



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for January 6, 2022

Gov. Beshear Provides Update on Winter Storm & COVID

([From Press Release](#)) Gov. Andy Beshear provided his Team Kentucky update and said due to inclement weather he closed all state office buildings as of 12 p.m. EST. Executive branch agencies will continue to provide services to the citizens of the commonwealth. The Governor urged Kentuckians to avoid travel due to hazardous road conditions and reports of multiple accidents. District crews from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet have been pretreating roads this week, with crews out today responding to hazardous roadways. For more information on roadway conditions during the winter, visit [SnowKy.Ky.gov](https://www.snowky.com).

COVID-19 Omicron Variant Update - The Governor also announced 9,836 new COVID-19 cases were reported today, the highest number of new daily cases since the pandemic began. The state also reported its highest ever daily test positivity rate, 23.67%. “Nearly 1 in 4 people being tested are coming up positive,” the Governor said. “So this week we will surpass last week’s numbers for most cases in any week during the pandemic. Hospital admissions are also increasing, and they are starting to increase rapidly.”

There are 1,783 currently hospitalized, with 402 in an ICU and 227 on a vent. There were 35 new deaths recorded.

The Governor said 62% of all Kentuckians have received at least their first dose, as well as 67% of Kentuckians ages 5 and older and 74% of all Kentucky adults. In addition, 890,081 Kentuckians have had a vaccination booster, about 20% of the total population.

The Governor also noted that on Jan. 5, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorsed youth 12 to 17 years old are [recommended to receive a booster](#) shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series. At this time, only the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is authorized and recommended for adolescents age 12 to 17 years old. [See article below.]

Tornado and Storm Recovery Efforts - The Governor also provided an update on New Year’s Day storms that impacted much of the commonwealth, reporting the National Weather Service has confirmed nine tornadoes affecting 10 Kentucky counties with wind speeds ranging from 80 to 115 mph.

Watch the briefing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuzzHDHS1gl>

Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security COVID-19 Situation report

(From [Johns Hopkins](#) – US Update) The [US CDC](#) is currently reporting 57.2 million cumulative cases of COVID-19 and 827,879 deaths. The US is averaging 554,328 new cases and 1,238 deaths per day.*

**Changes in state-level reporting may affect the accuracy of recently reported data, particularly over weekends. In an effort to reflect the longer-term trends, the numbers reported here may not correspond to the most recent dates.*

Since December 27, 2021, the US has continually set new records for both single-day incidence and average daily incidence. Notably, the US exceeded 300k, 400k, 500k, 600k, 700k, 800k, and 900k new cases reported in a single day for the first time since the onset of the pandemic.

COVID-19 hospitalizations in the US are rapidly approaching a record high as well. The record is [16,497 new hospitalizations per day](#) (January 8, 2021), and the CDC reported 14,776 on January 2, 2022. The average has nearly doubled since December 18, 2021. The CDC is also reporting a surge in the number of [current hospitalizations](#), up from an average of 61,574 hospitalized COVID-19 patients on December 20 to 85,423 on January 2, an increase of nearly 40% over that period. The current average is 31% below the record high—124,031 on January 11, 2021—but the trend is increasing rapidly.

Daily mortality appears to have increased slightly over the past several weeks, but reporting fluctuations over the holidays make it difficult to determine whether this is the start of a longer-term trend. A surge in hospitalizations could place severe stress on health systems nationwide, particularly in the context of [staffing shortages](#) in many parts of the country, which could contribute to increased mortality for COVID-19 patients as well as those seeking care for other conditions.

[\[Click here\]](#) for the full Johns Hopkins update.]

CDC Endorses Booster Shot for Eligible 12-17 Year Olds

(CDC [Press Release Jan 5th](#)) CDC is endorsing the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices’ (ACIP) recommendation to expand eligibility of booster doses to those 12 to 15 years old. CDC now recommends that adolescents age 12 to 17 years old should receive a booster shot 5 months after their initial Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination series.

Data show that COVID-19 boosters help broaden and strengthen protection against Omicron and other SARS-CoV-2 variants. ACIP reviewed the available safety data following the administration of over 25 million vaccine doses in adolescents; COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.

At this time, only the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is authorized and recommended for adolescents aged 12-17.

CDC Director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, said, "It is critical that we protect our children and teens from COVID-19 infection and the complications of severe disease. Today, I endorsed ACIP's vote to expand eligibility and strengthen our recommendations for booster doses. We now recommend that all adolescents aged 12-17 years should receive a booster shot 5 months after their primary series. This booster dose will provide optimized protection against COVID-19 and the Omicron variant. I encourage all parents to keep their children up to date with CDC's COVID-19 vaccine recommendations."

A Texas team comes up with a COVID vaccine that could be a global game changer

(NPR) A vaccine authorized in December for use in India may help solve one of the most vexing problems in global public health: How to supply lower-income countries with a COVID-19 vaccine that is safe, effective and affordable. The vaccine is called CORBEVAX. It uses old but proven vaccine technology and can be manufactured far more easily than most, if not all, of the COVID-19 vaccines in use today.

The story of CORBEVAX begins some two decades ago. [Peter Hotez](#) and [Maria Elena Bottazzi](#) were medical researchers at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where they worked on vaccines and treatments for what are called neglected tropical diseases, such as schistosomiasis and hookworm. "It's the same technology as the hepatitis B vaccine that's been around for decades," Hotez says.

Full story and Podcast: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2022/01/05/1070046189/a-texas-team-comes-up-with-a-covid-vaccine-that-could-be-a-global-game-changer>

16 states (including KY) where hospitals are experiencing workforce shortages

(Becker Hospital Review) Sixteen states are experiencing critical staffing shortages in at least 25 percent of their hospitals, according to [HHS data](#) posted Dec. 28. (KY is at 31.73%.) A critical staffing shortage is based on a facility's needs and internal policies for staffing ratios, according to HHS. Hospitals using temporary staff to meet staffing ratios are not counted among those experiencing a shortage

The U.S. is seeing a 126 percent increase in cases over the past 14 days and an 11 percent increase in hospitalizations, according to [The New York Times](#).

Full story: <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/workforce/16-states-where-hospitals-are-experiencing-workforce-shortages.html>

Man Arrested On Charges of Attacking Vaccination Clinic Workers

The [Washington Post](#) (1/5, Bella) reports a man in Southern California "was arrested after he recently attacked workers at a coronavirus vaccination clinic, allegedly calling them 'murderers' and falsely accusing the staffers of causing the covid pandemic, according to police and clinic officials." The Post says, "Two staff members with Families Together of Orange County were injured in a Dec. 30 attack on the group's mobile clinic...the organization said in a news release Wednesday." Families Together "said one of the members 'sustained serious injuries,'" but that "both workers 'are expected to make a full recovery within a few days.'" Thomas Apollo, "of Poway, Calif., was arrested and booked into the Orange County jail Thursday on suspicion of battery and resisting arrest, according to police. He was released on bail Friday, records show." Apollo "is scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 27."

Kentucky's flu season is in full swing, with cases still increasing; cases have been confirmed in 15 of the state's 16 health regions

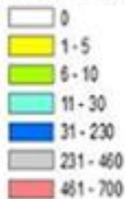
(KY Health News) Influenza cases in Kentucky continue on the rise, and health officials say it's not too late to get your flu vaccination. Flu season typically peaks in February, but runs through May.

"It is very important that people get their flu vaccine," said Brooke Hudspeth, chief practice officer at the **University of Kentucky** College of Pharmacy. "We know that flu vaccines work and they are very well tolerated. And they are a key way to help prevent complications that we see from the flu."

The latest weekly report from the state **Department for Public Health** shows that in the week ended Dec. 18, Kentucky counted 618 new flu cases, up from 402 the previous week, an increase of nearly 54%. That followed a week in which the state saw a jump of 106%. The state has recorded 1,313 cases this season. No flu-related deaths have been reported this year.

Fewer adults in Kentucky got a flu vaccine last season, but the state also saw a big drop in cases. During the same reporting week last year, Kentucky had only two confirmed cases of the flu, and a total of 127 for the season. The drop was likely due to the strict public-health measures taken against Covid-19, such as masking and social distancing.

Total Confirmed Influenza Cases (n=1,313)



According to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**, the number of adults getting a flu vaccine in Kentucky dropped to 44.9% in the 2020-21 flu season, compared to 48.4% in the 2019-20 flu season.

[Click the headline above for the full story.]

CDC Reports Increase in Human Rabies Cases Linked to Bats in the US

(CDC Press Release) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is raising awareness of the risks of [rabies](#) from bats in the U.S. after three people, including one child, died from rabies between late September and early November 2021. The three cases, described in the January 6, 2022, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, bring the total number of cases in 2021 to five, compared to no reported rabies cases in people during 2019 and 2020.

Over a five-week period between September 28, and November 3, 2021, three people— one each in Idaho, Illinois, and Texas— were confirmed to have rabies after direct contact with [bats](#) in or around their homes and died. None of the three individuals received [post-exposure prophylaxis \(PEP\)](#), shots that can prevent rabies from developing if received before symptoms start.

Bat bites do not always cause a visible mark yet can still spread rabies virus through infected saliva – so any direct contact with a bat should be assessed by a clinical or public health provider. It typically takes anywhere between three weeks to three months, though sometimes more or less time, for people to develop [symptoms](#) if infected. PEP is effective in preventing rabies until symptoms develop. Once symptoms begin, rabies is nearly always fatal. Full press release: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0106-human-rabies.html>

Can FEMA and the Feds Serve as Disaster 911?

(Government Technology) Is it the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) role to rush to every disaster, no matter the size, to help a state or local community? See this article: "[Last Year's 'Relentless' Disasters Challenged Fed Response.](#)" It would appear that we have been on that path for some time and, as illustrated in the above article, it would appear we are revving the engine to get there faster and with more help. The fact of the matter is that most states are not prepared to help people, local governments or businesses in a post-disaster environment. Disaster recovery is a federal program, and that is why states will ask for a presidential disaster declaration even for relatively small disasters. If the feds are taking care of their citizens, they don't have to lift a finger or pen to write checks.

The number of disasters is multiplying and FEMA will need to triple or quadruple in size just to manage that level of effort. Other federal departments will also have to step up with increases in staffing to manage and provide all the resources needed.

Read more: <https://www.govtech.com/em/emergency-blogs/disaster-zone/can-fema-and-the-feds-serve-as-disaster-911>

[Feature Article: Building Community Climate Resilience with Compound-Flood Modeling Tools](#)

(DHS) When Hurricane Ida made landfall in Louisiana in August 2021, it was classified as a Category 4 storm with 150 mph winds, a storm surge that measured at more than five feet in New Orleans and 10 feet in Grand Isle, and rainfall of more than 15 inches. Inland flooding from the rain, combined with overflowing waterways and storm-surge flooding, resulted in a compound-flood event.

In 2021, extreme flooding from rain affected residents across the United States, causing property damage and loss of life. These extreme weather events are becoming all too common. In fact, a recent United Nations report—[Climate Change 2021](#)—found that heavy rain events are likely to become more intense and frequent, resulting in an increase in severe flooding events around the globe.

Preparing for and responding to climate change is a priority for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), with Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas announcing earlier this year the creation of a [Climate Change Action Group](#) to drive the department's cross-functional efforts. And as DHS' research and development arm, the [Science and Technology Directorate](#) (S&T) is developing resilience tools and resources to help communities and first responders prepare for the effects of climate change.

[Click the headline above for the full story.]

Calls grow for examinations of Virginia's response to hours-long I-95 backup

(The Washington Post) Calls mounted Wednesday for an investigation into Virginia's handling of a snowfall that paralyzed the East Coast's busiest highway, a meltdown that left some motorists stranded for more than 24 hours in one of the Washington region's worst traffic disasters in a decade. As state highway officials continued to dig out from 12 inches of snow, a member of Congress and a major transportation advocacy group were among those who said the state needed to examine how Monday's snowstorm left motorists on Interstate 95 stuck in freezing vehicles overnight. Many lacked food or water, and some ran out of gas. One expert questioned the homeland security risks of I-95, a major thoroughfare leading to the Pentagon and nation's capital, being crippled for hours. [<Read more >](#)

Winter Driving Tips
Take it easy if you must travel

January 5, 2022
5:58 AM

WINTER DRIVING KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Get the weather forecast.
Change your travel plans if hazardous weather is expected.

Check road conditions.
Call 511 or visit your state's DOT webpage to check on road conditions. Choose a different route or adjust your travel plans if road conditions are poor.

Pack an emergency supply kit.
Stock your vehicle with a mobile phone, charger, batteries, blankets, flashlight, first-aid kit, high-calorie, non-perishable food, candle to melt snow for drinking water, sack of sand or cat litter for traction, shovel, scraper, and battery booster cables.

Ready your vehicle.
Check your battery, wipers, coolant, and other systems affected by cold temperature. Make sure your tires have good tread. Clear snow, ice or dirt from your windows, lights and camera.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service
Louisville, KY

Related story - Trapped Motorists on I-95 Shows Value of a Car Kit

([Government Technology – Opinion by Eric Holdeman](#)) How about topping off your gas tank before getting on a highway before a winter storm is projected to hit. When I do disaster preparedness presentations, I talk about having disaster kits at home, at work and in the car. Blame the state of Virginia if you want, but *personal judgment is also part of the equation, as well as individual preparedness.*

For the car I recommend:

- Put it in a backpack so you can take it with you if you have to leave the car

- Think about the weather situations you may encounter. Hat, gloves, rain gear, a good pair of walking shoes or boots and extra pairs of socks (as an infantryman, I can assure you the socks are important when walking)
- Water is more important than food. You can survive a long time without food, but water is necessary for life
- Put food in the backpack that stores well, is easy to open, and will not melt in the heat. You may like chocolate, but not in a kit
- Should you have a medical condition, consider putting a few extra pills in the kit so you are not without any at all
- Might you have to go to the bathroom? Toilet paper, wipes, etc., are nice to have!!
- Got an infant? Diapers, etc.
- Got a pet? Plan for them too

Covid-19 Hit Supply Chains Hard. Climate Shocks May Hurt More

(Bloomberg) The pandemic has tied a series of paralyzing knots in the global economy, but beyond the transportation delays and parts shortages lies a more enduring challenge for supply chains: climate change. Consider that last year alone saw Hurricane Ida, a typhoon near Chinese ports, the Texas freeze, British Columbia flooding, and freak December tornadoes across the U.S., and it's clear that global trade is struggling to cope with much more than a health crisis. As temperatures creep higher, nature is likely to be a more frequent, intense, and random economic disrupter. [<Read more >](#)

Related story - Lawmakers send letter to DHS, DOT requesting information on cybersecurity of transportation infrastructure

(*The Highland County Press*) U.S. Senators Rob Portman (R-OH), ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Jacky Rosen (D-NV), a member of both the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, and Roger Wicker (R-MS), ranking member of the Commerce Committee, led a bipartisan group of 10 senators in sending a letter to Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas and Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg requesting information about the two Departments' ability to meet their responsibilities, as co-Sector Risk Management Agencies (SRMA), to detect, prevent, and respond to cyber threats to the nation's critical transportation infrastructure. Cyberattacks on American transportation infrastructure are escalating in frequency and severity. [<Read more >](#)

National Wildfire Coordinating Group releases new training module on wildland fire mental health

([EMR-ISAC - InfoGram](#)) Wildland firefighting is a physically and mentally demanding job, with many stressors that can take their toll on a wildland firefighter's mental health. The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) has just released a new module on [Wildland Fire Mental Health](#). The new module is available as an option within the NWCG's [RT-130: Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher](#) (WFSTAR), which is required training for all personnel assigned to positions with fireline duties, and for any position assigned to the fireline for non-suppression tasks, in order to maintain currency. Instructors of RT-130 may opt to include this new module on mental health in annual refresher training to address this important topic with their wildland firefighting personnel.

The new Wildland Fire Mental Health module provides tools and resources for "mental fitness." Participants will learn about how to build resilience to face adversity, improve mental preparedness, recognize the importance of self-care, and recognize the effects from cumulative stress, critical incident stress, and other mental health related issues, including suicide. The guidance within the module emphasizes the importance of asking for help and offers information about accessing mental health care resources.

This module includes an 18-minute video, featuring interviews with wildland fire practitioners addressing important and difficult topics such as wildland firefighter suicide and chronic stress, with first-hand stories and guidance about how to help oneself or a peer in need.

The RT-130 WFSTAR course must be delivered as an instructor-led training, and some modules must be delivered in person. However, the Wildland Fire Mental Health module can be delivered in a virtual instructor-led format. It is estimated to take about 45 minutes.

The Wildland Fire Mental Health module for RT-130 was developed by the NWCG's [Mental Health Subcommittee](#) (MHSC), whose mission is to provide national leadership in wildland firefighter mental health and wellness, and to facilitate a national interagency approach to proactively addressing firefighter mental health.

For more information on RT-130 and its new [Wildland Fire Mental Health module](#), visit the NWCG's [RT-130 WFSTAR course website](#). (Source: *NWCG*)

CISA's Office for Bombing Prevention videos illustrate how to prevent attacks

([EMR-ISAC - InfoGram](#)) The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) recently launched three videos that provide key steps to recognize suspicious activity and take appropriate action to prevent a bombing event.

The free videos were developed by CISA's Office for Bombing Prevention (OBP) and are available on YouTube. They provide real-life scenarios that are readily relatable to emergency service providers and their stakeholders. The videos include:

- [Be Vigilant – Vigilant Neighbor](#) – A young woman realizes her neighbors have recently shown signs of suspicious behavior that led to the local high school bombing event. She reports her neighbors to the authorities, leading to their arrest.
- [Be Vigilant – Vigilant Manager](#) – Mike, a store manager, realizes he could have prevented the high school bombing event by reporting the recently stolen items from his inventory.
- [Be Vigilant – Vigilant Employee](#) – Two employees recall a customer who requested to purchase more chemicals than usual and behaved suspiciously. Had these employees known about the possible nefarious usage of the products in their store, they could have reported the suspicious purchases and prevented the bombing attack.

The series is designed to provide a simple way to communicate bombing prevention concepts and highlights the fact that bomb-making materials are readily available for those seeking to harm the public.

Approximately 250,000 point-of-sale businesses in the U.S. sell, use, or distribute materials that can be used to build bombs. Criminals can easily obtain common household chemicals and components at beauty supply stores, hardware stores, pool supply stores, sporting goods stores, and elsewhere to create homemade explosives and improvised explosive devices (IED).

Bomb threats remain a major concern for the public. The total number of explosive and device-related incidents reported in open sources, including IED activity, totaled 2,061 events in 2020, according to the TRIPwire 2020 Domestic Open Source Intelligence IED Report.

CISA provides many counter-IED and risk mitigation training courses that include in-person mobile trainings, web-based Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) and Independent Study Training (IST) courses that highlight some of the same lessons found in the videos. CISA offers its VILT and IST courses for free at <https://cdp.dhs.gov/obp>. (Source: [CISA OBP](#))

In Wake Of Shooting, Michigan School District Mandates Clear Backpacks

([IACP "The Lead"](#)) The [Washington Post](#) (1/4, Firozi) reports middle and high school students at the Oxford Community Schools district in Michigan "will be required to use clear backpacks on campus, one of numerous new safety measures announced weeks after a deadly school shooting at Oxford High School." The Post adds the district said it will provide the backpacks for all middle- and high-schoolers, while "elementary school students will not be required to use the backpacks, but they will keep their bags in lockers or cubbies during the day." The district is also hiring a "security company that will put personnel in school buildings; providing trauma response training for staffers; continuing to have trauma specialists available for students; and having therapy dogs in every school."

NASEM Workshop

Methadone Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder: Examining Federal Regulations and Laws

March 3, 2022 | 9:30am-5:00pm ET & March 4, 2022 | 9:30am-4:30pm ET

On March 3-4, 2022, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's [Board on Health Sciences Policy](#) and [Board on Health Care Services](#), and National Academy of Medicine's [Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic](#) will host a public workshop bringing together experts and key stakeholders to examine the current federal regulatory and legal landscape regarding provision of and access to methadone for the treatment of opioid use disorder.

This workshop is sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President. For more information, and to [REGISTER](#), please visit [their website](#).

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 (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.