturing projects to help the commonwealth bounce back stronger and better.

2. **Homeland Security Grants**
   Today, Gov. Beshear announced the awarding of $3 million in federal grant money (https://homelandsecurity.ky.gov/Grants/1-FFY20%20KOHS%20Grants%20Funded-For%20Website%2010-6-2020.pdf) that will enhance safety and preparedness of 25 communities across the commonwealth.

   “If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it’s the value of being prepared before a crisis strikes,” the Governor said. “These much-needed grants will help Kentucky communities plan for, respond to and recover from events we pray never happen.”

   The funding comes from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s State Homeland Security Grant Program, which helps local governments prepare for and counter acts of terrorism.

3. **‘Stay Close. Go Far.’**
   Gov. Beshear promoted Tuesday the Kentucky Department of Tourism’s newly launched campaign: “Stay Close. Go Far.”

   “As we continue to remain diligent in our fight against COVID-19, we also recognize the importance of staying connected with our families and communities,” the Governor said. “The ‘Stay Close. Go Far.’ campaign allows us to encourage safe and responsible in-state travel for Kentuckians and support our continuous efforts to place Kentucky on a path to economic recovery.”

   The Governor also asked Kentuckians to follow and use the hashtag #TravelKYroadtrip on social media to get and share trip ideas.

   For more information and to view the full news release, click here (https://www.kentuckytourism.com/sites/default/files/2020-08/2020_Stay%20Close%20Go%20Far%20Campaign%20Press%20Release%20Final.pdf).

4. **Mask Up Kentucky!**
   Gov. Beshear also stressed the continued importance of everyone wearing face coverings, calling it the single most important thing all of us can do to fight COVID-19.

   Gov. Beshear also announced that 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.

   “We saw with the last escalation that we have the power to stop it if we simply do what we know works and that is wearing a mask and engaging in social distancing,” the Governor said. “If we are honest with ourselves, we know that fewer people are wearing masks right now than they were when we took steps in July on the mask mandate to stop that escalation.”

   He pointed to the latest guidance for the state from the White House (https://govsite-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/sqZrTw32QLOSxlH4CFja_Kentucky%20October%204%202020.pdf), noting that it says: “Masks should be worn indoors in all public settings, and group gatherings should be limited.”

   He also encouraged Kentuckians to spread the word on social media using #MaskUpKY and #MaskUpKentucky hashtags. The Governor also highlighted a new contest. For Kentuckians who use the hashtags, they will receive a #TeamKY mask if their post is featured as part of the Governor’s daily 4 p.m. news conference.

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. Oct. 6, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 74,194 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 1,054 of which were newly reported Tuesday. One hundred and forty-four of the newly reported cases were from

children ages 18 and younger, of which 21 were children ages 5 and under. The youngest was only 3 months old.

“We are experiencing an escalation, our third major escalation in this COVID crisis, and it is significant,” the Governor said. “Last week we had 6,126 positive cases and we are on pace to have more than that this week.”

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

The deaths reported Tuesday include an 89-year-old man from Christian County; two women, ages 69 and 78, from Jefferson County; and an 85-year-old man from Henderson County.

“Yesterday I said more cases equal more people we lose. I want to bring that home a little bit,” the Governor said. “In the United States there is a 2.8% mortality rate for people who contract COVID. I’m proud that in Kentucky, we’ve got some great doctors and nurses and health care workers, and we’re at 1.7%, 1.1% less than the national average. But 6,126 cases of COVID-19 with the mortality rate we have would be 104 Kentuckians just from last week’s cases, we will lose. That’s just one week.”

As of Tuesday, there have been at least 1,552,667 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was 4.29%, and at least 12,751 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus.

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. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, offered more detailed information Tuesday about the state of the coronavirus crisis in the commonwealth.

“We’re in a new escalation, and I’ve raised the concern that when you’re running at higher levels, you take off more quickly,” Dr. Stack said.

He said in addition to following the rules and guidance, Kentuckians need to fight against complacency and exhaustion.

Unemployment Insurance Update

Amy Cubbage, general counsel in the Office of the Governor, provided an update Tuesday on the commonwealth’s efforts to help those Kentuckians experiencing job loss during this unprecedented time.

“The Kentucky Office of Unemployment Insurance has paid in excess of $4.1 billion in benefits to Kentuckians, benefits for the most part that get spent at our businesses and have an economic impact multiple times more than that $4.1 billion,” she said.

Nonetheless, Cubbage noted that some claims have been denied or are still being processed. She noted that the rules governing unemployment insurance payouts come largely from the federal Department of Labor.

“The eligible claims payment rate is staying at the same level as pre-pandemic, about 80%” she said.

Cubbage also provided an update on the federal Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which provides an additional $400 per week for those who qualify.

She said Kentucky’s Office of Unemployment Insurance has paid out about $245 million in LWA benefits, covering the weeks of Aug. 1 through Sept. 5.

Cubbage said some have been confused by the federal program’s eligibility rules and urged anyone with questions to view new information covering frequently asked questions (https://kcc.ky.gov/Documents/Lost%20Wages%20Assistance%20(LWA)%20Program%20FAQs.pdf) on the Kentucky Career Center’s webpage (https://kcc.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx).

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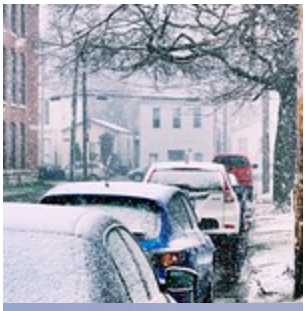
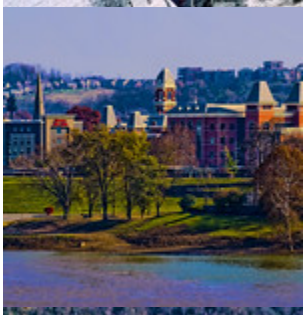
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/7372926@N06/47218320672/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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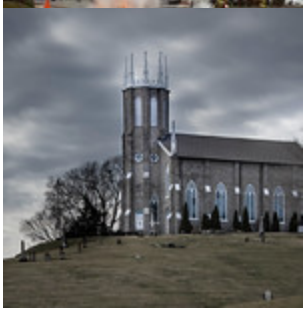
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)

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