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Gov. Beshear Provides Update as Kentucky Reports Second-Highest One-Day Total of COVID-19 Cases

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

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 21, 2020) – Gov. Andy Beshear on Tuesday updated Kentuckians on continuing efforts to fight the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) as officials reported the second-highest number of cases in a single day.

"Here in Kentucky, our surge continues as well. Today we are reporting our second-highest daily total of 674 new cases. That's not good news," the Governor said. "We have got to be committed to doing better, and I do see a lot of that out there. We've got to make sure we are not one of these other states where their cases are exploding. We still have time to act. But we have got to know that we are on that trajectory, we are on that path, without everybody doing the right thing."

Gov. Beshear stressed the need for everyone to adhere to the mandates and advisories – all based on the guidance and science provide by the White House and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

He noted that on Monday he issued a [new travel advisory](#) that recommends a 14-day self-quarantine for Kentuckians who travel to nine states – Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina and Texas – and Puerto Rico, which are reporting a positive coronavirus testing rate equal to or greater than 15%. 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.

“This is the time for statewide action, coming together to get this done,” the Governor said.

He said Kentucky’s facial covering requirement in particular would effectively slow the increase in coronavirus cases, but only if people wear masks.

“It will work. It will absolutely work, and we can do almost everything we want to do,” Gov. Beshear said. “From saving lives to keeping the economy open, if we can do that and get this thing under control, it will make what we can do in schools so much easier. But we need your buy-in to do it.”

Analyzing the numbers, Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, said the state’s recent rise in cases is a stark reminder to be more disciplined about wearing masks, maintaining social distance and washing and sanitizing our hands.

“These numbers today are not a surprise,” Dr. Stack said. “They unfortunately validate where we are on this journey. Having nearly 700 new positives puts us solidly at the base of that escalation of the curve. It’s consistent with what we’ve seen in the last week where our numbers clearly broke out of a multimonth stable period.”

Healthy at School Update

Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman on Tuesday provided a *Healthy at School* update on the state’s efforts to help districts make healthy and safe decisions on reopening schools.

“At the heart of every reopening plan should be the health and safety of every child and every adult in the building, as well as every family they go home to at night,” said Lt. Gov. Coleman, an educator who also serves as secretary of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. “That should be first and foremost.”

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the state’s *Healthy at School* guidelines, which promote best practices including social distancing, cloth face coverings, contact tracing, sanitation and health screenings.

She also touted expanded flexibility the state is extending to school district officials so they can make decisions about what is best for their students, teachers and school staffers. Among the new provisions being allowed for the coming school year are unlimited non-traditional instruction (NTI) days, removing “daily average attendance” requirements for funding, an expanded care program and unlimited COVID-19-related emergency days for teachers and staff in quarantine.

Lt. Gov. Coleman said she will be taking part Thursday in a Kentucky Department of Education virtual town hall with educators and staffers to talk about issues related to reopening schools.

In addition, the Lieutenant Governor said she sent a letter to U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Kentucky's congressional leadership explaining the health and safety challenges facing schools across the commonwealth and appealing for additional funding for Kentucky schools through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

"All of our schools and college campuses have to keep students safe and they have to keep them learning," Lt. Gov. Coleman said. "Today I urge Congress and our national leaders to meet this moment so that we can meet the needs of our communities in this unprecedented time."

Case Information

As of 4 p.m. July 21, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 24,060 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 674 of which were newly reported Tuesday. Twenty-three new cases were from children ages 5 and younger.

Pointing to a map breaking down the state's cases by county, the Governor said there is no region of Kentucky that is safe from COVID-19.

"There is only one way to address this virus, and that's with statewide policies. Because when you can have 100 cases (in one county) over the course of a week, surely to God we all want to prevent that, and not to say, 'There's not a problem here,' until it's out of control," he said. "That would be taking approaches like we're seeing in other states where the numbers have to be in the thousands before we act."

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported three new deaths Tuesday, raising the total to 674 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Tuesday include a 63-year-old man from Calloway County, a 91-year-old woman from Casey County and a 95-year-old man from Shelby County.

"Today we're sad to announce three new deaths. Yes, the deaths are lower, which we like to see, but remember, they lag by about 14 days or more from the announced cases," Gov. Beshear said. "Again, we continue to see a lot of people in their 60s passing away, and I hope none of us believes that is old."

As of Tuesday, there have been at least 549,208 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 4.37%. At least 6,928 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](#).

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.

More Information

Read about other key updates, actions and information from Gov. Beshear and his administration at governor.ky.gov, 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/kygovespanol (Spanish) and tinyurl.com/kygovtranslations (more than 20 additional languages).

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