



# Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for December 5, 2020

## Kentucky's Highest Week of COVID-19 Cases

(From [Press Releases](#)) Gov. Andy Beshear announced on Saturday that Kentucky has had its new highest week of COVID-19 cases, even with one day left to report and encouraged Kentuckians to keep fighting. "With a day still to go, we have set a new one-week record for highest cases in the commonwealth," Gov. Beshear said.

"The imminent arrival of COVID-19 vaccines is a monumental scientific accomplishment offering great hope that this devastating pandemic can at last be ended," commented Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Department for Public Health. "Initially, though, very limited quantities of vaccine coupled with complicated and changing distribution logistics mean not everyone can have access at the very start. It's essential that everyone work together and know that all Kentuckians will be given access as rapidly as vaccine supplies, shipping, storage, and handling limitations allow. There is a bright light of hope ahead; let's all support each other as we look forward to better days soon."

As of 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5, Gov. Beshear reported the following COVID-19 numbers:

New cases today: 3,892 (Friday's new cases: 3,614)  
New deaths today: 23 (Friday's new deaths: 25)  
Positivity rate: 9.80% (Friday's positivity: 9.93%)  
Total deaths: 2,062  
Currently hospitalized: 1,731  
Currently in ICU: 401  
Currently on ventilator: 226

**Pharmacy Refills Update:** Gov. Beshear signed an executive order Friday that extends previous orders allowing pharmacists to dispense 30-day refills. The current executive order was set to expire Saturday at midnight; the new order will be effective for 30 days beginning Dec. 4.

To view the [full daily report](#), [incidence rate map](#), [new statewide requirements](#), testing locations, long term-care and other congregate facilities update, school reports and [guidance](#), [red zone counties](#), [red zone recommendations](#), the White House Coronavirus Task Force reports for Kentucky and other key guidance visit, [kycovid19.ky.gov](http://kycovid19.ky.gov).

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## Kentucky schools notified next phase of COVID-19 vaccine rollout will be educators

(WLWT) Kentucky's governor called on school superintendents Friday to begin planning for the eventual distribution of coronavirus vaccines to their employees. Kentucky's K-12 schools are under orders to halt in-person instruction. Middle and high schools will be required to continue remote instruction until January. Elementary schools can reopen Dec. 7 if they aren't located in a "red-zone" county.

The latest development in the state's plans to allocate the vaccine came as Gov. Andy Beshear reported more than 3,600 new coronavirus cases and 25 more virus-related deaths. Kentucky is approaching a milestone of 200,000 virus cases since the start of the pandemic.

Source: <https://www.wlwt.com/article/kentucky-schools-notified-next-phase-of-covid-19-vaccine-rollout-will-be-educators/34879568>

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## CDC: It's time for "universal face mask use"

(Axios) The CDC is urging "[universal face mask use](#)" for the first time since the coronavirus pandemic began, citing recent case spikes as the U.S. has entered a phase of "high-level transmission" before winter officially begins.

Daily COVID-related deaths across the U.S. [hit a new record](#) on Wednesday. Face coverings have been shown to increase protection of the wearer and those around them, despite [some Americans' reluctance](#) to use them.

"With colder weather, more time spent indoors, the ongoing U.S. holiday season, and silent spread of disease" the country now requires a multi-pronged approach to reduce the risk of transmission. Universal mask use outside people's homes — whether indoors or in close proximity to others outdoors — is one crucial strategy, according to the CDC.

This summary guidance highlights critical evidence-based CDC recommendations and sustainable strategies to reduce COVID-19 transmission. These strategies include

- 1) Universal face mask use,
- 2) Maintaining physical distance from other persons and limiting in-person contacts,
- 3) Avoiding nonessential indoor spaces and crowded outdoor spaces,
- 4) Increasing testing to rapidly identify and isolate infected persons,
- 5) Promptly identifying, quarantining, and testing close contacts of persons with known COVID-19,
- 6) Safeguarding persons most at risk for severe illness or death from infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19,



- 7) Protecting essential workers with provision of adequate personal protective equipment and safe work practices,
- 8) Postponing travel,
- 9) Increasing room air ventilation and enhancing hand hygiene and environmental disinfection, and
- 10) Achieving widespread availability and high community coverage with effective COVID-19 vaccines. In combination, these strategies can reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission, long-term sequelae or disability, and death, and mitigate the pandemic's economic impact.

The CDC guidance says that consistent implementation of these strategies improves health equity, preserves health care capacity, maintains the function of essential businesses, and supports the availability of in-person instruction for kindergarten through grade 12 schools and preschool. Individual persons, households, and communities should take these actions now to reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission from its current high level.

Axios story: <https://www.axios.com/covid-cdc-universal-face-mask-d270f815-0843-4986-89a4-dbd9bf851473.html>

**CDC Guidance:** [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6949e2.htm?s\\_cid=mm6949e2\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6949e2.htm?s_cid=mm6949e2_w)

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**Potential game changer in development...**

**New antiviral drug blocks Covid virus within 24 hrs**

Learn more: <https://news360.com/article/544048324>

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**The U.S. has passed the hospital breaking point**

(The Atlantic) Since the beginning of the pandemic, public-health experts have warned of one particular nightmare. It is possible, they said, for the number of coronavirus patients to exceed the capacity of hospitals in a state or city to take care of them. Faced with a surge of severely ill people, doctors and nurses will have to put beds in hallways, spend less time with patients, and become more strict about whom they admit into the hospital at all. The quality of care will fall; Americans who need hospital beds for any other reason—a heart attack, a broken leg—will struggle to find space. Many people will unnecessarily suffer and die.

Read more: <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/12/the-worst-case-scenario-is-happening-hospitals-are-overwhelmed/617301/>

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**'You can't find additional employees'**

**Staffing top concern among Cincinnati regional hospitals**

(WLWT) As COVID cases continue to surge, the number of health care workers getting the virus is rising too, causing staffing issues the Health Collaborative is calling their number one concern.

"We've been able to find space. You can't find additional employees," said Dr. Steve Davis. "They're working longer, they're taking more shifts and they're taking care of more patients." Davis said he's hearing from more hospitals in the region that are reporting staffing issues. The problem is more patients and fewer frontline workers to help them. In some places, already exhausted health caregivers are working even more hours.

Some hospitals are calling on recently retired nurses to come back and help. Educators and nursing students are being considered for certain positions.

Children's Hospital, which hasn't been hit as hard as adult hospitals, has expanded the age guidelines in order to help relieve some of the pressure from other hospitals.

St. Elizabeth has turned three of its five urgent care facilities into COVID-only centers to help with the issue.

Full story: <https://www.wlwt.com/article/you-cant-find-additional-employees-staffing-top-concern-among-regional-hospitals/34877344>

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**Pandemic Is Driving U.S. Surge in Cardiac Arrests Tied to Overdose**

<https://news360.com/article/544040261>  
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**Ad Council Prepares Big Campaign On Getting The Coronavirus Vaccine**

(NPR) The Ad Council is preparing to convince people that a coronavirus vaccine [is safe](#). Only about 60% of American adults say they would get the vaccine, according to [a recent survey](#) by the Pew Research Center. That's up from about 50% in September, well before vaccines were announced.

Lisa Sherman, president and CEO of the Ad Council, tells NPR's *All Things Considered* that the [\\$50 million campaign](#) will be the most significant in the group's history. It's "our moonshot moment. We're approaching this with the size and the speed and the scale and the urgency unlike anything we've ever done before."

She says the campaign, which doesn't yet have a catchphrase, will be widely targeted with a "unified and consistent message" going beyond television to include modern technology platforms. But it will also work to specifically reach "communities of color that have been the hardest hit by the pandemic and where we see higher levels of hesitancy." The Pew survey found that only 42% of Black adults are inclined to be vaccinated.

Learn more and hear a podcast: <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/12/04/943151549/and-now-for-an-important-message-convincing-you-to-get-the-coronavirus-vaccine>  
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HOWARD L. BOST MEMORIAL HEALTH POLICY FORUM WEBINAR SERIES

**Moving Kids Towards Natural Highs:**

Kentucky Opportunities to Prevent Youth Substance Use, Suicide and Risky Behavior

Understanding Youth  
and Building  
Good Mental Health

Monday, December 14, 2020  
2:00 to 3:00 p.m. ET



Register here: <https://bit.ly/35c8AVI>



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 [Preparedness@kyha.com](mailto:Preparedness@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.