Gov. Beshear Updates Kentuckians on COVID-19

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New recommendations, red counties; record cases while positivity rate declines for seventh straight day

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 10, 2020) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that public health restrictions will change Monday, Dec. 14, but said the state's virus fight depends on all Kentuckians continuing to do the right things, in particular, wearing masks, social distancing and keeping gatherings small.

He reported the state's highest-ever number of new COVID-19 cases; however, the state's positivity rate declined for the seventh straight day.

"When we talk about COVID being a fast moving train, it doesn't just immediately turn; you have to slow it down, stop it and turn it around. We still believe that's what we're seeing," said Gov. Beshear. "We may also be seeing some of the impact from Thanksgiving in these numbers, that we could be moving in the right way, but still, Thanksgiving has a major impact. I can tell you that if we are seeing Thanksgiving's impact, it's a lot less than what we are seeing in some other states."

On Dec. 14, Kentucky's public health restrictions and recommendations will include:

- All public and private middle and high schools will continue remote instruction until Jan. 4, 2021. Elementary schools can return to in-person learning once their county is out of the red zone.
- Restaurants and bars can reopen at 50% capacity. Masks are required except when actively drinking or eating. Service must stop at 11 p.m.; establishments must close no later than 12 a.m.
- Indoor social gatherings are recommended to have no more than eight people from a maximum of two households. There is no recommended limit on the number of people from the same household. There is no limit on outdoor social gatherings.
- Gyms, fitness centers, pools and other indoor recreation facilities can operate at 50% capacity. Masks must be worn while exercising.
- Venues, event spaces and theaters can reopen at 50% capacity.
- Professional services can operate with up to 50% of employees working in-person; however, all employees who are able to work from home must do so.

Finally, the Governor shared positive economic development news, more evidence that the commonwealth will be prepared to sprint out of the pandemic in 2021.

Today, Gov. Beshear and executives from Protective Life Corp. announced the company will relocate its core site in the greater Cincinnati region to Covington. The new location positions Protective Life for long-term employee and business growth. The initial move to RiverCenter Towers in downtown Covington will bring approximately 100 well-paying jobs to Kentucky in 2021. As the company grows over the next decade, leaders expect to more than double that employee count.

In addition, in a win for Kentucky's growing agritech sector, Gov. Beshear and leaders from EnviroFlight LLC announced the company's plans to add 40 jobs in Maysville with a nearly $20 million expansion. EnviroFlight, which produces black soldier fly larvae for animal and plant nutrition, established its Kentucky production facility just two years ago.

Case Information
As of 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

- New cases today: 4,324
- New deaths today: 28
- Positivity rate: 9.13%
- Total deaths: 2,146
- Currently hospitalized: 1,756
- Currently in ICU: 442
- Currently on ventilator: 231

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Fayette, Pulaski, Kenton, Boyd, Boone, Warren and McCracken. Each of these counties reported 100 or more new cases; Jefferson County alone reported 659.

The new red zone counties for this week can be found here (https://chfs.ky.gov/Pages/cv19maps.aspx). Community leaders, businesses, schools and families in these counties should all follow red zone reduction recommendations (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/Red-Zone-Reduction-Recommendations.pdf), as well as other orders and guidance.

Those reported lost to the virus today include two men, ages 61 and 72, from Adair County; a 63-year-old woman from Barren County; a 61-year-old woman from Boyd County; a 71-year-old man from Casey County; a 94-year-old woman from Christian County; an 83-year-old woman from Clinton County; a 92-year-old woman from Cumberland County; a 95-year-old woman from Fayette County; a 78-year-old man from Fleming County; a 93-year-old man from Henderson County; two women, ages 70 and 96, from Hopkins County; a 91-year-old woman and four men, ages 69, 70, 72 and 88, from Jefferson County; a 75-year-old man from Martin County; a 96-year-old man from McCracken County; a 92-year-old woman from Montgomery County; a 97-year-old woman and a 99-year-old man from Oldham County; a 59-year-old man from Owsley County; two men, ages 81 and 88, from Russell County; an 85-year-old woman from Taylor County; and a 74-year-old man from Wayne County.

Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Department for Public Health, noted that different Kentucky regions have between 54% and 87% of hospital beds already in use; in addition, Kentucky regions have between 61% and 96% of ICU beds already filled.

“With these hospitalization and ICU numbers, you start having to make more difficult choices, including having to postpone or defer surgeries or procedures for patients who would have to stay in the hospital afterwards,” said Dr. Stack. “For example, people who have large aneurysms in their aorta come into the hospital, have a major surgery oftentimes, and may have to stay in the hospital for multiple days. If it’s not an immediate emergency, hospitals may have to postpone that kind of surgery because they have so few beds available.”

Memorial

“Today, we share the heartbreaking loss of The Rev. Gregory Smith, a beloved pastor in Louisville who led the Hill Street Baptist Church for nearly 40 years,” said Gov. Beshear. “He passed away one day after his 69th birthday.

“Rev. Smith lived by the message of ‘love thy neighbor.’ His life was dedicated to the service of others. From leading his congregation, to mobilizing people to help those impacted by natural disasters across the country, Rev. Smith was there for those in need. His daughter, Caitlin, described him as the most joyful, kind and giving person that walked this earth. And his work wasn’t for recognition. He did it to make a difference. One example of this is how he personally paid the tuition for some students at Simmons College of Kentucky where he was on the Board of Trustees – something his family didn’t even know of until his passing. His daughter said, ‘This was just who he was. He was always looking to share. … He’d give whatever he had to help others.

“He was a man of faith, and lived through his faith each and every day. Caitlin said whether it was 3 a.m. or 1 p.m., if her father received a call from a member of the congregation or a friend, he’d drop everything to be by their side wherever that was. From a hospital bedside, to traveling out of state to support someone mourning the loss of someone he’d never even met, Rev. Smith was there.

“The impact of this man stretches far and wide, and can easily be seen through the words of his grandson who ‘wants to be just like him when he grows up.’ Smith left behind his wife of 34 years, his three children and his beloved grandchildren. Our thoughts and prayers are with the entire Smith family and the members of the Hill Street Baptist Church. Today we mask up in honor of Rev. Smith.”

The Governor also noted that today marks his first-year anniversary serving as the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. To read more about his first year, click here (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=501).

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), new statewide requirements (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/Fall-Restrictions_One-Pager.pdf), testing locations, long-term care and other congregate facilities update, school reports and guidance (https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/cv19ModeofInstructionMetricsforK-12Education.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).

New requirements (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/Fall-Restrictions_One-Pager.pdf) impact restaurants, bars, social gatherings, indoor fitness and recreation centers, venues and theaters, professional services and schools. See the full executive orders here (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20201119_Executive-

Order_2020-968_State-of-Emergency.pdf) and here.
(https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20201118_Executive-Order_2020-969_State-of-Emergency.pdf)

Audio public service announcements about the new requirements (created in partnership with RadioLex (file:///P:/Press%20Releases/radiolex.us)) are published here in: Bosnian (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/bosnian-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020), Chinese (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/china-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020), English (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/english-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020), Japanese (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/japanese-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020), Korean (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/korean-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020), Spanish (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/spanish-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020) and Russian. (https://soundcloud.com/radiolex/russian-psa-new-guidelines-covid-19-nov-20-2020)

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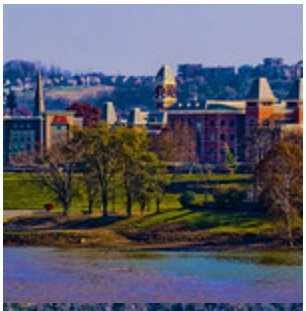
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/miamiboy/47184596121/in/pool-773339@N20)
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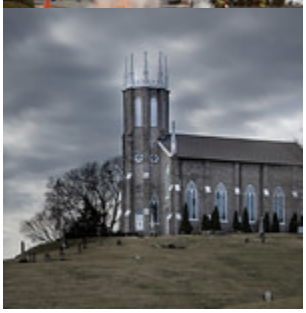
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)
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