



# Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for March 17, 2020

## Gov. Beshear Takes Decisive Action to Limit Spread of COVID-19 Guidance for closure of public-facing businesses, government offices

(Press Release) Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced additional steps to contain and limit the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). He issued an executive order outlining specific steps all public-facing businesses should take regarding closures, which include:

- By 5:00 p.m. on March 18, 2020, all public-facing businesses that encourage public congregation or, that by the nature of the service to the public, cannot comply with CDC guidelines concerning social distancing, shall cease all in-person operations.
- These public-facing businesses that must close include entertainment, hospitality and recreational facilities, community and recreation centers, gyms and exercise facilities, hair salons, nail salons, spas, concert venues, theaters, and sporting event facilities.
- Those businesses providing food, food processing, agriculture, industrial manufacturing, feed mills, construction, trash collection, retail, grocery and consumer goods, home repair/hardware and auto repair, pharmacy, and other medical facilities, biomedical and healthcare, post offices, insurance, banks, gas stations, laundromats, veterinary clinics and pet stores, warehousing, storage, and distribution, public transportation, and hotel and commercial lodging may remain open, subject to limitations provided in prior orders, but must to the extent practicable implement Centers for Disease Control guidance, including:
  - maintaining a distance of 6 feet between persons;
  - ensuring employees practice appropriate hygiene measures, including regular, thorough handwashing;
  - ensuring that employees who are sick remain home; and
  - regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Gov. Beshear said the overriding goal of the order is to minimize in-person interaction, which is the primary means of transmission of COVID-19. The immediate implementation of the order is necessary as patrons of public-facing businesses gather in large numbers, in close proximity to each other and in enclosed spaces, endangering the health of customers and staff.

Long Term Care Visitation: Gov. Beshear also recommended personal care homes, assisted living, senior care facilities and intermediate care facilities limit visitation only to loved ones that are receiving end-of-life care.

Adult Day Health Centers: To slow the spread of COVID-19, Gov. Beshear issued interim guidance to require the temporary closure of all licensed adult day care centers across the state. This emergency closure will begin on March 20.

Closure of in-person government services: As of 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, all government offices are closed to in-person services.

Case count as of 6:30 PM includes 27 cases. One 66 year old patient in Bourbon County passes away.

Full Press Release: <https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=95>

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**KDPH COVID-19 Website:** [KYCOVID19.ky.gov](https://www.ky.gov/covid19)

**KY COVID-19 Hotline (800) 722-5725**  
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## Coronavirus updates: Americans told to hunker down as death toll rises

(CBS) The White House and Congress on Tuesday said they are working to craft a massive \$1 trillion coronavirus stimulus package to rescue the U.S. economy. Medical workers on the front lines face shortages for life-saving equipment and concerns for their own safety. Health departments across the country said Monday was the deadliest day since the outbreak began.

The virus has now claimed at least 106 lives in the U.S. More than 5,800 people have been diagnosed with the virus in the U.S. Globally, the death toll is over 7,500, with the most aggressive outbreaks still spreading in Europe and Iran.

With hospitals warning they're not prepared for an impending crisis, the Department of Defense is donating five million surgical masks and 2,000 ventilators. The military is also using its labs to process civilian test kits. And Tuesday, Vice President Mike Pence called on the construction industry to donate face masks.

The shortage of medical supplies is forcing some states to request help from the \$8 billion federal stockpile. Washington state, which has seen more than 50 deaths and more than 900 confirmed coronavirus cases, has received more than 145,000 N-95 respirators and 238,560 surgical masks to help combat the spread.

The lack of coronavirus testing has sidelined 200 health care workers across Connecticut because they were potentially exposed to the virus. Until they get tested, they cannot go back to work — which is straining the system.

West Virginia announced Tuesday that a patient has tested positive for coronavirus, according to CBS affiliate WOWK. West Virginia was the last state that had not yet confirmed a case.

Among the other headlines:

- Guns and ammo sales spike in U.S. on coronavirus worries
- NYPD officer tests positive for coronavirus
- Patients in all 50 U.S. states have tested positive
- America has plenty of toilet paper. The hard part is stocking empty store shelves.
- Thousands flock to Florida beaches, ignoring coronavirus concerns
- Johns Hopkins expert: "In some respects we are just getting started in the United States"

Full CBS Coronavirus Update: <https://www.cbsnews.com/live-updates/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-latest-news-2020-03-17/>

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**COVID-19 Latest Updates**

**FAQ for Healthcare Professionals:** - (March 17)- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html>

**Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 (Interim Guidance):**- (March 16)- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html>

**Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):** (March 14)- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>

**Information for Laboratories:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/index.html>

**Prepare to Care for COVID-19: Get Your Practice Ready:** (March 15) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/practice-preparedness.html>

**Guidance for School Settings:** (March 13) - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

**KY: COVID-19 Person Under Investigation (PUI) Report Form (March 15)**

<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/casereportinginstructionsandform.pdf>

**KY: Guidance for Long Term Care Facilities Regarding visitation (March 10):**

<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/Coronavisitationguidancforlongtermcarefacilities.pdf>

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**CMS broadens access to telehealth during COVID-19 public health emergency.**

(AHA Today) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services today [announced](#) several waivers and policy changes to broaden access to telehealth services for Medicare beneficiaries during the COVID-19 public health emergency. These include:

- Waivers of originating and geographic site restrictions on Medicare telehealth services, permitting the delivery of these services in all areas of the country and all locations, including patients' homes.
- The ability of providers to use expanded telehealth authority for new and established patients for diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19, as well as for conditions unrelated to the pandemic.
- Permission for providers to use everyday communications technologies, such as FaceTime or Skype, during the COVID-19 public health emergency, without running afoul of HIPAA penalties.

CMS also released a [frequently asked questions](#) document about the changes included in its announcement.

As a companion to the Medicare telehealth guidance, CMS also [released Medicaid telehealth guidance](#) to states. While CMS has underscored that Medicaid programs have the flexibility to allow for telehealth reimbursement and do not need the federal government's permission to do so, the guidance is designed to assist states in understanding the policy options available to them to reimburse Medicaid providers that provide telehealth services.

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**FDA expands testing guidance, grants diagnostic EUA to two labs**

(AHA Today) The Food and Drug Administration yesterday updated its policy for [COVID-19 diagnostics](#) to increase the amount and types of tests and expand testing capabilities in health care, reference and

commercial labs. The changes include allowing states to take responsibility for tests developed and used by labs in their states, removing FDA from the equation; allowing commercial manufacturers to distribute, and labs to use, these tests before the FDA grants an emergency use authorization; and offering recommendations for developers wanting to create serological tests, as long as these tests are not used as the sole means for diagnosis. FDA also [issued](#) EUAs to Hologic for its COVID-19 assay and LabCorp for its PCR test.

#### **CDC changes test interpretation for CDC EUA**

(AHA Today) Clinical laboratories using the [CDC 2019-nCoV Real-Time Reverse Transcriptase-PCR Diagnostic Panel Emergency Use Authorization](#) will no longer have to seek additional confirmation from CDC but instead will be able to report presumptive positive results as positives, CDC said. In addition, labs using any test modifying the CDC EUA must still send their assay information to the FDA for emergency use authorization.

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#### **The Joint Commission suspends surveying**

(AHA Today) In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Joint Commission yesterday suspended all surveying until at least the end of April. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, in an email to stakeholders, said it agreed with TJC's decision. TJC said it also is working with its field staff and customers on plans to redirect TJC resources to best assist customers during this time.

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact [rbartlett@kyha.com](mailto:rbartlett@kyha.com) (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.

**From KY Public Health - March 16, 2020**

The attached guidance was developed by the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) for Emergency Departments, but others can use this guidance as well. Follow this chart to determine if your patient qualifies for state KDPH laboratory testing or if your patient should have a specimen sent to a non-KDPH Laboratory. Please call KDPH's COVID-19 Hotline at (888) 404-1539 if you have any questions.

**Kentucky Department for Public Health  
Emergency Department (ED) Flow Chart for COVID-19  
Testing**

