Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 14, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Wednesday updated Kentuckians on the commonwealth's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) as the state posted the largest regular one-day increase in recorded cases.

Gov. Beshear continues to conduct news conferences remotely as he and his family self-quarantine in the Governor's Mansion after they were potentially exposed to COVID-19 late Saturday afternoon through a member of the Governor's security detail.

The Beshear family tested negative yesterday and will remain in quarantine until cleared by the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH).

'The Fast 4 at 4'

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

1. **Support for Crime Victims**
   Today, Gov. Beshear and the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet announced more than $37 million in grant funding to 133 crime victim service providers across Kentucky. The funds are part of the Victims of Crime Act program, known as VOCA.

   "Victims of violent crime have faced horrific events most of us cannot even imagine, and it is imperative that we provide them with the resources needed to transform their lives," the Governor said. "**VOCA** is the only federal **grant** program supporting direct services to victims and survivors of all types of crimes as they walk the path to recovery."

   Gov. Beshear said the Governor's Mansion will be lighted up with purple lights tonight in honor of domestic violence victims and survivors. For more information and to view the full news release, click here (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=411).

2. **Buckle Up, Phone Down**
   Gov. Beshear on Wednesday spoke about a new highway safety campaign.

"Our Kentucky Office of Highway Safety is partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to drive home a safety message: Buckle Up, Phone Down," the Governor said. "We're convinced these two simple actions will save lives on our roadways."

He said an awareness campaign will spread this message and more information is available by visiting kyhighwaysafety.com (https://kyhighwaysafety.com/).

3. **Vote!**
   Yesterday marked the beginning of early in-person voting in Kentucky ahead of the Nov. 3 General Election. Gov. Beshear continues to encourage all eligible voters to make a plan to cast a ballot, either by sending in a previously requested absentee ballot, voting early in person or in person on the day of the election.

   "Remember, there are three weeks to vote early, before Election Day, and there are even Saturday hours," the Governor said. "Pick a time. Make a plan of when you're going to go vote."

   More information is available on the state's online Voter Information Portal (https://vrsws.sos.ky.gov/ovrweb/govoteky).

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.

   He spoke Wednesday about the Capitol's onsite nursing staffers and a security officer who, along with Rocky Adkins, the Governor's senior advisor, helped create a masked jack-o-lantern that greets people at the Capitol.

   "We appreciate your dedication to ensure we stay healthy at work, and they have fun while doing it," the Governor said.

   Gov. Beshear also encouraged Kentuckians to spread the word on social media using #MaskUpKY and #MaskUpKentucky hashtags. Kentuckians who use the hashtags 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. 14, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 83,013 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 1,346 of which were newly reported Wednesday. One hundred and seventy-one of the newly reported cases were from children up to age 18, of which 34 were age 5 and under. The youngest was just 2 months old.

This was the most coronavirus cases reported in Kentucky in a single day that didn't include a backlogged set of cases, as happened recently when some Fayette County case numbers were added.

"I've said this should be a wake-up call or maybe a jolt or shock to the system, but everybody ought to be concerned and everybody ought to be doing the right thing," the Governor said. "Let's push the complacency out and let's get the urgency back in."

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported seven new deaths Wednesday, raising the total to 1,276 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Wednesday include a 76-year-old man from Boyd County; a 76-year-old man from Bullitt County; a 49-year-old woman from Fayette County; a 78-year-old man from Franklin County; an 82-year-old woman from Henderson County; a 76-year-old man from Jefferson County; and an 81-year-old man from Webster County.

The Governor also said two Kentucky veterans who were at the Thomson-Hood Veterans Center in Wilmore were among those who died from COVID-19.

“They were at the Lexington VA,” he said. “Those are now the second and third veterans in our nursing homes who we have lost. It’s another reason to make sure we’re doing everything we can to stop the spread of this virus.”

As of Wednesday, there have been at least 1,718,621 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was 4.72%, and at least 16,756 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).

KCHIP Sign-Up and RISE Awards

Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman spoke Wednesday about health care for children as well as awarding excellence in education.

“We believe health care is not a privilege, an add-on to sweeten a job offer, a luxury or a convenience. Health care is a right for every Kentuckian,” the Lieutenant Governor said. “That is especially true for children.”

She urged eligible families to sign up for the Kentucky Children’s Health Insurance Program, or KCHIP, by visiting kidshealth.ky.gov (https://kidshealth.ky.gov/Pages/index.aspx) or calling 877-KCHIP-18, or 877-524-4718.

Lt. Gov. Coleman, who also serves as secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, also spoke Wednesday about Kentucky’s participation in the U.S. Department of Education’s RISE Award, which stands for Recognizing Inspirational School Employees.

The award honors classified school employees who provide exemplary service to students.

“We are asking for nominations from parents, students, schools, school districts and non-profit organizations,” she said. “We are looking for nominees who demonstrate excellence in leadership, commitment and community involvement.”

Nominations can be made by visiting education.ky.gov (https://education.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx). The deadline for nominations is Oct. 16.

Finally, Lt. Gov. Coleman thanked everyone who has participated in First Lady Britainy Beshear’s Coverings for Kids program, which provides school districts across the commonwealth with a supply of face masks for students. She noted that while the program is ending at the end of October, there is still time to take part.

For information and instructions on making masks, visit firstlady.ky.gov/coveringsforkids (https://governor.ky.gov/coveringsforkids).

Dr. Stack Update

Dr. Steven Stack, KDPH commissioner, provided more detailed information Wednesday about the state of the coronavirus in the commonwealth and testing issues.

He encouraged residents to take advantage of more than 300 testing locations throughout the commonwealth, which can be found at kycovid19.ky.gov (https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19). Dr. Stack also highlighted new partnerships in some areas that need service.

“One of the central missions of public health is to try to help make sure underserved and disadvantaged individuals have access to health care just like everybody else,” Dr. Stack said.

The new testing sites include: Purchase District Health Department, serving McCracken, Ballard, Carlisle, Hickman and Fulton counties, at PurchaseHealth.org (http://www.purchasehealth.org/); Ashland-Boyd Health Department, serving Boyd, Greenup, Carter and Lawrence counties, at ABCHDKentucky.com (http://www.abchdkentucky.com/); the Kentucky River Health Department, serving Lee, Wolfe and Owsley counties at KRDHD.org (https://www.krdhd.org/site/); and Lincoln Trail Health Department, serving Hardin, Meade, LaRue, Nelson, Marion, Washington, Breckinridge and Grayson counties at LTDHD.org (https://www.ltdhd.org/).

Dr. Stack also reminded everyone that, beginning next week, Kentucky will change the way it calculates the positivity rate. Going forward, Kentucky will use COVID-19 PCR tests that are sent in electronically to make the calculation.

“PCR tests are the gold standard – those are the most reliable – for finding active disease in currently infected people,” Dr. Stack said.

Dr. Stack said there were four main benefits to moving to using the PCR tests to calculate the positivity rate: automated collection of data, a more stable data stream, filter for the past seven days and a quick turnaround on testing results.

Gov. Beshear emphasized that the change will not take place until next week to give everyone – hospitals, state officials, media and citizens – enough time to analyze and ask questions about the move before it happens.

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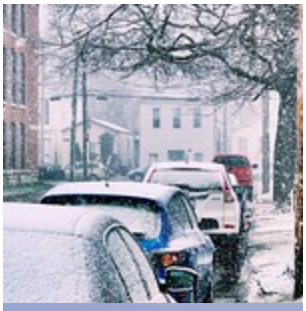
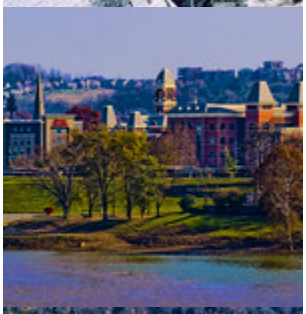
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/7372926@N06/47218320672/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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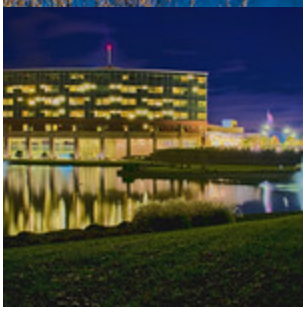
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/32275086277/in/pool-773339@N20)

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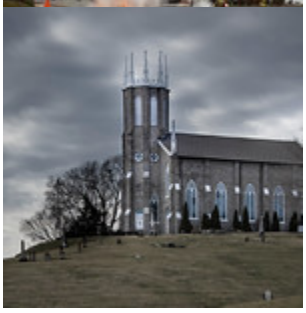
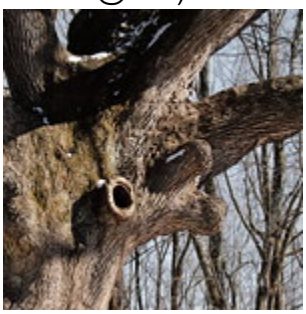
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/mcconnell_springs_photo_journal/46864760851/in/pool-773339@N20)
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