

‘Unpredictable challenges shouldn’t be a barrier for a better future’

Beshear signs order to relieve medical debt

BY MESSENGER STAFF

More than 130,000 Kentuckians are situated to be relieved from \$250 million in medical debt thanks to Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear’s executive order.

The executive order, which was signed by Beshear on Sept. 15, establishing the Team Kentucky Medical Debt Relief Program.

“Medical debt isn’t a choice — it’s what people are faced with after a serious accident, cancer diagnosis and more,” Beshear said. “Relieving this debt is the right thing to do to help Kentuckians who are overwhelmed by these extreme costs, which can cripple families for years, if not a lifetime. That’s especially true when medical debt results in bad credit, which can prevent families from securing the American Dream of owning a home. Unpredictable challenges shouldn’t be a barrier for a better future, and today we’re taking steps to help make sure that isn’t the case.”

Through his executive order, Beshear directed \$2.5 million to Undue Medical Debt, a national nonprofit that has erased more than \$49 billion in debt nationwide. The nonprofit acquires medical debt from participating hospitals and collection agencies, relieving debt for a fraction of the cost. For Kentucky, the breakdown equals \$100 erased for every \$1 spent, according to Beshear’s office.

“We’re proud to partner with Gov. Beshear and Team Kentucky to lift the financial and emotional burden of medical debt for families across the commonwealth,” said Undue Medical Debt Vice President of Government Initiatives Courtney Werp Story. “No one chooses to get sick, get injured or face financial hardship



Liam Niemeyer | Kentucky Lantern

The executive order, which was signed by Beshear on Sept. 15, establishing the Team Kentucky Medical Debt Relief Program.

simply because they needed healthcare. Thanks to this partnership, more than \$103 million in medical debt has already been erased for over 46,000 Kentuckians, with letters arriving in mailboxes starting next week — one less bill to carry and one less source of stress. We hope this relief encourages Kentuckians to re-engage with the healthcare system, and we’re grateful for Gov. Beshear’s leadership as we continue this work.”

There is no application process for the Team Kentucky Medical Debt Relief Program. Debt relief cannot be requested.

Eligible Kentuckians will receive an official medical debt relief letter from Team Kentucky and Undue Medical Debt notifying recipients of what debts have been erased and from which creditors. No further action is required of Kentuckians who receive a letter; however, it is recommended that the letter is kept for proof of debt erasure, the governor’s office stated.

Beginning this week, the first 46,000 qualified Kentuckians will have up to \$100 million in medical debt erased. Official debt relief letters will go out in the mail beginning next week to notify individuals included that some or all of their medical debt has been erased.

“No one chooses to get sick, and there is no shopping around to compare prices,” said Melis-

sa Henry, a Kentuckian whose severe, chronic back pain led to multiple surgeries and appointments that loaded up thousands of dollars in medical debt. “Like thousands of other Kentuckians, I was opted into medical debt by illness and accident. Trying to focus on getting better, I had to choose between keeping the lights on and food in the fridge or trying to pay down the debt. It was a painful distraction keeping me from focusing on recovery. That debt followed me and affected my credit for years. It made it harder to buy a car, qualify for a mortgage; every loan I got had a higher interest rate. I delayed going back to the doctor even when I should have,” Henry said. “Undue Medical Debt erasing my debt gave me hope. Hope that there are people and companies that care more about human lives than money. Hope that someday no one will have to make an impossible choice because they can’t afford medical care.”

Henry shared how having a portion of that debt erased helped her move forward and find hope.

To qualify for the program, one must be a resident of Kentucky who owes at least 5% of their annual income for outstanding medical bills or earns at or below 400% of the federal poverty level, which is around \$100,000 for a family of three, according to the governor’s office.



Pool photo by Matt Stone of the Louisville Courier-Journal

Former Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin smiles at his arraignment in Jefferson County Court. Judge Angela Johnson sentenced him to 60 days in jail for contempt of court.

Bevin appeals jail sentence to Kentucky Court of Appeals

BY DEBORAH YETTER
KENTUCKY LANTERN

Saying a judge has “slammed the door shut and thrown away the key,” a lawyer for former Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin is asking the state Court of Appeals to order his immediate release from jail for contempt of court.

Bevin, 59, was arrested Sept. 3 and lodged in the Jefferson County jail to serve a 60-day sentence for contempt for failing to produce financial documents a judge had ordered him to provide in an ongoing legal battle with his estranged, adopted son, Jonah Bevin.

Jefferson Family Court Judge Angela Johnson had sentenced him for contempt after finding he failed to release all documents she had ordered he produce as part of his divorce case with his ex-wife, Glenna, in which Jonah is seeking support.

Bevin also skipped a July 28 hearing the judge had ordered him to attend

in person over the matter. The one-term Republican governor was arrested Thursday while working as an extra on a Christmas movie being filmed at a Bourbon County horse farm.

Jonah, 19, has alleged the Bevins abandoned him at age 17 at a brutally abusive youth facility in Jamaica and is seeking support for living expenses and education. Jonah is one of four children the Bevins, who have nine children, adopted from Ethiopia.

Glenna Bevin has testified in court that Jonah was aggressive and threatening as a teen and the couple sought multiple placements and treatment for him.

In sentencing Matt Bevin for contempt Friday, Johnson said he had ignored multiple court orders and opportunities to comply.

“You have done nothing to show the court that you are willing to act in good

faith, and I cannot reward that with a reduced sentence or an alternative sentence or some form of relief for you, because you have shown this court that you are not going to do what you’re ordered to do because you don’t think that it should be this way,” she said.

Matt Bevin’s motion filed Sept. 9 by lawyer Jesse Mudd with the appeals court asks for emergency relief for him to be released from jail while it considers his appeal of the contempt finding and sentence.

Bevin already has produced over 1,000 pages of financial documents and, because the case involving his son’s claims for support has been submitted to the judge for a decision there is nothing further he can do to meet requirements of the court, it said.

His continued incarceration, it said, “amounts to nothing more than punishment for his past conduct.”

LIGHT

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on the bottom step, but I was actually on the step above and fell onto the concrete and into the storm door. I broke the door and have a few bruises, but miraculously I was not seriously injured.

Throughout our lives, we’ve had some ups and downs, but all in all we have a lot to be thankful for. I know it’s easy at times to feel sorry for ourselves, but instead of feeling cast down, may we consider where we would be without God’s grace.

Hope is a small word like love and joy,

but it’s the power within the human soul to trust God and to know that His will CAN be fulfilled in our lives.

Depression and discouragement come upon us when we are focused more on our emotions than our spiritual armor; so don’t forget, optimism and pessimism are hourly choices we make within our conscience. Many times we are our own worst enemy.

Keep your face toward the light — and the shadows will always be behind you.

Dr. Holland is an ordained minister, chaplain, public school teacher, and Christian author. To read more about LIVING ON PURPOSE, visit: billyhollandministries.com



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LEGAL NOTICE OF BID

Notice is hereby given that the Graves County Fiscal Court will accept sealed bids for:

Preventive maintenance and repair services for five county-owned generators located at the Graves County Road Department, County Warehouse (two portable generators), Graves County Jail, and Emergency Management Tower. The bid will be for monthly, semi-annual, annually. Please include in your sealed bid a dollar amount for all three.

Bid specifications may be obtained from the Graves County Judge/Executive's Office at 1102 Paris Road, Suite 2, Mayfield, Ky. 42066. Sealed bids must be received by October 8, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. CST. When the sealed bids will be opened and read.

The Graves County Fiscal Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive minor informalities.

The bidder will be responsible for all warranty work.

The contract will be in place until June 30, 2027.







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