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Gov. Beshear: Face Coverings Still Crucial to Success in COVID-19 Fight

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Visit the Governor's Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/pg/GovAndyBeshear/videos/?ref=page_internal) *page to watch today's news conference*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 6, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Thursday extended the state's mandate requiring face coverings in some situations for another 30 days, citing its success and continued importance in flattening the curve of novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) cases in the commonwealth.

"By now, we all know someone that we care about, that we're close to who is fighting this virus or has fought this virus. And as things progress, we will all probably know somebody who we have lost to this virus. This is going to be a month where I hope we turn things around, but based on July, we're still going to see a lot of pain," said Gov. Beshear. "So let's make sure that we protect our mental and emotional health, stay as committed as we've always been to defeating this virus and step it up."

The Governor also noted that on Monday, he will have additional guidance for Kentucky's bars and restaurants.

"Expectations ought to be that capacity will increase again to 50% but there will be some changes. Especially in restaurants, we need people to still prioritize outdoor seating," said Gov. Beshear. "Bars and restaurants are both going to be expected to have their last item served at 10 p.m. Then there is going to be an hour to let people eat and drink and ultimately go home."

Case Information
As of 4 p.m. Aug. 6, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 33,254 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 516 of which were newly reported Thursday. Twelve of the newly reported cases were from children ages 5 and younger.

“We appear to not just be slowing, but we hope stopping any escalation that we’ve seen. It’s further evidence that wearing that facial covering is truly helping Kentucky in so many different ways – our people, our economy, our kids,” said Gov. Beshear. “So let’s keep it up. I believe that if we continue to do this, we can see even better numbers than what we have now.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported eight new deaths Thursday, raising the total to 760 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Thursday include a 68-year-old woman from Bell County; an 86-year-old woman from Fayette County; a 94-year-old woman and a 94-year-old man from Franklin County; an 87-year-old man from Graves County; a 78-year-old woman from Jefferson County; a 68-year-old woman from Kenton County; and an 84-year-old woman from Ohio County.

“We’ve had major wars that we’ve gone through, at least in the last 40 years, where we’ve lost fewer Kentuckians than those who we’re going to lose to Covid-19,” said Gov. Beshear. “So let’s remember that just because we don’t see numbers like New York had or Florida is going to experience, that doesn’t mean this isn’t hitting Kentucky really hard.”

As of Thursday, there have been at least 674,490 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 5.51%, unchanged from yesterday. At least 8,523 Kentuckians have recovered from the virus.

“We know the deaths follow large numbers of cases and that we’re going to have days when it’s really hard to read that list. But I do feel hopeful. I do feel optimistic that if we do wear that facial covering that we have found a way to stop what was going to be devastating,” said Gov. Beshear.

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).

Kentucky Infrastructure Authority Loans Update

Gov. Beshear announced today the approval of five project loans from the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority (KIA) totaling $7,230,900 for wastewater and sewer system improvements in the cities of Bardstown, Calvert City, Dawson Springs, Lewisburg and Whitesburg. For more information, read the full release (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=295).

“Every city and county in Kentucky should have reliable wastewater and sewer systems” said Gov. Beshear. “I’m glad these five cities can make necessary updates and provide more reliable service to their communities.”

State Fair Update

Today, the Governor announced that through consultation with public health officials, the Kentucky State Fair (https://kystatefair.org/) Board determined that limiting the fair to participants only was a necessary step to prevent a surge in COVID-19 cases.

The fair will feature wider aisle ways, reduced occupancy, increased hygiene accessibility and facial covering requirements. In an effort to manage crowds and social distancing, Lot A exhibits, Midway, concerts, entertainment and food vendors will not be featured in this year’s fair.

“By hosting a participant-only event, fair officials can more effectively enforce social distancing and facial covering requirements as well as gather the necessary information to perform contact tracing,” said Gov. Beshear. “I appreciate the board’s willingness to be agile, and their efforts to ensure that the health and safety of Kentuckians remains a top priority.”

The Kentucky State Fair will be held Aug. 20-30 at the Kentucky Expo Center in Louisville.

The World’s Championship Horse Show will be held without spectators and adhere to the U.S. Equestrian Federation COVID-19 guidelines.

“We believe the decision will allow Kentucky to continue our tradition of highlighting the state’s premiere agriculture and equestrian industry while prioritizing the health and safety of Kentuckians,” said Gov. Beshear.

“We are proud that we are having the fair, but obviously the health and safety of our community is uppermost in our minds and we’re delighted that we will at least be able to have the horse show and livestock contestants, the 4H-ers and the FFA kids,” said Steve Wilson, chair of the State Fair Board.

Agriculture is one of the state’s leading and most vital industries. There are nearly 76,000 farms in Kentucky, contributing about $45.6 billion to Kentucky’s economy each year.

For more information, visit the Kentucky State Fair’s website (https://kystatefair.org/).

Corrections Update

Today, Secretary of the Executive Cabinet J. Michael Brown provided a Department of Corrections update.

“To date, system-wide, we’ve had 844 positive cases with inmates and 136 with our employees. But we’ve also had 560 inmates recover and 87 employees recover, leaving today 49 active employee cases and 284 active inmate cases,” said Secretary Brown.

Unfortunately, 10 DOC inmates have died from complications due to the coronavirus.

For more information on Department of Corrections cases and facilities, click here (https://corrections.ky.gov/facilities/pages/covid19.aspx).

Driver’s Licensing Update

Today, the Governor’s chief of staff and general counsel, La Tasha Buckner, reminded Kentuckians that Secretary of Transportation Jim Gray issued an order for two emergency actions that help limit in-person traffic at driver’s licensing offices:

1. There is a 90-day rolling extension of expiration dates for driver’s licenses whose printed expiration date was March 16 to July 6.
2. Kentuckians must use mail or a clerk’s drop box for renewal or replacement of standard operator’s licenses, permits and ID cards that expire(d) between March 1 to Sept. 30 and do not require testing for renewal.

For more information, go to drive.ky.gov (drive.ky.gov).

Pharmacy Refills Update

Buckner also announced that Gov. Beshear signed an executive order (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200805_Executive-Order_2020-649_Dispensing-of-Pharmaceuticals.pdf)extending previous orders allowing pharmacists to dispense 30-day refills. This order will be in effect until Sept. 5 and is subject to renewal.

“Pharmacists in any Kentucky county can dispense emergency refills for up to 30 days on medicines that are not controlled substances to residents of any Kentucky county,” said Buckner. “You can get multiple 30-day refills. The order allows people to be healthy at home and still get the medicine they need.”

Price-Gouging Update

In addition, Buckner announced that Gov. Beshear signed an executive order (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200805_Executive-Order_2020-650_Price-Gouging.pdf)prohibiting price gouging, extending a previous order. This order will remain in effect for the duration of the state of emergency (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20200306_Executive-Order_2020-215.pdf).

“The order protects Kentuckians from those who would take advantage of the pandemic by charging inflated prices for goods – goods like hand sanitizer, soap, cleaners and disinfectants,” Buckner said.

First Lady Launches *Coverings for Kids* Program

First Lady Britainy Beshear on Tuesday launched a new program, *Coverings for Kids*, which will help Kentuckians donate facial coverings directly to school districts.

More information, including links to tutorials and patterns to make both child- and adult-size facial coverings, can be found on the *Coverings for Kids* web page (https://firstlady.ky.gov/coveringsforkids). To view the complete *Coverings for Kids* news release, click here (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=292).

Expanded COVID-19 Testing

Gov. Beshear continues to encourage all Kentuckians to take advantage of coronavirus testing being offered at more than 200 locations across the commonwealth.

For additional information about each location, visit kycovid19.ky.gov (https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19).

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 daily summaries of the Governor’s news conference at teamkentuckytranslations.com. (teamkentuckytranslations.com)

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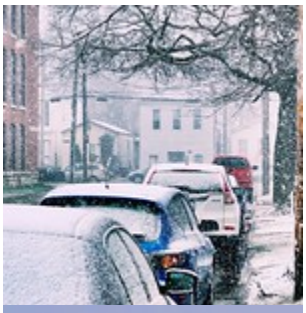
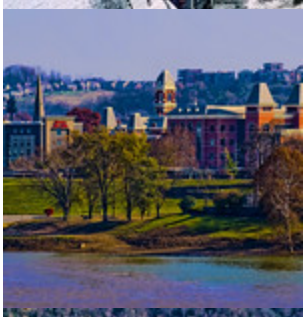
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/7372926@N06/47218320672/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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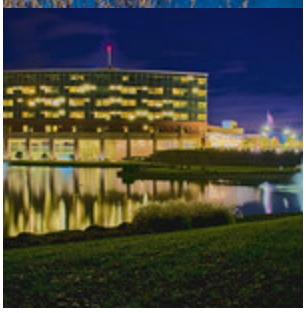
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/32275086277/in/pool-773339@N20)

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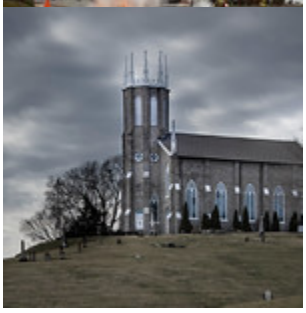
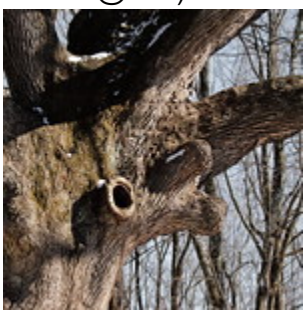
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/mcconnell_springs_photo_journal/46864760851/in/pool-773339@N20)
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