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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 23, 2020)** – Gov. Andy Beshear on Thursday updated Kentuckians on the state's ongoing fight against the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

"This week we have seen some of our highest number of cases of the coronavirus going all the way back to the start of dealing with this pandemic in Kentucky on March 6," said Gov. Beshear. "These results ought not to make us panic but it also ought to make us get back into the habits that we know help defeat this virus."

#### **Case Information**

As of 4 p.m. July 23, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 25,147 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 611 of which were newly reported Thursday. Twenty-one new cases were from children age 5 and younger.

"Today is one of the highest days we've had. Let's remember every day with a high number of cases is a day we don't want to have," said Gov. Beshear. "We continue to see hospital systems in the states to our south running out of ICU beds."

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported seven new deaths Thursday, raising the total to 684 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Thursday include a 60-year-old woman from Casey County; a 49-year-old woman from Fayette County, a 57-year-old woman from Jefferson County; a 64-year-old woman from Knox County; two women, ages 88 and 89, from Ohio County; and a 68-year-old woman from Whitley County.

“We’re reporting seven deaths today, and the spread in ages ought to tell us something. The way we need to look at this is everybody can get this virus. No one is immune,” said Gov. Beshear. “Let’s remember to ring those bells – we do it here in the Rotunda every day. Let’s turn on those green lights.”

As of Thursday, there have been at least 565,490 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 4.94%.

At least 7,046 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](#).

#### **Long-Term Care Testing Update**

Today, Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Eric Friedlander announced that all staff at congregate residential settings serving older or disabled adults will get a molecular diagnostic test for COVID-19 at least every 14 days. Staff who test positive will be tested again for confirmation, and symptomatic residents will also be tested.

From August through the end of 2020, the state anticipates that 65,000 tests per month will be conducted in these facilities, which include: nursing facilities, nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities, personal care homes and assisted living communities. The testing will be conducted by clinical labs that the state pays directly.

Secretary Friedlander also announced that the federal government has allocated an additional \$5 billion going to nursing and veterans facilities across the country to help with PPE and testing. The federal government will also be providing more rapid testing equipment to nursing facilities in the hardest-hit areas of the country.

“Today I signed a contract that will allow laboratories to bill us directly for maintenance testing of staff and residents at all nursing facilities across Kentucky,” said Secretary Friedlander. “We continue to want to support our nursing facilities, we’re glad to partner with the federal government so we can have a consistent program and keep our folks safe.”

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

Yesterday, the Governor said in the midst of an incredibly challenging pandemic, he was pleased to report some good economic news.

The Governor said the official numbers for fiscal year 2020 – the filing for which was extended from April 15 to July 15 this year due to the pandemic – will show a surplus. He noted that it is a marked improvement from May 22, when a revised revenue estimate expected a shortfall of \$457 million. He said the Office of the State Budget Director will issue final end-of-the-fiscal-year numbers and details after the books officially close this weekend.

In immediate practical terms, this improved economic footing means:

- 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.

Gov. Beshear said his administration's cost-saving moves also were expected to result in a more than 18% increase of the state's rainy day fund, the Budget Reserve Trust Fund, and an increase in lottery revenues would result in another \$15 million for need-based student financial aid this coming school year.

Gov. Beshear emphasized that despite these encouraging signs, the economic outlook in Kentucky remains extremely difficult and successfully fighting to stop the spread of COVID-19 remains the most important component to safeguarding our economy. To learn more, see [yesterday's full release](#).

### **Rising Cases Prompt New Actions**

On Monday, Gov. Beshear's administration issued a [new 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 a [new order](#) pulling back the guidance on gatherings to allow only for meet-ups of 10 or fewer people.

### **Safety Reporting Hotline**

Gov. Beshear reminded Kentuckians that the COVID-19 reporting hotline is available to help keep everyone safe.

People who witness dangerous non-compliance with coronavirus mandates, including requirements for mask wearing, social distancing and sanitation, at Kentucky businesses are encouraged to call the COVID-19 reporting hotline at 833-KY SAFER (833-597-2337). Labor Cabinet personnel will monitor the line from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. To file a complaint online, [click here](#).

**Testing Update**

Responding to 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 at [kycovid19.ky.gov](https://kycovid19.ky.gov).

**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).

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