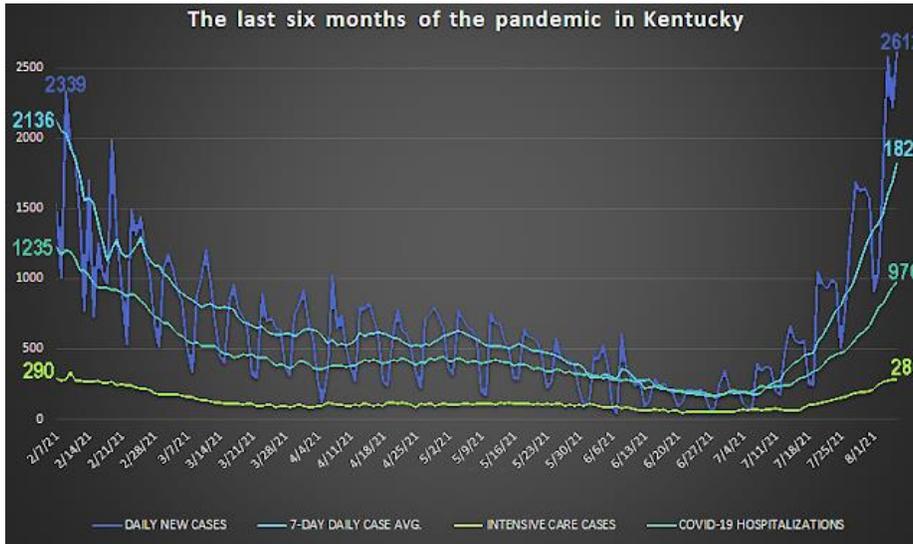




# Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for August 7, 2021

## A six-week surge of the coronavirus has put Ky. about where it was six months ago, but then it was going down; now it's going up

(KY Health News) Six weeks of the Delta variant have put the pandemic in Kentucky about where it was six months ago, but then it was coming off its biggest surge. Just how big the current surge will get is anybody's guess, because vaccinations are rising more slowly than new cases are increasing and the coronavirus is mutating.



Kentucky reported 2,612 new cases of the virus Friday, the largest in one day since Jan. 30. That raised the seven-day rolling average of daily new cases by more than 100, to 1,820 per day. That's the highest since Feb. 10.

The average has increased 175 percent over the last two weeks, giving Kentucky the nation's 14th highest rate of increase, according to The New York Times.

Covid-19 hospitalizations and intensive-care cases continued to rise, to the point that more than 1,000 Kentuckians are

likely to be hospitalized with the disease this weekend. Hospitals in the state reported 976 cases, 286 of them in intensive care and 121 of those on mechanical ventilation. The next report will be Monday.

Covid-19 deaths, a lagging indicator of the pandemic, are starting to creep up. The state reported six more Friday, raising Kentucky's toll to 7,372 and the seven-day average to 5.4, the highest since mid-June.

### Eleven Hospital Systems in Kentucky to Require Vaccinations for Health Care Workforce

(Press Release) Gov. Andy Beshear said hospital executives from 11 health care systems in the commonwealth are announcing the following pledge:

"The health care facilities below are committed to the health and safety of our patients and employees. In support of this commitment, we will all require our health care workforce to initiate a complete COVID-19 vaccination series no later than Sept. 15, 2021."

The new policy will help health systems respond to a surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the delta variant. Yesterday, the Governor announced 2,583 new cases (the highest since Feb. 3, 2021) and a 10.08% test positivity rate (the highest since Jan. 24, 2021).

Full press release: <https://chfs.ky.gov/News/Documents/nrhealthrequiredvax.pdf>

### CDC study confirms vaccination's greater protection against COVID-19 compared to prior infection and natural immunity

(AHA Today) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today released a study confirming the comparative effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines versus natural immunity, including immunity gained from prior SARS-CoV-2 infection. Researchers found that, among hundreds of **Kentucky** residents with previous infections through June 2021, those who were unvaccinated had 2.34 times the odds of reinfection compared with those who were fully vaccinated. CDC says the research suggests that among people who have had COVID-19 previously, getting fully vaccinated provides additional protection against reinfection.

A second CDC study, published concurrently, shows the extent to which vaccines prevented COVID-19-related hospitalizations among the highest risk age groups.

**The health care systems** adding this vaccine requirement for staff include:

Appalachian Regional Healthcare (ARH), Baptist Health, CHI Saint Joseph Health, King's Daughters Health

System, Med Center Health, Norton Healthcare, Pikeville Medical Center, St. Claire Healthcare, St. Elizabeth Healthcare, UK Healthcare and UofL Health.

In a joint statement, the Kentucky Hospital Association, Kentucky Medical Association and the Kentucky Nurses Association said: "KHA, KMA and KNA support hospitals and health systems amending their existing vaccine policies to require COVID-19 vaccines for their health care employees. Vaccination against COVID-19 is our best tool to prevent spread of the disease, protect our patients and ensure the health and well-being of our hospital workforce and all Kentuckians. We recognize that each hospital and health system is unique and encourage each hospital and health system to determine the appropriate timeline to implement a requirement."

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**Vaccine demand jumps in states pummeled by Delta variant**

([Politico](#)) Demand for Covid-19 vaccines is surging in states hardest hit by the Delta variant, but weary public health officials worry the renewed interest will fizzle. The number of Americans receiving a first vaccine dose each week has nearly doubled over the last month. The largest increases have come in areas where overall vaccination rates are low and hospitalizations and deaths are rising sharply. On July 30, Alabama vaccinated more than 16,000 people — the first time it had cleared that threshold since May. Louisiana, which is experiencing the worst Covid-19 outbreak in the country, has seen the number of doses administered each day quadruple over the last three weeks.

State and local officials in these areas say that fears about the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant, and the risk of death, are finally driving more people to seek out shots — succeeding where months of concerted appeals from pastors, pop stars and politicians have failed. But whether the recent spike in demand will meaningfully boost vaccination rates, which are still below 50 percent in more than a dozen states, remains to be seen.

Full story: <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/08/06/vaccine-demand-states-delta-502701?cid=apn>

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**NETEC Launches New Three-part Podcast:**

***Transmission Interrupted***

***"Viruses, Mutations and Variants – OH, MY!"***

Back to Basics

***First episode: [Viruses, Mutations, and Variants. Oh My!](#)***

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**COVID-19 antibodies may linger for at least 7 months, study suggests**

([CIDRAP Scan](#)) COVID-19 antibodies remained 7 months' post-infection, with some even increasing in levels, according to a follow-up study of 578 healthcare workers at the Hospital Clínic at Barcelona. The results, which were published today in *Nature Communications*, also include evidence that exposure to common cold coronaviruses may contribute to some cross protection.

The cohort submitted four different blood samples from March to October 2020, which were assessed for Immunoglobulin (Ig) A, IgM, and IgG antibodies to six different SARS-CoV-2 antigens as well as the presence of antibodies against four human coronaviruses (HCoVs). By month 6 post-symptom onset (PSO), 16.4% of the cohort had tested seropositive for COVID-19 at least once, and the researchers were able to look at kinetic curves based on samples from 76 symptomatic participants at a maximum of 7.7 PSO.

"Although cross-protection by pre-existing immunity to common cold coronaviruses remains to be confirmed, this could help explain the big differences in susceptibility to the disease within the population," said study lead Carlota Dobaño, PhD, in a Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISIGlobal) press release.

**Aug 6 *Nat Comm* [study](#)**

**Aug 6 ISI Global [press release](#)**

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**Gov. Beshear Encourages Kentuckians Impacted by Nicholas County Flooding to Seek Help at Multiagency Recovery Center**

([Press Release](#)) Thursday, Gov. Andy Beshear [announced](#) the opening of a multiagency recovery center to assist residents of Nicholas County impacted by the July 30 severe flooding. Friday, he reminded residents to visit the center and detailed which agencies would be there to provide assistance.

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The KHEREF 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 KHEREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.