



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for March 24, 2021

**KY Governor reported 294 cases, 11 deaths yesterday
Positivity lowest since 2020; [Over 1,186,000 have vaccinated](#)**

Read story: <https://www.kyforward.com/beshear-reports-294-cases-11-deaths-positivity-lowest-since-2020-get-vaccinated-1186000-have/>

Related - [Governor Orders Flags Lowered to Half Staff in Remembrance of Boulder Victims](#)

US DOJ under Pressure to Treat Atlanta Shootings as Hate Crimes Arrest made in [Boulder shooting](#)

([IACP's The Lead](#)) The [Washington Post](#) (3/23, Nakamura) says the Justice Department is “facing mounting pressure to file federal hate-crime charges in the Atlanta spa shootings, setting up a test for the Biden administration in managing public expectations in a case that experts said illustrates the difficulty in prosecuting and winning a conviction.” According to the Post, “Experts said law enforcement’s handling of the killings of eight people, including six women of Asian descent, at three spas in the Atlanta area last week has demonstrated flaws in how federal and local authorities are collaborating on the investigation into whether” alleged shooter Robert Aaron Long was “motivated by race or gender or national origin.”

[USA Today](#) (3/23, Wagner) reports, “At a news conference late Monday, authorities said the assailant was wounded and in custody, receiving hospital treatment.” The [Boulder \(CO\) Daily Camera](#) (3/23) reports that after his arrest, “Alissa did not say anything other than to ask to speak to his mother,” according to an arrest affidavit. The [Washington Post](#) (3/23, Schneider, Bernstein, Bellware, Timberg) has a profile of Alissa, and the [Denver Post](#) (3/23) reports that he had “previously attacked a classmate at Arvada West High School, according to court records and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.”

The Future of the Pandemic in the U.S.: Experts Look Ahead

(NPR) A year after the pandemic shut down the country, a growing number of infectious disease experts, epidemiologists, public health officials and others have started to entertain a notion that has long seemed out-of-reach: The worst of the pandemic may be over for the United States. No one thinks that’s guaranteed by any means. There are many ways the pandemic could resurge. But many say it’s becoming increasingly possible that the end may finally be in sight.

And the newfound optimism comes with three big caveats: The worst may be over if too many people don’t let down their guard too fast; if the more dangerous variants don’t make cases surge before enough people get vaccinated, and if the vaccination campaign doesn’t stumble badly. But if none of those problems occur, life could slowly but steadily return to something much more normal.

Read more: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/03/24/976146368/the-future-of-the-pandemic-in-the-u-s-experts-look-ahead>

Related story - As some states open Covid-19 vaccines to all, many are still weeks away

Full CNN story: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/23/health/covid-19-vaccine-eligible-to-all-states-timeline-wellness/index.html>

National Guard Soldiers Held at Gunpoint While Moving Vaccines

(Newser) A group of 11 unarmed National Guardsmen was held at gunpoint while transporting coronavirus vaccines in Texas on Monday. A male driver had followed a convoy of vehicles from a travel stop in Lubbock before repeatedly attempting to run the vehicles off the road, police tell [WAFB](#). He then used his truck to block the roadway, forcing 11 Guardsmen in three vehicles to stop. The suspect, who claimed he was a detective, pointed a loaded gun at the unarmed but uniformed soldiers and demanded to search their vehicles, police say. The Guardsmen, who’d been transporting vaccines to Matador, complied. The suspect—identified as Larry Harris of Willcox, Ariz.—later told Idalou Police that he thought the vehicles’ occupants had kidnapped a woman and child.

Read more: <https://www.newser.com/story/304022/soldiers-held-at-gunpoint-while-moving-vaccines.html>

Brazil Is Looking Like The Worst Place On Earth For COVID-19

(NPR) The country is now widely viewed as the epicenter of the pandemic, with the highest number of daily deaths of any nation. On Tuesday, that number topped 3,000 for the first time, with 3,251 deaths recorded. And this week, Brazil’s registered COVID-19 deaths will rise above 300,000 — a toll exceeded only by the United States.

In more than half of the country's 26 states, ICU occupancy rates have hit 90% or above, [according to a bulletin](#) posted March 16 by the Brazilian medical research institution Fiocruz. Brazil's public health systems are "living through the worst collapse in history," it read.

There have been numerous reports in Brazilian media and on social media platforms of patients dying while waiting for beds, shortages of medicines and oxygen, and bodies being dumped in hospital corridors.

Learn more: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2021/03/23/980391847/brazil-is-looking-like-the-worst-place-on-earth-for-covid-19>

Johns Hopkins: Health Security Headlines from [March 23, 2021](#)

[What We Know and Don't Know About Long Covid](#) (*STAT*) It doesn't have a formal name or a definition. No one can predict who will develop it, but whether you call it long Covid or post-acute Covid-19 or just identify yourself as a long-hauler, the constellation of prolonged symptoms after Covid-19 infection has become all too familiar.

[Common Fungus Emerges As Threat to Hospitalized COVID-19 Patients](#) (*Science*) COVID-19 brings thousands of people into hospitals every day—but their coronavirus infections are not always the direct reason they die. Dangerous secondary infections by opportunistic pathogens are common in intensive care units, and physicians are raising the alarm about a particular microbial threat to COVID-19 patients: a common fungus known as Aspergillus.

Emerging evidence suggests that infection with SARS-CoV-2—and possibly the drugs used to treat it—makes COVID-19 patients especially vulnerable to Aspergillus.

[Major Coronavirus Variant Found in Pets for First Time](#) (*Science*) Two reports released this week have found the first evidence that dogs and cats can become infected by B.1.1.7, a recent variant of the pandemic coronavirus that transmits more readily between people and also appears more lethal in them. The finds mark the first time one of the several major variants of concern has been seen outside of humans.

[NOAA Upgrades Forecasts As Climate Change Drives More Severe Storms](#) (*NPR*) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration upgraded the computer model that forecasters use to predict the weather one to two weeks in the future, called the Global Forecast System. The new model is better at predicting where hurricanes will form and how intense they will be as well as where and when snowstorms and rainstorms will occur, and how much precipitation will fall.

ASPR TRACIE

Healthcare Coalition Burn Surge Annex Tabletop Exercise Toolkit

The [Burn Surge Annex Tabletop Exercise \(TTX\) Toolkit](#) can be used by healthcare coalitions (HCCs) to enhance operational area awareness and capability to effectively address the needs of burn victims as part of a whole community emergency response framework. HCCs are not required to use this template but it can be utilized to satisfy Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) requirements for the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Cooperative Agreement. ASPR TRACIE has also developed a [HCC Burn Surge Annex Template](#) and has many [additional resources for HCCs](#) and [burn planners](#).

[NOTE: Watch for the ASPR TACIE Express coming out later today for more goodies!]

S&T Partnership Enhances Public Safety Spectrum Efficiency, Improves Interoperability

(US DHS) Major events in any community are a massive planning effort—like the Presidential Inauguration, for instance. For public safety, they mean planning to stay connected over open airways—which is achieved over public safety spectrum bandwidth (often referred to as the 700 and 800 MHz public safety band).

Having enough bandwidth is key to effectively coordinating staffing and communications resources. However, it comes with its challenges—and that's what a grant from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [Science and Technology Directorate](#) (S&T) is working to address with partners at the National Regional Planning Council (NRPC) and the Association of Public Safety Communication Officials International (APCO).

The grant is helping regional planning communities (RPC) secure Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensing capabilities and public safety spectrum bandwidth, allowing agencies to better respond to major incidents or plan large public events. [<Article link>](#)

[IACP's The Lead](#): US Lawmakers Continue Policing Reform Efforts

[CNN](#) (3/23, Dean, Wright, Grayer) reports, "Bipartisan discussions are underway as lawmakers try once again to find consensus for a bill to overhaul policing that can pass the United States Senate." According to CNN, "The lead sponsor of last summer's failed Senate bill," South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, "told CNN he met with a working group on the issue in recent weeks and is 'hopeful' this effort will work." CNN adds, "The current version of the House bill, passed on March 3, would overhaul qualified immunity laws for law enforcement, prohibit racial and religious profiling by law enforcement, ban on no-knock warrants in federal drug cases and establish a

national registry of police misconduct maintained by the Department of Justice. The bill would also ban chokeholds at the federal level and classify them as a civil rights violation.”

EIS/Global Resilience Commission Webinar

Water Infrastructure Resilience: What if there is no second chance?

TODAY, 24 March 11:00 AM ET/10 AM CT

[Advance Registration](#)

NETEC COVID-19 Webinar Series

Ebola in the Age of COVID

TODAY, March 24th, 1 PM ET/Noon CT

CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER!

Webinar: *What the COVID-19 vaccine means for EMS operations*

(NHTSA) Millions of EMS clinicians and members of the public across the nation have now received a COVID-19 vaccine. But exactly what does that mean for EMS systems and organizations? The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), Office of EMS is hosting a webinar in its EMS Focus webinar series to provide the opportunity to learn what we know, and what we don't know yet, about how the vaccines are changing our approach to the coronavirus pandemic. You'll hear from experts helping to create and implement guidance for EMS services during these unprecedented times. They'll address topics such as:

- Testing and quarantine implications
- EMS clinicians who have not been vaccinated
- Vaccines and coronavirus variants

This webinar will be held on **Thursday, March 25, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 pm ET**. Attendees will be encouraged to submit questions during any point of the discussion. The webinar and question and answer period will last approximately one hour.

To register, visit NHTSA Office of EMS' [registration page](#) for this event. (Source: [NHTSA](#))

Upcoming COVID-19 ECHO Session

COVID-19 and the Vaccine for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women

Thursday, March 25, 2021 @ 11am

Link to their website & registration: <https://med.emory.edu/departments/medicine/divisions/infectious-diseases/serious-communicable-diseases-program/covid-19-resources/echo-upcoming-session.html>

Questions can be directed to scdp.echo@emory.edu

KY Public Health is Recruiting Two Healthcare Regional Coordinators!

HPP Region 4 (HEART): <https://gohire.org/job/healthcare-coalition-readiness-and-response-coordinator-ky-region-4/>

HPP Region 7 (Appalachia HCC): <http://gohire.org/job/healthcare-coalition-readiness-and-response-coordinator-hccrc-for-region-7-kentucky-appalachian-healthcare-coalition-kdph/>

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 (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.