



Dear Neighbor,

In a year with so much bad and tragic news, it has been really gratifying to see so many residents, businesses and organizations from south Kansas City and nearby areas chipping in their time and money at several recent area events to help our struggling neighbors.

I was particularly pleased to see so much assistance given to so many families in need at last Saturday's Because We Care giveaway coordinated by the Hickman Mills Community Empowerment Center in partnership with several area churches, community organizations, businesses, and the Kansas City Police Department's South Patrol Division.

More than 400 families received needed items such as blankets, children's toys, personal protective supplies and winter clothing, along with free hot dogs from 7-Eleven, at the International House of Prayer Camp and Training Center. Tons of free fresh fruit and vegetables and other healthy food from Harvesters were given to families at Forerunner Church.

I'm also extremely grateful that COVID-19 vaccinations are beginning to become available in Missouri for our frontline healthcare workers who have been putting themselves at risk to protect the rest of us for months.

However, I'm deeply concerned that emergency medical service (EMS) personnel and fire fighters who are the first responders to out-of-hospital medical emergencies were not included with other frontline healthcare workers in the first phase of vaccinations in Missouri. I wrote Governor Mike Parson today asking that they quickly be included.

The most recent information I received said 346 Kansas City Fire Department personnel (almost 24% of the Department's workforce) had tested positive for COVID-19, and that number may have increased by the time you read this. **Three KCFD employees have died from COVID-19, including Emergency**

Medical Technician Billy Birmingham who was the first known first responder in Missouri to die from the virus.

Our first responders need and deserve all the protection we can provide them so they can continue to help others without putting their own lives at undue risk. Plus, the high rate of infection EMS personnel have suffered makes it more and more difficult for fire departments and ambulance services to maintain adequate duty-ready numbers of personnel to quickly respond to life-threatening emergencies when seconds count, especially given the increased call volume caused by the pandemic.

Also, vaccinating first responders will prevent them from unknowingly spreading the virus to the very people they are doing their best to protect who are experiencing all types of medical emergencies.

Please accept my best wishes for a safe and joyous holiday season! Please scroll down to read about other state government matters and important upcoming local events.

Email is probably the best way to reach my office. If you are unable to quickly reach me, my assistant [Brian Farmer](#) is ready to help you.

Feel free to forward this newsletter to your friends and family who might want to know the latest news about what is happening in state government and about important local events. Be safe and God bless!

Yours in Service,
Mark A. Sharp

Mark A. Sharp
WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE
Wednesday, December 23, 2020

JUDGE UPHOLDS MEDICAL MARIJUANA LICENSE LIMITS

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' decision to restrict the number of licenses to cultivate, manufacture and sell medical marijuana is consistent with constitutional standards and doesn't violate the right to farm amendment Missouri voters ratified in 2014, a Cole County Judge ruled on December 21.

Under a 2018 constitutional amendment legalizing marijuana for medical use, the Department is charged with regulating all aspects of the new industry. A Sarcoxie family who had been denied a cultivation license sued the Department, claiming its decision to severely limit the number of licenses was arbitrary and in conflict with the right to farm amendment.

However, Judge Patricia Joyce noted in her ruling that the medical marijuana amendment specifically grants the Department the discretion to determine the appropriate number of licenses, subject to certain minimums. She also pointed out that the Missouri Supreme Court has already determined the right to farm does not extend to the cultivation of marijuana, which generally remains an illegal controlled substance, and even in the medical context is subject to strict regulation.

“To argue that the facility license limits consistent with the plain language of Article XIV, Section 1 violate another article of the constitution attempts to place these constitutional provisions in conflict where there is none,” Joyce wrote. “The right to farm does not apply to the cultivation of marijuana.”

According to the facts set forth in Joyce’s ruling, there were 582 applicants for just 60 cultivation licenses, 430 applicants for the 86 licenses to produce marijuana infused products and 1,218 applicants for the 192 dispensary licenses.

Joyce said the Department had a legitimate interest in limiting the licenses in order to keep excess medical marijuana from spilling over into the illegal market for recreational use.

The plaintiffs in the case, *Sarcoxie Cultivation Center, et al., v. Randall Williams, et al.*, are expected to appeal to the Missouri Supreme Court.

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT PROGRAM REVIVED

Three years after former Gov. Eric Greitens blocked the issuance of state Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), the state commission responsible for overseeing the program approved millions in tax credits for dozens of projects across the state.

According to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Missouri Housing Development

Commission (MHDC) which is headquartered in Kansas City on December 17 approved \$300 million in state and federal tax credits over the next 10 years.

After taking control of MHDC in 2017, Greitens urged it to stop issuing state low income housing tax credits, although the federal tax credits that pass through the Commission continued. With Greitens' resignation the following year, state Low Income Housing Tax Credits were expected to resume, especially since his replacement, Gov. Mike Parson, had voted against Greitens' plan to halt the credits while a member of MHDC as lieutenant governor.

However, Parson surprised many by not immediately reviving the program and instead urging lawmakers to make it more efficient and address critics' concerns. These efforts failed to win support during the 2019 legislative session, and the issue wasn't a priority during the pandemic-shortened 2020 session.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits have been used extensively in the past to help finance needed affordable housing projects in Kansas City, and restoration of the program has been a priority for advocates for affordable housing and economic development.

STATE APPROVES FIRST CHARTER SCHOOL IN STL COUNTY

The Missouri State Board of Education on December 17 granted approval for a charter school to open for the 2021-2022 school year within the boundaries of the Normandy School Collaborative in north St. Louis County. The Leadership School will be the first charter school in Missouri located outside of Kansas City and St. Louis City.

Although the vote was 6-1 in favor, with one member voting present, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported the Board's support was reluctant and granted primarily due to the fact that state law gives members no discretion to deny a charter school application so long as it meets basic legal requirements. Some Board members expressed concern about authorizing a charter school in Normandy when many local residents and elected officials opposed the school.

Charter schools are public schools that operate independently of their local school districts and are exempt from many state education regulations. They draw their funding by taking a share of the state money that otherwise would go to their local school district.

JUDGE FINDS VICTIMS' BILL OF RIGHTS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

A Cole County Judge on Dec. 17 ruled unconstitutional portions of a new law establishing a bill of rights for sexual assault survivors and continued to block the state from enforcing them.

The legislature passed the provisions in question in the spring as part of Senate Bill 569 which I voted for along with almost all my colleagues in the House. These provisions had been scheduled to take effect on Aug. 28 but were placed on hold while the litigation was pending.

State Public Defender Mary Fox sued claiming the provisions establishing certain rights for victims unconstitutionally restrict the ability of defense attorneys to represent defendants in sexual assault cases and infringe on the constitutional right to a fair trial. While striking down those provisions, Judge Patricia Joyce rejected Fox's claim that SB 569 should be invalidated in its entirety for violating constitutional prohibitions on bills being changed from their original purpose or from containing multiple subjects.

The bill also modifies procedures for tracking evidence collection kits and includes other changes to laws relating to sex crimes. The state could appeal Joyce's decision to the Missouri Supreme Court, and I hope it does. The case is *Mary Fox, et al., v. State of Missouri, et al.*

Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson

Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 22, 2020

Update on COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution and Administration in Missouri

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) – The state of Missouri continues to see the distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines according to the state's vaccination

plan. Last Friday, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the second vaccine to be approved.

"The announcement of a second vaccine that is proven to be safe and effective in preventing COVID-19 is great news for the people of Missouri. The approval of an additional vaccine will help us move through the phases of our vaccination plan and offer more vaccines to Missourians, " said **Governor Mike Parson**. "While we continue to receive positive news in our fight against COVID-19, I remind Missourians that the virus is still here, and we all must take the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of this virus, especially through the holiday season."

To date, more than 23,000 vaccines have been administered to frontline health care workers and nursing home residents and staff according to Phase 1A of Missouri's Vaccination Plan. There are over 450,000 Missourians included in Phase 1A, which will take several weeks to complete. State and local governments and health care partners are administering vaccines to those recipients as efficiently as possible.

Currently, 285 facilities across the state are approved to administer the COVID-19 vaccine to Phase 1A eligible recipients within their facility. More than 700 additional facilities are expected to be approved within the coming days and weeks. Vaccinators have been approved in all geographic regions of Missouri, and more will continue to be brought onboard to ensure vaccines are distributed equitably and efficiently.

Updates are occurring daily to the state's COVID-19 website [MOStopsCOVID.com](https://www.MOStopsCOVID.com). This site is a great resource to obtain the latest information, dispel vaccine myths, and find answers to common questions. Missouri's vaccine site has been nationally recognized and other state governments have sought to emulate this site for their own states.

Members of the media and all Missourians are urged to help share the state's vaccine messaging. A resource toolkit has been made available at www.MOstopsCovid.com/toolkit.

Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 23, 2020

Governor Parson Appoints Kea S. Bird-Riley as Associate Circuit Judge for 16th Judicial Circuit

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) – Today, Governor Mike Parson appointed Kea S. Bird-Riley as Associate Circuit Judge for the 16th Judicial Circuit. She will fill the Associate Circuit Judge vacancy created by the appointment of the Honorable Sarah Castle to Circuit Judge.

Ms. Bird-Riley, of Kansas City, currently serves as a family court commissioner for the 16th Judicial Circuit. She holds a Bachelor of Science in communications and a Juris Doctor from the University of Missouri – Kansas City School of Law.



Ross Marine, a south Kansas City resident who is Honorary Counsel of the Slovak Republic to the Midwest, recently received the first Memorial Tree of Peace Medal for leading the effort to plant a Tree of Peace in 2019 at the national World War I Museum and Memorial in our city. The project, designed to promote peace and friendship among nations, hopes to plant at least one Tree of Peace on every continent. The medal was given to Marine by the Slovak Republic civic association Servare et Manere.

KCMO residents can set out extra bags without tags the week of Dec. 26-31

Holiday tree & light recycling encouraged

The upcoming Christmas and New Year's Day holidays mean that trash and recycling collection will be [delayed one day](#) for residents with Friday pickups. So, if your trash day is Friday, Dec. 25, your trash and recycling will be collected on Saturday, Dec. 26. The same schedule holds true for Friday, Jan. 1. There are no other delays in service.

Also in time for the holidays, KCMO residents will be able to set out up to 12 bags of trash, weighing less than 40 pounds each, during the week of Dec. 26-31. This free, no-tag service is provided to help ease your burden of having to dispose of the extra trash accumulated during the holiday season.

However, hazardous waste, bulky items or leaf and brush will not be accepted.

After the holidays, you're encouraged to recycle holiday lights and real trees. Kansas City residents can dispose of trees for free on Saturdays only through Jan. 16, 2021. Just trek over to one of our three [leaf and brush sites](#). Trees must be free of tinsel, lights and other ornaments. You must bring proof of residency. Trees can also be dropped off at the sites Monday through Friday, but there is a \$5 fee.



SOUTH KANSAS CITY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



It's time again for the South KC Chamber's annual Community Impact Awards!

Each year the Chamber honors companies and volunteers who have made the MOST impact in our community. We are asking businesses and community members to help us nominate those who did something to make a positive impact in South Kansas City in 2020.

To qualify, the impact MUST be in the form of a Community Contribution.

Examples of Community Contributions:

- Donations raised by employees and customers to support a non-profit initiative or charity
- Reduction in your company's carbon footprint or implementation of sustainable initiative
- Significant donation of time and/or resources toward meaningful investment in South KC
- Educational initiatives that assist employee/ers, customers, and/or the South KC community
- Providing support to another company or organization who is making a difference in South KC
- Initiatives to support employees and/or coworkers who are in need, rides to work, etc.
- Providing mentorship, entrepreneurship, and/or job skills to a person or organization in South KC
- Healthcare initiatives for employees and/or customers that made or will make an impact in their lives
- Initiatives to hire veterans, disabled persons, and/or ex-convicts
- Development investment in surrounding neighborhoods around your company's headquarters

There are MANY ways a company or person (or group of people!) could have impacted South Kansas City in 2020 so please do not feel limited by the list of examples! If you believe someone has made an impact in our region, we want to know about it!

Nominations will be accepted until 6:00 PM, Friday, January 22, 2021

Once all nominations are received and reviewed, our secret Chamber judges will narrow down the top submissions for YOU, our Chamber members and community leaders, to vote for a BIG

COMMUNITY IMPACT Winner!

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION ONLINE](#)

or

[DOWNLOAD FORM](#)

#SKCCIMPACT

For questions or more information call 816-761-7660 or email vwolgast@southkcchamber.com

Mid-Continent Public Library

Announcement:

All Mid-Continent Public Library locations will be closed December 24 – 27. Curbside and drive-through window services will resume on Monday, December 28. In addition, MCPL branches will close at 5:00 p.m. on December 31 and reopen on January 2. Holds on items will be extended to accommodate for the closures. Outdoor book drops will remain open for returns.

MCPL Holiday Hours

Closed December 24-27

Closing at 5 p.m. on December 31

Closed January 1

Be a part of the 12th Annual
Grandview C-4

Trivia Night

Thursday, January 14, 2021

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.



TRIVIA NIGHT IS GOING VIRTUAL!

Presented by Grandview Education Foundation.

Supports teacher grants, student scholarships and programs.

Hosted through TriviaHub, join us for a competitive game of fun!

Gather your team through a Zoom platform (together or apart).

More information on team dynamics available after registration is received.

Win the coveted BRAIN TROPHY!

BE A SPONSOR Circle level, or visit <https://bit.ly/GEFTriviaNight> to pay online.

Mensa - \$1,000 Genius - \$500

Brainiac - \$250 Know-It-All - \$100

FORM A TEAM \$100 for a team of up to 8 players. All Welcome!

Clever team names, uniforms, cheers, and more will be applauded and awarded! Registration is available online at: <https://bit.ly/GEFTriviaNight>

DONATE GOODS OR SERVICES

With a virtual format, we will gladly accept donations of gift cards or certificates to offer as prizes throughout the evening. Thank you for your consideration!

Item _____

Retail Value \$ _____

Contact Mary King, 816-977-5765, to arrange pickup of item, or arrange to drop-off.

Sponsors, donors and teams will be recognized throughout evening.



www.grandvieweducationfoundation.org

PO Box 546 • Grandview, MO 64030

Need Help Paying for Internet?

The [Internet Access Support Program](#) has funds available to pay for Internet service. If COVID has made it more difficult for you to afford Internet, the IASP can help you:

1. Establish new service
2. Pay off an old balance
3. Pay for ongoing service

The IASP can pay for up to 6 months of service. The program is only open to families with limited income. To qualify, you need to earn less than 2x the federal poverty rate.

Funds are limited and will be distributed on a first-come, first served basis. So do not wait. Apply now! Visit kconnect.me or call **(816) 200-0599** to apply.

Harvest Report



Select
Saturdays
9:00 AM - Noon

NOVEMBER
7th, 14th, 21st

DECEMBER
5th, 12th, 19th

JANUARY
2nd, 16th

FEBRUARY
6th, 20th

MARCH
6th, 20th

Winter Market

HJ's Community Center
6425 Wornall Road

SUSTAINABLE FARMS
ARTISAN FOOD
LOCAL PRODUCE
HOLIDAY GIFTS

sponsored by



www.brooksidefarmersmarket.com

South KC Mobile Food Pantries

With so many people out of work due to the coronavirus pandemic, a growing number of families in south Kansas City are being forced to rely on community food pantries such as Community Assistance Council's to have enough to eat.

Fortunately, Harvesters (the community food network) brings the semi-truck that serves as its mobile food pantry to five sites in south Kansas City monthly to distribute fresh produce and other healthy food to families in need. The sites are:

Center District Warehouse, 8701 Holmes Rd., from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. the second Friday of each month. Persons should go to the entrance to the Center Administrative Office and drive through the bus parking lot to the warehouse where volunteers will load the food. Persons should take the Troost Ave exit. The event is sponsored by the Center Education Foundation in partnership with the Center School District.

Evangel Church, 1414 E. 103rd St., from 7 to 8:30 a.m. the second Saturday of the month. Persons may remain in their vehicles, and food will be brought to them.

United Believers Community Church, 5600 E. 112th Terr., with vehicles lining up at 8:30 a.m. and contactless food distribution running from 9 to 11 a.m. the third Wednesday of the month.

Ruskin High School, 7000 E. 111th St., from 4 to 5:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. Vehicles should line up on Ruskin Way on the east side of the school, and food will be loaded in the vehicles when they reach the school by staff and student volunteers. This event is sponsored by the school and Community Assistance Council.

Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall Rd., with registration beginning at 8 a.m. and food distribution running from about 8:30 to 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month. Families are asked to bring two cardboard boxes for volunteers to put the food in.

Center High School, 8715 Holmes Rd., from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. as long as food is left on the third Saturday of the month. The event is sponsored by Three Trails Community church in partnership with the Center School District.

1 of 1



COVID-19

FREE TESTING CLINIC

Testing symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals

Walk-ins welcome, appointments preferred



Monday - Friday

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

*Lunch will be held from 11:50 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.,
and there will not be testing during this time.*

Visit jaco hd.org/events to see
dates + locations and to register.

Testing provided by the Jackson County Health Department

Truman Medical Centers has available services for Jackson County residents during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

If you are experiencing a fever, a new cough or new shortness of breath, you can call **404-CARE (2273)** and speak to a health care professional to be screened for COVID-19.



Coronavirus Facts and Resources

Kansas City

If you would like to receive updates about what the City is doing in response to the coronavirus, **text COVIDKC to 888777** or go online to kcmo.gov/coronavirus

Missouri

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services is operating a [hotline](#) for residents and health care providers to call for information and guidance about COVID-19.

The statewide hotline number is **877-435-8411**. The hotline is being operated by medical professionals and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

UNEMPLOYMENT

How to File?

If you're eligible, you'll need the following:

1. Your Social Security number;
2. Any amount you were paid in the past week, before taxes and deductions;
3. The name and mailing address of each job you worked in the past 18 months;
4. The dates you started and ended work at each of those jobs.

If this is your first time filing for unemployment please watch [this video](#) on unemployment basics. Visit uinteract.labor.mo.gov, create an account and file your claim. If your job loss is related to coronavirus issues, make sure to check a box that says "COVID-19" in your application to waive a requirement to search for a new job amid the crisis.

Missouri provides benefits for up to 20 weeks, which can be extended to 33 weeks under the federal provisions.

The state will pay you up to \$320 per week, and the federal government will provide \$600 on top of whatever you get from the state for each week you're on unemployment prior to July 31.

Benefits can be paid within 22 days unless there is an issue with your eligibility, which on average can take 4-6 weeks to resolve.

You should continue filing weekly requests for payment even if you have not yet received benefits.

Regional Claims Center representatives are available by phone Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM by calling:

Kansas City Claims Center: 816-889-3101 or visit

[Missouri Unemployment Website](#)

Please visit the Missouri Department of Labor's website for more information about COVID-19 FAQ's for Businesses and

Workers: <https://labor.mo.gov/coronavirus>

US Department of Labor has a few sites dedicated to Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave>
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>



REMAIN ANONYMOUS • RECEIVE CASH REWARDS



TIPS HOTLINE

816-474-8477



WEB TIPS

KcCrimestoppers.com



FREE MOBILE APP

P3Tips.com



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**Please don't hesitate to contact me
with any feedback, questions or ideas!**