



## OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

*Schools advised to delay in-person classes until Sept. 28; bars and restaurants can open at 50% capacity*

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

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 10, 2020)** – Gov. Andy Beshear on Monday updated Kentuckians on the state's continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the commonwealth.

"Let me start by reiterating that we are still in a very difficult, dangerous place with a virus that is spreading so significantly right now," the Governor said. "One of the foremost experts this morning talked about it raging in the United States. I believe we have stopped the exponential growth, but we can't just stay where we are. We have got to start decreasing our cases."

#### **School Opening Guidance**

Gov. Beshear and administration officials, in consultation with Kentucky teachers and school administrators, on Monday announced new guidance for schools that are planning for the fall semester.

"Our recommendation today is that schools wait to begin in-person classes until Sept. 28," the Governor said. "Yes, that's six weeks from now, but it's also six weeks from what I hope is the peak of this virus, six weeks from the last three weeks where we have been at an all-time high week in and week out, six weeks from a time when we just had a 6% positivity rate. Let's face it, we're trying really hard and we've taken good steps. Masks are working. But we do not have

control over this virus. And to send tens of thousands of our kids back into in-person classes when we don't have control of this virus, it's not the right thing to do for these kids, it's not the right thing to do for their faculty and it's not the right thing to do as Governor."

He said the decision was driven by four factors: Kentucky's cases being near a peak, an increase in infection rates among children across the U.S., the experience of school districts in other states and families continuing to travel to hotspots for vacations against the advice of health officials.

"I think what all of the health care specialists said when we talked about reopening, is we need to be looking at a decline. In other words, we need to get our positive rate down," the Governor said. "On top of that, what we're seeing are more outbreaks and more infections in kids. The two hardest things I do every day is read the deaths and the number of kids infected under 5. And it's not just kids under 5. We're having record numbers of children that are infected, and it shows this infection spreads to them when we still don't know the long-term impact. What we do know is children have a harder time social distancing. And we can't put a whole bunch of them in a classroom with a teacher right now. Other states that have tried to open this new school year are now having to close. We don't want to start and stop. That may be more difficult on our children."

### **Restaurants and Bars Update**

La Tasha Buckner, the Governor's chief of staff and general counsel, offered an update on bars and restaurants operating in the commonwealth.

"Today we are issuing a [new order](#), effective tomorrow, which will allow bars to reopen and restaurants to increase their capacity," Buckner said. "Both bars and restaurants can operate at 50% of capacity, as long as people can remain six feet from anyone who is not in their household or group."

She said the reopening and increase in capacity comes with new requirements to avoid another spike in COVID-19 cases. First, customers in both bars and restaurants will be required to remain in their seats, except when entering, leaving or using the restroom.

Second, bars and restaurants will be required to halt food and beverage service by 10 p.m. and close at 11 p.m. local time.

"Third, as the Governor mentioned previously, the face-covering requirement has been extended as of Sunday for another 30 days," Buckner said. "Therefore, just like in other businesses, all customers and staff must wear a face covering while in the bar or restaurant except when actively eating or drinking."

The full list of requirements is posted on the [Healthy at Work website](#).

### **Case Information – Monday, Aug. 10**

As of 4 p.m. Aug. 10, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 35,254 coronavirus cases in Kentucky,

275 of which were newly reported Monday. Thirteen of the newly reported cases were from children ages 5 and younger, including five who are less than a year old.

The Governor noted that a technical issue with the state's data processor is causing a delay in some reporting, leading to lower numbers that will be updated later this week.

"Today's number needs to have a giant asterisk on it, because we know that number is higher and will change," said Gov. Beshear.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported two new deaths Monday, raising the total to 775 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Monday include a 60-year-old woman from Graves County and a 98-year-old woman from Lincoln County.

"We hope we are getting even better at treating this virus," said Gov. Beshear. "But these are two families that still need our support, our green lights, those bells and most important, for us all to do the things we know will help prevent more tragic loss."

As of Monday, there have been at least 700,417 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 5.71%. At least 8,738 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](#). To see all recent daily reports, [click here](#).

#### **Case Information – Sunday, Aug. 9**

Due to limited reporting on the weekends, some updated information is now available from Sunday, Aug. 9.

As of Sunday, there were 698,854 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was at 5.74% and at least 8,721 Kentuckians had recovered from the virus.

For a detailed look at coronavirus case information from Sunday, Aug. 9, [click here](#).

#### **Behavioral Health Care**

Eric Friedlander, Secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, also spoke Monday about a new project that Kentucky has been selected to take part in to expand behavior health care treatment.

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently informed Kentucky it had been selected to participate in the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic demonstration.

“In addition to a more efficient payment system, more treatment options for serious mental illness are needed, and that includes attention to opioid addiction,” Secretary Friedlander said.

Initial results from an evaluation of the eight original states to participate in the program found positive outcomes across a range of factors, officials said.

Secretary Friedlander also provided an update about payment assistance to providers impacted by COVID-19. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has made \$15 billion available to help cover lost revenue attributed to the coronavirus, or to help defray the cost of expenses to prevent, prepare or respond to COVID-19. Providers may be eligible for approximately 2% of reported revenue from patient care. The application deadline is Aug. 28, and providers may call 866-569-3522 for more information.

#### **State Budget Update**

The Office of the State Budget Director announced today that the state’s General Fund receipts for July, the first month of Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21), totaled \$905.1 million, a 7% increase compared with July 2019 receipts. Collections for the month were surprisingly strong given the general slowdown in consumer spending arising from the uncertainty of the novel coronavirus.

“That’s really good news. It suggests that our economy is still afloat. But we know what it’s taken to keep it afloat,” said Gov. Beshear. “The people of Kentucky are doing what we need them to do with those stimulus and unemployment insurance dollars – they are spending them. They are helping our economy in so many different ways. And so the federal government is going to have to come to some compromise to continue to support state and local governments.”

#### **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 [tinyurl.com/kygovspanol](https://tinyurl.com/kygovspanol) (Spanish) and [tinyurl.com/kygovtranslations](https://tinyurl.com/kygovtranslations) (more than 20 additional languages).

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