



## OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Crystal Staley**

502-545-3714

**Sebastian Kitchen**

502-330-0799

502-564-2611

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

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

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 17, 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.

"We are certainly in a time of crisis, and it's one where our character and how we respond has never been more important," the Governor said. "If crisis shows our character, is it one that yells at the checkout clerk who tells us we have to be wearing a facial covering? Is it one where if somebody is for something, we're against it just because? Or is it one where we put the health and lives of our neighbors above our personal interests, a time where our character shows more kindness and empathy to one another than ever before, knowing we are all going through something very difficult?"

#### **Case Information – Monday, Aug. 17**

As of 4 p.m. Aug. 17, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 39,691 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 376 of which were newly reported Monday. Fourteen of the newly reported cases were from children ages 5 and younger, including two 11-month-olds.

"Fifty-four of these cases are from people 18 or younger," said Gov. Beshear. "Just based on that, when they might have been going back to school today or next Monday, I think the right decision was made even if it was a hard one."

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported five new deaths Monday, raising the total to 818 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Monday include an 84-year-old man from Boyd County; a 91-year-old man from Calloway County; an 87-year-old woman from Franklin County; a 63-year-old man from Henry County; and a 75-year-old woman from Oldham County.

“We’ve also lost five more Kentuckians to COVID-19. So those green lights I saw – thank you. I don’t need them half as much as these families need them, but thank you for having the strength and the perseverance to keep going. We are still being tested about our kindness and our character, and I thank you for rising to that occasion,” said Gov. Beshear.

As of Monday, there have been at least 760,022 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate currently stands at 5.80%. At least 9,158 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. 16**

Due to limited reporting on the weekends, some updated information is now available from Sunday, Aug. 16.

As of Sunday, there were 757,828 coronavirus tests performed in Kentucky. The positivity rate was at 5.76% and at least 9,122 Kentuckians had recovered from the virus.

For a detailed look at coronavirus case information from Sunday, Aug. 16, [click here](#).

#### **New Testing Partnership**

Gov. Beshear announced Monday that Kentucky’s Department for Public Health is partnering with the University of Kentucky and UK HealthCare to begin free drive-up COVID-19 testing for the community. Officials said the testing will begin Aug. 24 at two sites.

“Kentucky remains at war with the coronavirus, and a robust testing program is essential to protecting one another, fully reopening our economy and getting all of our children back in classrooms,” Gov. Beshear said. “I want to thank the University of Kentucky and UK HealthCare for stepping up with this partnership to provide the community with this free public health resource. Everyone should take advantage of these testing opportunities and be part of Team Kentucky’s push to defeat COVID-19.”

Beginning Aug. 24, community testing will be available in the new parking lot on College Way near the UK motor pool on the far southern edge of campus as well as on the grounds of Eastern State

Hospital, which UK operates and manages for the state. The hospital is located off of Newtown Pike near the Interstate Highway 64/75 exchange. Eastern State is located at UK's Coldstream Research Campus.

All testing will be available by scheduling an appointment. To receive a free COVID-19 test, an individual can register at: [lexington.wildhealth.com](https://lexington.wildhealth.com). Testing will be seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

More information on testing opportunities at more than 200 sites throughout the commonwealth can be found [here](#).

Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, explained that Kentucky is one of only a few states that has been able to maintain the same COVID-19 testing capacity in recent weeks as supplies necessary to run those tests are in greater and greater demand across the country.

"Test supplies are getting tight again. The demand for the tests continues to grow more quickly than the resources to provide the tests. So we are likely to be at some kind of plateau in number of tests for a while, but it's going to be a challenge just to maintain the plateau because a lot of other states are going to compete now more intensely to try to get these resources," said Dr. Stack. "But we're going to work really hard to make sure we keep access to that. If we keep that, that's just under 60,000 tests a week on average. That's about 4.7% of the total population of Kentucky we would be testing. The White House's initial guidelines were to test over 2%."

#### **More than \$14 Million Approved in CARES Act Reimbursements for Local Governments**

In collaboration with the Department for Local Government (DLG), today, Gov. Beshear announced 23 Western Kentucky governments were approved for \$14,445,419 in reimbursements from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act for local governments with expenses related to COVID-19.

"Our local governments have been lifelines in our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why this funding is so important," said Gov. Beshear. "We are grateful for their hard work and dedication to keeping Kentuckians safe."

For more information, [read the full release](#).

#### **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 summaries of the Governor's news conferences at [\[teamkentuckytranslations.com\]teamkentuckytranslations.com](https://teamkentuckytranslations.com).

###