

Project Prom hopes for donations for GRC Class of 2027

By Kayla Sizemore
Project Prom Coordinator

Dear Business and Civic Leaders,

Project Prom is a nationwide program designed to prevent needless tragedy that occurs annually in our communities. Traditionally, the hours following prom find our young people vulnerable to drug and alcohol abuse as they celebrate their transition into adult life. Unfortunately, the past has proven that many young people will die or become disabled as a result of the evening's celebrations.

With help from the parents of the graduating class of 2027 and community leaders such as you, we will work together to provide a safe, substance-free evening following Senior Prom. The celebration begins at 12:00 a.m. and continues until morning. Throughout the evening, our young people are provided

with food, games, and activities solely through the generosity of the community. To encourage participation and make the evening memorable, we sponsor contests and prizes for all student seniors attending.

The Class of 2027 along with myself and student parents are writing to ask for a donation from your organization to be used as one of the prizes during the evening. Some suggestions of donations are a specialized gift set for a girl or boy with your products, a gift certificate, and/or a cash donation. Businesses or individuals who make a cash donation will be recognized as a Cardinal Sponsor (up to \$99), a Bronze Sponsor (\$100 to \$499), a Silver Sponsor (\$500 to \$999), or a Gold Sponsor (\$1,000 and up). Please make your checks payable to GRC Project Prom and mail your donation no later

than **March 12, 2027**. GRC Project Prom c/o Kayla Sizemore 2745 Boonesboro Road Winchester, KY 40391

We realize that you are asked to make donations to many organizations and that many times you may hesitate to add one more to your list. We would ask that you consider our request as an opportunity to perhaps save a young life and support in the celebration of this joyous occasion. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your support in this very worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,
Kayla Sizemore,
Project Coordinator

For more information, including a donation form, contact Kayla Sizemore at kayla.sizemore@clark.kyschools.us or 859-744-6111 ext. 3508.

Beshear launches dashboard to combat domestic violence in Kentucky

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT - On the first day of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Gov. Andy Beshear and First Lady Britainy Beshear recognized the courage of survivors, celebrated progress in protecting families, and shared resources to help people find safety.

"Domestic violence will not be tolerated in Kentucky. Everyone deserves to be safe and feel safe in their day-to-day lives," Gov. Beshear said. "We're going after people who commit these crimes, and we're providing justice and healing for survivors and their families. Together, we're creating a safer Kentucky for all our people."

"Domestic violence is a heinous crime that has no place in our state or our country," Mrs. Beshear noted. "We've taken action by holding offenders accountable and increasing resources for survivors. If someone close to you is hurting you or threatening you, it is not your fault; you are not alone and there is help available."

Intimate partner violence affects millions of Americans each year. According to the U.S.S. Centers for



Disease Control and Prevention, more than 1 in 3 women and more than 1 in 6 men experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetimes.

The Governor and First Lady are committed to protecting Kentuckians from domestic violence and supporting survivors and to making all communities safer.

This year, the Governor launched an interactive dashboard that shares domestic violence data. The website allows Kentuckians to more easily view data on offenders and learn more about domestic violence shelters and support services. Previously, Gov. Beshear had signed legislation requiring the commonwealth to produce an annual report on domestic violence-related data.

One of the state's

leading partners in the fight against domestic violence is "ZeroV," (formerly the Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence), a statewide coalition dedicated to creating safe lives and thriving futures for survivors of intimate partner violence and their children. ZeroV and its coalition of domestic violence programs provided supportive services to nearly 14,500 survivors of domestic violence in fiscal year 2026. Of those survivors, more than 1,400 adults and 900 children received emergency shelter services.

Each year, the First Lady partners with ZeroV to host Shop & Share, a one-day donation drive for domestic violence shelters across Kentucky, providing critical supplies, such as food, diapers and other essentials. She noted that next year's event will be held on Saturday, Feb. 13.

Governor Beshear highlights Kentucky's progress to increase public safety

Governor Andy Beshear's
Office Press Release

FRANKFORT, Ky. – On International Day of Non-Violence, Gov. Andy Beshear highlighted the progress Team Kentucky has made to increase public safety. By supporting law enforcement, expanding second-chance opportunities, reducing recidivism, increasing recovery resources, and removing dangerous drugs from communities, Gov. Beshear's administration is creating safer communities and a better Kentucky.

"Kentuckians deserve to be safe and to feel safe in their communities, and the progress we're making across the commonwealth is making a difference," Gov. Beshear said. "Thanks to our brave law enforcement and folks across Kentucky working together, we're building a safer New Kentucky Home for our families."

In June, Gov. Beshear announced the release of the 2025 Crime in Kentucky Report, which shows reports of serious crime decreased for the second year in a row. From 2024 to 2025, reports of serious crime decreased by 8.14%. This was the fifth decrease reported since the Governor took office. This included an 11.25% decrease in drug/narcotic offenses and a 15.64% decrease in homicide offenses.

In July 2026, First Lady Britainy Beshear announced the launch of an interactive data dashboard for the public to more easily view data; compare statewide statistics by county and area development district; and gather specific information on offenders, domestic violence shelters and support services, as well as law enforcement-related outcomes. The dashboard includes data from each of Kentucky's annual domestic violence data reports.

SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT

Gov. Beshear announced in August that 937 school resource officers (SROs) are protecting Kentucky's public-school campuses, as reported in the 2025-2026 School Safety Risk Assessment Report. This is nearly 100 more SROs since the

start of the previous school year and a 130% increase since the Beshear-Coleman administration took office in 2019. The report also shows that nearly all of the Commonwealth's schools comply with state-mandated security measures.

In June, Team Kentucky increased starting salaries for Kentucky State Police troopers to \$71,000 annually. This followed the \$15,000 raise the Governor secured for every Kentucky State Police trooper in 2022, which increased starting pay for sworn officers from \$40,000 to \$55,000 annually when he signed House Bill 259. This was the largest single pay raise in Kentucky State Police history.

The Governor ceremonially signed House Bill 5 in April 2026, providing the framework to create Kentucky's first reentry campus and focused on increasing public safety and boosting the state's workforce. The reentry campus will be operated by the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) on the grounds of Northpoint Training Center in Burgin. Once constructed, it will provide up to 400 inmates each year with targeted vocational technical education programs and intensive reentry services.

In April 2026, Team Kentucky Broke Ground on the Department of Criminal Justice Training West: Gaines-Brown Campus in Madisonville. When completed, the facility will support two basic training recruit classes concurrently, with a total of four classes graduating from the facility each year with an average of 30 officers. Once operational, the new campus will create 20 full-time jobs with an average salary of \$60,000 in the Madisonville area.

Since Dec. 9, 2019, more than 2,900 officers have graduated from basic training from one of the commonwealth's basic training academies. This has increased the number of law enforcement officers protecting the commonwealth to more than 9,000.

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS

In April, Gov. Beshear further protected Kentuckians by signing legislation to establish the offense

of grooming to protect Kentucky's children better and hold offenders accountable; to formalize the role of a statewide Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, or SANE, coordinator to strengthen the state's response to sexual assault cases and better support survivors; and to enhance the state's stalking laws by broadening the scope covered under the law to include social media. In previous years, the Governor signed legislation to make sexual extortion a felony and strengthened statutory language to include other forms of abuse and sexual exploitation of minors.

Since the Governor took office, his administration has awarded \$189 million in grant funding to victim service agencies across the commonwealth. This funding allows Team Kentucky to support law enforcement, victim services, and state and local courts in combating violent crime and seeking justice for victims. It also supports safe housing at domestic violence shelters, mental health counseling, sexual assault examinations, and more.

INCREASING SECOND CHANCE OPPORTUNITIES, REDUCING RECIDIVISM

In September 2025, Gov. Beshear announced that, in less than a year, Team Kentucky added 14 different technical education courses in Department of Corrections prisons across the commonwealth. The Department of Corrections currently offers 35 technical education courses across the commonwealth. So far, more than 1,700 inmates have completed at least one course.

In February, Gov. Beshear announced that recidivism rates declined for the second year in a row in 2025. Nearly 70% of those released from state prison have not returned.

For four straight years, overdose deaths have decreased in Kentucky. In 2025, the commonwealth saw 22.9% fewer overdose deaths than the year prior.

Kentucky launches first Certified Cities program to boost agriculture

By Tom Latek
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT – Kentucky Proud Certified Cities, a first-of-its-kind program offered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) through a partnership with the Kentucky League of Cities, is recognizing cities across the state that are showing a commitment to the agriculture industry and strengthening their communities' connection with farmers.

"Cities making that special effort to create an agricultural connection for residents deserve that special recognition," said Agriculture Commissioner Jonathan Shell. "This unique program elevates those experiences to real rewards. When con-

sumers choose Kentucky-grown and Kentucky-made products they create demand for agricultural commodities and agritourism that supports the farmers supplying them. We know what we grow and produce in Kentucky is the best. We want to reward those cities actively promoting that idea."

Managed under KDA's Kentucky Proud agricultural marketing umbrella, the initiative recognizes those cities incorporating local foods, farms, and agricultural projects into their community identities.

Kentucky Proud, Kentucky's official agriculture marketing program, launched in 2002 as a central platform to promote Kentucky's farms and farm products. The Certified Cities program furthers the mar-

keting mission by emphasizing how every step of commodities reaching consumers is crucial to supporting local supply and demand. The Kentucky Proud Certified Cities program provides an opportunity to highlight this critical connection and empower local governments to proactively enhance agricultural opportunities.

"I can't stress enough how important the symbiotic relationship is among Kentucky's urban and rural communities," said J.D. Chaney, CEO of the Kentucky League of Cities, a nonprofit association that represents Kentucky's cities and serves as a resource for local governments across the Commonwealth.