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Gov. Beshear: Kroger Regional Vaccination Sites Will Open Feb. 1 for Phase 1A, 1B and 1C

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Governor, state officials also update Kentuckians on unemployment insurance, vaccine progress; state surpasses 3,000 COVID-19 deaths

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 14, 2021) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear, state officials and Kroger leadership announced a new partnership to significantly increase the speed of COVID-19 vaccinations across the commonwealth.

The first Kroger regional, drive-through vaccination sites will open the week of Feb. 1 for Kentuckians in Phase 1A, 1B and 1C. For more details on who is included in each phase, click here. (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20210104_Vaccine-Update.pdf) On Jan. 28, the Governor said more details would be announced on site locations and how to sign up.

“Last year, when we were wondering when anybody who wanted a COVID-19 test would be able to get one, Kroger made that a reality. That testing partnership created the national model for surge testing,” said Gov. Beshear. “These drive-through vaccination sites are fantastic news all Kentuckians, and we’re grateful to the entire Kroger team for making it possible. Your help in this effort will save countless lives.”

The Governor announced that Transportation Secretary Jim Gray has also been named Director of the Vaccine Distribution Project.

“This is all about Team Kentucky delivering on an ambitious, life-saving project,” said Secretary Gray. “This regional system will grow over time to reach even more Kentuckians. As we speak, we are working to get sites evaluated and secured. We are committed to ensuring equitable distribution of the vaccine and everyone

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will have their turn."

"We are proud to partner with the state on efforts to make sure all Kentuckians have access to the COVID-19 vaccine as quickly as possible," said Meggen Brown, Chief Nursing Officer and National Clinical Director at Kroger Health. "Kroger Health's vision is to help people live healthier lives, and that has never been more important."

Vaccinations have already begun for K-12 school personnel through individual school districts and will continue to ramp up over the next few weeks. The Governor said the state expects to finish administering initial vaccination doses for K-12 educators and support staff the week of Feb. 1.

"The great news is, we expect to finish first dose vaccinations for school staff the week we said we would start," said Gov. Beshear.

The Governor urged Kentuckians to be patient as vaccine allocations from the federal government are still far too small to cover everyone in Phase 1A, 1B and 1C who wants to be vaccinated. However, it is critically important that the state gets vaccines into arms quickly. That means in some cases, vaccine providers will need to vaccinate Kentuckians out of the phase sequence in order to meet the state's goal of administering 90% of vaccines within one week of their arrival at a distribution site.

The Governor and the Kentucky Department for Public Health outlined these phases to help providers distribute vaccines in the most equitable order they can while still vaccinating people as fast as possible. To learn more, see the Jan. 4 release. (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=541)

"I know people are understandably anxious and want to get the vaccine as soon as they can, especially those who are high-risk. We want to do our very best to put those people in the front of the line, but we also need to move quickly so vaccines don't just sit in a freezer, helping no one," said Gov. Beshear. "The faster we increase our vaccination numbers, the safer we all will be, because we will get closer to herd immunity as a state more quickly. That's the overarching goal, so we ask Kentuckians to bear with us if they have to wait a little while in order to get an appointment."

Case Information
As of 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

New cases today: 4,084
New deaths today: 51
Positivity rate: 12.34%
Total deaths: 3,042
Currently hospitalized: 1,661
Currently in ICU: 409
Currently on ventilator: 196

Top counties with the most positive cases today are: Jefferson, Kenton, Boone, Oldham and Fayette. Each of these counties reported 170 or more new cases; Jefferson County alone reported 642.

To see a list of those reported lost to the virus today, click here. (https://governor.ky.gov/attachments/20210114_KY_COVID-19_New-Deaths.pdf)

Vaccine Update

The Governor said 324,650 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been received in Kentucky and 172,537 doses have been administered. Of the doses administered, 28,977 have been given to long-term care facility residents and staff.

More than 67,000 doses were administered from Jan. 3 to 9, about 30,000 more doses than were administered the week prior. Since Jan. 10, more than 45,000 additional doses have been administered.

Walgreens and CVS have a contract with the federal government to administer vaccines to residents and staff at long-term care facilities.

Adam Mather, inspector general at the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, announced that during the week of Jan. 4 to 10, Walgreens completed vaccinations at 72 long-term care facilities, with 3,512 residents and 2,059 staff receiving doses.

That week, CVS completed vaccinations at 75 long-term care facilities, with 2,973 residents and 2,432 staff receiving doses.

Unemployment Insurance Update

Today, Amy Cubbage, general counsel for Gov. Beshear, updated Kentuckians on virtual appointment scheduling, federal Continued Assistance Act implementation and the number of Kentuckians who have now received unemployment insurance (UI) payments.

“The virtual appointment schedule (https://kcc.ky.gov/Pages/In-Person-UI-Services.aspx) is an 18-calendar day rolling schedule,” Cubbage said. “For instance, day 1 is today, Jan. 14. Day 18 is Jan. 31. Appointments for Feb. 1 should be on the website tomorrow for claimants to schedule. Appointment hours are 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. daily. There are currently 16 staff working 125 appointments a day.”

The system allows claimants to schedule, reschedule and cancel appointments as well as add the appointment information to their calendars. If a claimant forgets their appointment information, they can go to the website (https://kcc.ky.gov/Pages/In-Person-UI-Services.aspx), enter their email address and the system will resend the appointment information. The system is also set to send reminders to claimants with appointments the day before their scheduled appointment.

“The programming for the federal Continuing Assistance Act is largely finished**.** Additional $300 per week payments should start going out next week,” Cubbage said. “Additional PUA/PEUC weeks should be ready to claim without opening a new claim, even if you had exhausted your full number of weeks previously.”

Cubbage added, “We are changing the way we report numbers to give a more accurate context for the work done by the Office of Unemployment Insurance since the beginning of the pandemic.**”**

The total numbers from the beginning of the pandemic to the end of November are as follows:

- Total Claims[1]: 1,539,784
- Total Claims Paid/Payable: 547,836
- Total Claims Denied: 27,552
- Total Pending with Fraud/Identity Issues: 90,144
- Total Pending with No Fraud/Identity Issues: 23,236
- Total Amount Paid: $5,450,709,280

Kentucky National Guard Members to Assist with Presidential Inauguration
Today, Gov. Beshear announced that the Kentucky National Guard will send approximately 270 personnel to the Washington, D.C. region who will be on duty through the presidential inauguration Jan. 20.

“The peaceful transfer of power is a bedrock of our democracy. Historically, the Kentucky National Guard has assisted in and around Washington, D.C., during presidential inaugurations. Given the attack of Jan. 6 on our U.S. Capitol and on lawmakers, more of our soldiers and airmen will be traveling to the region to ensure safety and security. They will assist civilian law enforcement with security operations, including protecting property, for the Wednesday inauguration,” said Gov. Beshear. “These brave men and women will once again proudly serve the commonwealth and the country during this historic moment when our new president is sworn in.”

Hitachi Creating 200 Jobs in Berea
As Kentucky rebuilds its economy and puts new emphasis on attracting well-paying jobs and industries of the future, Hitachi Automotive Electric Motor Systems America Inc. is establishing a new, 200-job operation in Berea to manufacture motors for electric vehicles. For more information, see the full release. (https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=555)

Memorial
“Today we share the loss of Lewis Bass, known to many in Louisville and throughout Kentucky as Sonny. He was 99 years old. He was a beloved community leader who was always ready to jump in and help others. His granddaughter Anna said his true loves were his family, the University of Louisville and giving back to his community.

“Sonny was born in the West End of Louisville and dedicated his life to helping the entire city succeed. He was a three-year football letterman and a two-year letterman in basketball at the University of Louisville, before serving his country during World War II. When he returned to Louisville, Sonny took the first step in his many business ventures, which included co-founding what is now known as Humana. Sonny was a gifted tennis player and played competitively into his golden years.

“But his greatest achievement was meeting Gladys, his wife of 74 years, and beginning the family he loved so much. Gladys, Sonny and many other family members were infected with COVID, but unfortunately, it hit Sonny the hardest. Despite the efforts of those at Baptist East Hospital he passed away on Dec. 11. Gladys is recovering, and thankfully her family was able to locate caregivers to help with her recovery despite the challenges of the virus.

“Sonny was special. Not only did he accomplish so much professionally and within the community, he also made everyone who came in contact with him smile. He lived by the motto, ‘It only takes a minute to give a little joy and see a smile.’ Anyone who knew Sonny can’t help but smile when they think of him – he was an all-around great man.

“Today we lift Gladys and their entire family in prayer. This is a huge loss for them, and the entire community of Louisville. Today we mask up for Sonny.”

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), information on testing locations (https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-covid-testing), vaccines (https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-covid-vaccine), contact

tracing (https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-contact-tracing), school reports and guidance (https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-healthy-at-school), guidance for health care providers (https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-healthcare-guidance) and the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and more, visit kycovid19.ky.gov (https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19).

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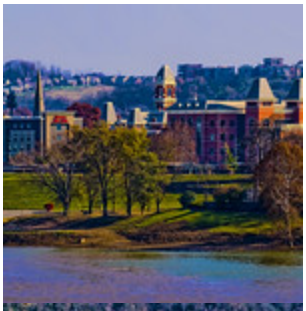
[1] This still includes duplicate claims for total claims. The number of unique claims from March to November 2020 is approximately 665,000. A number of pending claims have been resolved since the end of November. Kentucky's unemployment rate has consistently been lower than the national average through the pandemic, except for one month, where it was only slightly above. Many months have been significantly lower.

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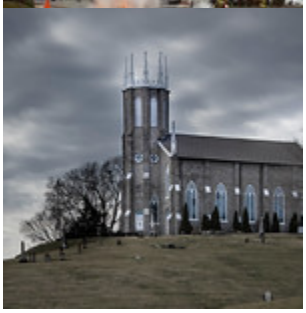
-  (https://www.flickr.com/photos/127721144@N05/46918072332/in/pool-773339@N20)
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