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COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Gov. Beshear Provides Update on COVID-19**

*Visit the Governor's [Facebook](#) page to watch today's news conference*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 28, 2020)** – Gov. Andy Beshear on Tuesday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

"We are at war with this virus. It has come to take the lives of our people, it has tried to turn everything about our lives upside down, and it's our job to fight back," the Governor said. "This is a war fought by every single one of us. Every single individual's actions matter."

Gov. Beshear again warned that without everyone complying with safety requirements – including social distancing, wearing face coverings and avoiding travel to virus hotspots – we risk squandering our hard work and facing the devastation being experienced by some other states.

"Today, again, tough news for Florida and Texas: Florida setting a record for deaths in a single day and in Texas, every six minutes and 16 seconds they are losing someone to COVID-19," the Governor said. "But again, we are at a point in time where we have the ability to stop this before it gets anywhere close to what we've seen in those states."

#### **Case Information**

As of 4 p.m. July 28, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 28,126 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 532 of which were newly reported Tuesday. Twenty-one of the newly reported cases were from

children ages 5 and younger, including a 2-month-old girl from Madison County and a 7-month-old boy from Graves County.

“Today’s update gives us hope that we may be seeing a new plateau or stabilization, although it is too early to come to that conclusion,” the Governor said. “It’s also the first time the positivity rate has gone down in four days. My hope is that the facial covering requirement is starting to kick in and help.”

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported 10 new deaths Tuesday, raising the total to 719 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Tuesday include a 74-year-old woman from Butler County; an 84-year-old man from Fayette County; two women, ages 86 and 87, and an 82-year-old man from Jefferson County; two women, ages 89 and 101, and an 83-year-old man from Logan County; a 37-year-old man from Lyon County; and a 73-year-old woman from Oldham County.

“Let’s remember, high cases means we lose more Kentuckians,” said Gov. Beshear. “Every time we do something that spreads the virus, we expose more people to that potential outcome.

As of Tuesday, there have been at least 599,251 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 5.08%. At least 7,470 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](#).

#### **Kerner Commission 2.0**

Gov. Beshear highlighted Tuesday a new effort in Kentucky that aims to pick up the mantle of the landmark National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, better known as the Kerner Commission, which was established 53 years ago today by President Lyndon Johnson.

Simmons College of Kentucky in Louisville recently announced the formation of a Kerner Commission 2.0, for which Gov. Beshear said his administration will offer support.

The original Kerner Commission was tasked with working to understand the root causes of civil unrest and violence that plagued several major cities during the summer of 1967. The report concluded: “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one Black, one white – separate and unequal.”

“Today, 53 years after his call for answers, our nation still is struggling with racial inequity and history continues to replay itself before our very eyes,” the Governor said. “Undoubtedly,

progress has been made in civil rights as a nation, but we can't deny the disparities that still exist for Black people in our great nation and even in our great commonwealth."

The Governor noted that most of the report's recommendations went unheeded and that the civil unrest seen in recent months mirrors what happened in 1967. The new Kerner Commission 2.0 soon will name its commissioners and convene as a statewide brain trust to help identify current problems and potential solutions.

"As Governor, I support this work because it's important," Gov. Beshear said. "I support it because it's the right thing to do. I support this work now because it can't wait."

### **New Actions to Fight Surge in Cases**

On Monday, Gov. Beshear announced new actions, conceived through and backed by guidance from the White House, to stem the growing number of coronavirus cases and rising test positivity rate in the commonwealth.

Under a [new order](#) from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, bars are closed and restaurants are limited to 25% of pre-pandemic capacity indoors. The Governor and the Kentucky Department for Public Health will monitor case numbers over the next two weeks with the goal of reopening bars and restoring restaurant capacity after that time.

In addition, the Governor is recommending public and private schools to avoid offering in-person instruction until the third week of August.

The new actions followed previous moves by Gov. Beshear's administration, including a [travel advisory](#) that recommends a 14-day self-quarantine for Kentuckians who travel to states and U.S. territories that are reporting a positive coronavirus testing rate equal to or greater than 15%. For an updated list of areas meeting that threshold, [click here](#). In addition, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services issued an [order](#) pulling back the guidance on non-commercial gatherings to allow only for meet-ups of 10 or fewer people.

### **Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Update**

Expanding on some good news about fiscal year 2020, Gov. Beshear announced Monday that the General Fund revenues ended up \$104.6 million above the budgeted estimate, at a total of nearly \$12 billion. The General Fund surplus will be \$177.5 million.

The Governor has said the improved economic footing means there will be no budget cuts to K-12 education, post-secondary education, and health and public safety, and no cuts to the Judicial or Legislative branch budgets.

After holding back \$15 million for necessary government expenses, Gov. Beshear said the \$162.5 million going to the rainy day fund, which is called the Budget Reserve Trust Fund, will bring it up to \$465.7 million.

Gov. Beshear cautioned that the outlook for fiscal year 2021 remains challenging.

#### **Testing Update**

Responding to some reports that some seeking coronavirus testing still are being asked to provide a doctor's order, administration officials reiterated that the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Public Health (DPH) issued an [order](#) removing any such requirement to receive a COVID-19 test.

Kentuckians can sign up for molecular diagnostic testing at more than 200 locations throughout the state, listed by county [here](#).

#### **More Information**

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at [governor.ky.gov](https://governor.ky.gov), [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov) and the Governor's official social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Kentuckians can also access translated COVID-19 information and daily summaries of the Governor's news conference at [\[teamkentuckytranslations.com\]](https://teamkentuckytranslations.com)[teamkentuckytranslations.com](https://teamkentuckytranslations.com).

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