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Gov. Beshear Provides Update on Fight Against COVID-19

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

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 3, 2020) – On Wednesday, Gov. Andy Beshear detailed the efforts undertaken to combat the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

Sadly, the Governor reported the tragic loss of one of the youngest Kentuckians to fall victim to the deadly virus.

"Today we've got to announce that we have on our list of deaths a 9-month-old child from Hopkins County," Gov. Beshear said. "We grieve for everybody we have lost from COVID-19. This is a reminder of how deadly this virus can be, how precious all of our lives are.

"As a father of two kids, one of which I was scared at birth might not make it, I want this family to know – and it's a family I have never met even in my dad's hometown county – that we, regardless of what will ultimately be listed as the cause of death, we are grieving for you, we care about you, and I cannot imagine how you are feeling right now."

Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner for the Department for Public Health, said the child's death initially was ruled to be a case of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS. He said a later COVID-19-positive test requires the death to be included in the reporting. Dr. Stack said the death of such a young person to coronavirus was rare yet devastating.

"I would encourage parents to not worry overly, but that you should be concerned because for the individual, for the families, they suffer the illness or loss of child," Dr. Stack said. "For them it is real. It doesn't make a difference if it is rare. For them it was 100% occurrence. They lost their loved young one. So it's important we are all careful with this disease."

Early Action

Gov. Beshear spoke of the unimaginable loss suffered by all of the families and communities as this deadly virus has taken its toll. Deaths nationwide have surged to more than 105,000, with nearly 450 Kentuckians' lives lost among them.

But months into the fight, several studies now show that the fast and focused response by the Governor's administration, along with the sacrifices of people across the commonwealth, benefited Kentucky greatly.

"Every day I worried it would not be enough to blunt that curve," Gov. Beshear said. "And we didn't know when it was going to happen and thank goodness it did."

Among other actions, on March 6, the day of the first confirmed coronavirus case in Kentucky, Gov. Beshear declared a state of emergency and activated the Emergency Management Operations Center. In the weeks that followed, the Governor's administration continued to take actions daily across a spectrum of issues to keep Kentuckians safe.

At all times, the guidelines and orders issued by Gov. Beshear and his cabinet officials have hewed closely to recommendations from the White House and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gov. Beshear launched Healthy at Home on March 26, providing information, advice and restrictions aimed at ensuring social distancing and protecting the state's health care operations.

The results are in: studies by the CDC, the University of Louisville and the University of Kentucky all show that these early and decisive actions saved the lives of thousands of Kentuckians.

“Healthy at Home was a significant step. It was asking a lot of the people of Kentucky, and they did it and because of their efforts we saved thousands of lives. I believe when we look back on this it will be 10,000-plus lives,” the Governor said. “I remember that the first modeling suggested we would lose 80,000 Kentuckians, and in the first couple of weeks people were scared.”

As a result of this hard work, Kentucky is nationally recognized as among few states that are meeting the White House and CDC guidance for reopening the economy. Our cases are on a downward trend, our hospitals are able to handle the patient load, and our COVID-19 testing program is robust.

Gov. Beshear said while Kentuckians should be proud of the work we’ve all done, the road ahead remains challenging and requires resilience.

Kentucky was not spared from worldwide economic upheaval caused by this deadly virus. Gov. Beshear said getting through it together as Kentuckians will require managing unprecedented unemployment, deep budget shortfalls and steep growth in the use of public benefits.

No special session

Gov. Beshear announced Wednesday that he has reached an agreement with legislative leaders to avoid the need for the General Assembly to return in a special session to resolve budget matters.

Previously, the Governor had said he had expected to call a “short, targeted” special session to allow lawmakers to pass a reduced budget proposal to account for revenue lost due to the global pandemic and response.

“All we are looking at is the Transportation Cabinet Budget. There is zero discretion in what needs to be done. It is a revision of a number,” Gov. Beshear said. “This is an agreement between all of the legislative leaders and the Governor’s office. So we do not believe at this time that there will be a need and there is agreement on the actions that have to be taken.”

Louisville update

J. Michael Brown, secretary of the Governor's Executive Cabinet, spoke about the state of an investigation into the death of David McAtee in Louisville.

"Yesterday, I reported that we believed from the preliminary autopsy that he died of single gunshot wound to the chest. We still are of that belief. We have not recovered a whole bullet, but we have recovered, I understand from today, some fragments," Secretary Brown said. "We are now in the process of trying to identify the very nature of those fragments to determine if they indeed came from one bullet or might have come from more than one bullet and, hopefully, be able to determine the caliber of the bullet."

Case information

As of 4 p.m. June 3, Gov. Beshear said there were at least 10,410 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, 265 of which were newly confirmed Wednesday.

"I don't think this 265 is cause for alarm, though it is at least a reminder just like what we've talked about today that this virus is still out there and spreading," the Governor said.

Unfortunately, Gov. Beshear reported eight new deaths Wednesday, raising the total to 450 Kentuckians lost to the virus.

The deaths reported Wednesday include two women, ages 91 and 99, from Edmonson County; an 84-year-old woman from Gallatin County; the 9-month-old baby girl from Hopkins County; three women, ages 91, 92 and 93, from Jefferson County; and a 48-year-old man from Shelby County.

"We need compassion now more than ever: compassion for these families, compassion for our fellow human beings who are hurting," the Governor said. "So let's make sure we turn on those green lights, that we ring those bells at 10 a.m. and let's ring them for these families who are in pain. Let's ring them for all families who are in pain."

At least 3,283 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](#).

Testing expansion

Gov. Beshear continues to urge Kentuckians to get tested for COVID-19. For information on how to register at sites throughout the commonwealth visit kycovid19.ky.gov.

"I know we are now in the upper half of states for the total number of tests that have been run, and that's an incredible story, given where we started," the Governor said about ongoing testing efforts.

Absentee Ballot Application Portal online

Gov. Beshear is encouraging all voters to use a new Absentee Ballot Application Portal now available online. A link to the State Board of Elections' portal can be found at govoteky.com. He urged everyone who plans to vote in this month's primary elections to go to the portal and request an absentee mail-in ballot.

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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