

# Obituaries

## Hazel Ross 1938-2025

Hazel Frances Ross, 87, of Argillite, went home to be with the Lord, Thursday, Aug. 21, 2025, at Community Hospice Center, Ashland, and was reunited with her wonderful husband of 61 years, Thurman J. Ross.

Hazel was born June 4, 1938, in Argillite to the late Howard and Hattie Rice Gillum.

Frances lived a life full of faith, love, and service to her family and community.

Frances was a talented seamstress and jeweler, known for her skilled hands and creative spirit. She found joy in music and spent many cherished years traveling with her husband, children, and grandchildren to sing in churches throughout the region, lifting spirits and touching hearts with their songs of faith. Her love for warm weather drew her to spend winters in Florida, where she enjoyed relaxation, fellowship, and fishing with her husband. She will be remembered for her unwavering faith and deep love for her family. Frances’ legacy of grace, generosity, and joyful song will live on in the hearts of all who knew her. She leaves behind a family shaped by her wisdom, comforted by her prayers, and inspired by her example. Her life was a blessing. Her memory, a treasure.

In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by her sisters Juanita Keaton and Areta Jonas, and brothers Edgar, Willard, Carl, and James Gillum.

Frances is survived by her sister Dora “Libby” Hutchinson; her beloved children: Darrell (Velma) Ross and Patty (Dave) Stamper; five treasured grandchildren: Zach (Emily) Stamper, Ross (Kaitlyn) Stamper, Shawna (Brent) Salyers, Kayla (Steven) Peters, and Courtney (Justin) Clarke; and thirteen great-grandchildren who brought her immense joy: Braydon and Tanner Salyers, Jayden Palmer, Carson, Zane, and CJ Peters, Madison, Jackson, and Brynlee Clarke, Silas, Annie, Sebastian, and Rhett Stamper. She also leaves behind a host of nieces, nephews, and dear friends.

Funeral service was conducted at 1:00pm, Tuesday, Aug. 26, 2025, at Reed Funeral Home in Greenup by Ministers James Harris, Chester Keathley, and her great grandson Carson Peters. Burial was in Bellefonte Memorial Gardens, Flatwoods.

# Kentucky banning ‘designer Xanax’

By Melissa Patrick  
Kentucky Health News

Gov. Andy Beshear banned the sale of bromazepam, also known as “designer Xanax,” on Aug. 18 through an emergency state designation that changes the drug to a Schedule 1 controlled substance. This change gives law enforcement the ability to arrest anyone selling or possessing the drug.

“Team Kentucky has made important progress in our fight against addiction, with three-straight years of declines in overdose deaths, and we’re committed to ensuring that work continues,” Beshear said in a news release. “This deadly drug has no place in our communities, and now we have the tools needed to get it off the streets and protect more lives.”

The emergency action comes as a coalition of 21 attorneys general, led by Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman, is urging the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration to ban the unregulated drug.

Earlier this month, Coleman called on Kentucky officials to take emergency action to schedule the drug.

“By answering our call to take emergency action on bromazepam, we have given Kentucky law enforcement new tools to keep this dangerous drug off our streets,” Coleman said in the release. “I’m proud of the zealot collaboration with the Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force to sound the alarm and save lives.

“We live in a moment when as little as one pill can kill – and is killing – our kids. I’m glad we could work together to tackle this grave threat.”

Bromazepam — widely known as “designer Xanax” — is being passed off as prescription pills, including benzodiazepines, which are commonly used to treat conditions such as anxiety disorders, insomnia, and seizures.

Bromazepam was detected in 48 overdose deaths in Kentucky in 2024, according to the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy’s annual report.

Kentucky joins Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Virginia and West Virginia in designating bromazepam as a Schedule 1 controlled substance.

# Beshear highlights 10-day economic winning streak

FRANKFORT – On Aug. 20, Gov. Andy Beshear highlighted an economic win streak for Kentucky, with more than \$6.3 billion in new investment and over 1,000 full-time jobs announced by four iconic companies in less than two weeks.

“There isn’t anything political about a good job or a strong economy, and Kentucky is seeing incredible success as we prioritize what’s right and create more opportunity than ever before for our people,” said Gov. Beshear. “With iconic companies like Ford, GE Appliances, General Matter and Apple choosing to invest here, we’re showing the world that our commonwealth is the best place to do business. The best thing is, we’re providing more good-paying jobs for Kentuckians so their families can live better lives.”

Over the past two weeks, Gov. Beshear has highlighted major investments by Ford, GE Appliances, General Matter and Apple.

On Aug. 5, the Governor joined executives from General Matter to celebrate a major milestone in the company’s project toward establishing a \$1.5 billion, 140-job uranium enrichment facility in McCracken County, which will be the largest economic development project in Western Kentucky history.

The company recently signed a lease with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for the former Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The lease signing paves the way for the company to seek the necessary permitting, licensing and contractual terms with the DOE to move the project forward.

On Aug. 6, Apple and Corning announced plans for a \$2.5 billion investment in Corning’s

Mercer County facility to produce 100% of the cover glass used in iPhones and Apple Watches. Leadership at Apple indicated the project will help increase Corning’s manufacturing and engineering workforce by 50% in Kentucky. The project is part of Apple’s broader commitment to invest over \$600 billion in the U.S. economy over the next four years.

On Aug. 11, Gov. Beshear participated in a monumental announcement by Ford Motor Co. for a nearly \$2 billion investment in its Louisville Assembly Plant to introduce an innovative manufacturing process that will serve as the platform for an all-new, yet to be revealed, electric mid-size pickup truck. The project also secures 2,200 jobs at the facility and introduces an “assembly tree” approach to the production process, which will increase efficiency, ergonomics and affordability. The new low-cost, scalable EV platform is scheduled for completion by Q2 2027.

On Aug. 13, the Governor and executives from GE Appliances highlighted the \$490 million investment at Appliance Park in Jefferson County that was announced in June.

The expansion, which will create 800 full-time jobs, serves as the cornerstone of the company’s new \$3 billion investing operations. The nearly half-billion-dollar project at GE Appliances’ global corporate headquarters in Louisville furthers the operation’s role as the company’s primary location for research, product design, development and testing.

These recent investment and job creation announcements build on the best five-year period for economic growth in state

history.

Since the beginning of his administration, Gov. Beshear has announced more than 1,200 private-sector new-location and expansion projects totaling close to \$40 billion in announced investments, creating nearly 63,000 jobs.

This is the highest investment figure secured during the tenure of any governor in the commonwealth’s history and over \$18 billion more than the next highest total.

The robust job creation has been accompanied by rising wages across the commonwealth. Since 2022, the average incentivized hourly wage has topped \$26 in three consecutive years for the first time.

Gov. Beshear has announced some of the largest economic development projects in state history, which have solidified Kentucky as the electric vehicle battery production capital of the United States: Ford Motor Co. and SK On’s transformative \$5.8 billion, 5,000-job BlueOval SK Battery Park in Hardin County; AESC’s \$2 billion, 2,000-job gigafactory project in Warren County; Toyota’s \$1.3 billion investment in Scott County; and Shelbyville Battery Manufacturing’s \$712 million investment, creating 1,572 jobs in Shelby County, among others.

The Governor’s administration also secured the largest General Fund budget surplus and Rainy Day Fund. In 2023, Kentucky recorded over 2 million jobs filled for the first time ever and has stayed above that number ever since.

Kentucky also secured rating increases from major credit rating agencies Fitch Ratings, S&P Global Ratings and Moody’s Investors Service.

# Will Covid vaccine be covered in 2025?

By Michelle Andrews  
KFF Health News

If you want a Covid-19 shot this fall, will your employer’s health insurance plan pay for it?

There’s no clear answer.

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime anti-vaccine activist, has upended the way Covid vaccines are approved and for whom they’re recommended, creating uncertainty where coverage was routine.

Agencies within HHS responsible for spelling out who should get vaccinated aren’t necessarily in sync, issuing seemingly contradictory recommendations based on age or risk factors for serious disease.

But the ambiguity may not affect your coverage, at least this year.

“I think in 2025 it’s highly likely that the employer plans will cover” the Covid vaccines, said Jeff Levin-Scherz, a primary care doctor who is the population health leader for the management consultancy WTW and an assistant professor at Harvard’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health. They’ve already budgeted for it, “and it would be a large administrative effort to try to exclude coverage for those not at increased risk,” he said.

With so much in flux, it’s important to check with your employer or insurer about coverage policies before you roll up your sleeve.

Here’s what we know so far, and what remains unclear.

What used to be straightforward is now much

murkier. Last year, the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech Covid vaccines were recommended for anyone at least 6 months old.

This year, the recommendation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is narrower. Although the vaccines are broadly recommended for adults 19 and older, they are no longer recommended for healthy pregnant people or for healthy children 6 months through 17 years old.

Kennedy announced the changes in a video in May, citing safety risks for young people and pregnant people as justification.

But his claims have been widely disputed by experts in vaccines, pediatrics and women’s health.

An analysis by FactCheck.org found that the secretary “misrepresented scientific research to make unfounded claims about vaccine safety for pregnant people and children.”

In addition, recently announced changes to the vaccine approval framework have further chipped away at eligibility.

Moderna announced July 10 that the FDA had fully approved its Spikevax Covid vaccine — but approval is restricted to adults 65 and older, and for people from 6 months through 64 years old who are at increased risk of developing a serious case of Covid.

Two other Covid vaccines expected to be available this fall, Novavax’s Nuvaxovid and Moderna’s mNexspike, are also restricted. They are approved for people 65 or older and those 12 to 64 who have underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of developing severe Covid.