



## Headlines for Friday, May 9, 2025

Kansas Public Radio

Published May 9, 2025 at 9:58 AM CDT



wish you have a great day



Emily DeMarchi / KPR

wish you have a great day

### Nationwide Crackdown on Child Sex Offenders Nets 205 Arrests, Including Two Men in Kansas

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (KPR) – The FBI has rescued 115 children and arrested 205 people in a nationwide crackdown on child sex offenders. Two of those arrested are men from Kansas. **Operation Restore Justice** is a coordinated law enforcement effort to identify, track and arrest child sex predators. The operation was executed over the course of five days by all 55 FBI field offices.

In Kansas, two men were arrested and charged with federal crimes, including:

- 39-year-old Christopher Davis, of Wellington, who was indicted on four counts of distribution of child pornography and one count of possession of child porn.
- 42-year-old Christopher Slattery, of Manhattan, who was indicted on one count of sexual exploitation of a minor and possession of child porn.

U.S. Attorney General Pamela Bondi said the Department of Justice "will never stop fighting to protect victims — especially child victims — and we will not rest until we hunt down, arrest, and prosecute every child predator who preys on the most vulnerable among us." FBI Director Kash Patel said, "Operation Restore Justice proves that no predator is out of reach, and no child will be forgotten. There is no place to hide for those who prey on children."

Others arrested around the country are alleged to have committed various crimes including the production, distribution, and possession of child sexual abuse material, online enticement and transportation of minors, and child sex trafficking. In Minneapolis, for example, a state trooper and Army Reservist was arrested for allegedly producing child sexual abuse material while wearing his uniforms. In Norfolk, VA, an illegal alien from Mexico is accused of transporting a minor across state lines for sex. In Washington, D.C., a former Metropolitan Police Department Police Officer was arrested for allegedly trafficking minor victims.

For more information about protecting children, visit [www.justice.gov/psc](http://www.justice.gov/psc).

=====

### Merck Animal Health Investing \$895 Million in Johnson County Expansion

DE SOTO, Kan. (KPR) — **Merck Animal Health** has announced an \$895 million capital expansion project at its manufacturing facility in De Soto. Governor Laura Kelly calls it the second largest private investment in Kansas history – and the largest economic development project ever for Merck Animal Health. Company officials say the expansion will create more than 200 new jobs. The company aims to deliver health

commitment to securing a strong economic future for our state and ensuring prosperity for generations to come,” Kelly said.

The 200,000-square-foot manufacturing facility project will expand filling and freeze dryer capacity for large molecule vaccines and biologic products for Merck Animal Health. Site preparation and facility design will start immediately, creating 2,500 construction jobs. Commercial manufacturing is expected to begin in 2030.

=====

5 Former Postal Workers at KCK Post Office Indicted for Mail Theft

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (KPR) - Five former postal service employees have been [indicted by a federal grand jury in Kansas City, Kansas, for stealing mail](#). The U.S. Attorney's Office says 49-year-old Terrence Luster, of Lee's Summit, Missouri; 64-year-old Laura Dantzler, of Kansas City, Kansas; 49-year-old Arthur Hook, of Lathrop, Missouri; 54-year-old Craig Roland, 54, of Kansas City, Kansas; and 60-year-old Cheryl Wankum, of Overland Park, have all been charged with conspiracy to steal mail and theft of mail. All five former USPS workers worked at a post office on North 51st Street in KCK.

Court documents allege they stole Amazon return packages, mail and other items for their personal use. The thefts took place between early 2023 and October 2023. The case is under investigation by the U.S. Postal Service.

=====

Kansas Governor: State's Ability to Respond to Health Emergencies in Jeopardy

TOPEKA, Kan. (KNS) - Democratic Governor Laura Kelly says Republican President Donald Trump’s funding cuts have affected the state’s ability to respond to disease outbreaks. According to a news release from the governor's office, the Trump administration abruptly stripped \$33 million dollars in grants for state health care and mental health resources. The reduction in funds means the state health department had to eliminate 56 positions. The governor says the cuts will have a negative impact on the health and well being of Kansans and make it harder to respond to health emergencies, like the measles outbreak in southern Kansas. The Trump administration says cuts like these save taxpayers money. ([Read more in the Lawrence Journal-World.](#))

=====

Seasonal Parks Near Council Grove Lake Affected by Federal Hiring Freeze

UNDATED (KNS) – A lake town in eastern Kansas is facing economic uncertainty as federal hiring freezes have forced campsites to close. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers says seasonal parks around Council Grove Lake will not open until they can hire more staff. Ginger Taunton, the co-owner of the Council Grove Marina, told the Kansas News Service that she wants the federal government to exempt their lake from the hiring freeze because businesses like hers rely on campers. “We need the campers because of how much money they put into our little economy,” she explained. These closures are just the latest. There will also be disruptions to recreational sites at Wilson, Hillsdale and Kanopolis Lakes. President Donald Trump says the federal hiring freeze is aimed at improving government efficiency.

=====

Questions Surround Recent Executive Order Requiring Commercial Trucker Proficiency in English

UNDATED (HPM) – A recent executive order will mandate that all commercial truck drivers be proficient in English. President Donald Trump’s directive comes as more immigrants enter the trucking industry in recent years, with numbers exceeding 700,000, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Harvest Public Media reports that there’s already a federal rule that requires truck drivers to be proficient in English, but Trump has called the new executive order a "non-negotiable safety requirement." That requirement includes speaking and reading well enough to understand road signs and to communicate with officials at agriculture checkpoints, weight limit stations, and the border patrol. Raman Dhillon, CEO of the [North American Punjabi Trucking Association](#), says there is a fear that the directive could target some drivers. “All these rule and regulations are vital to the trucking industry…but are these measures gonna be used against the people of color to retaliate or to discriminate?” he asks. The Department of Transportation will soon issue new guidance on English proficiency testing and enforcement.

=====

Former Overland Park Officers Agree to Make Restitution Following Accusations of Fund Misuse

UNDATED (KNS) – Former Overland Park police officers accused of misusing charity funds have agreed to pay back tens of thousands of dollars after reaching a settlement with the Kansas attorney general. The Kansas News Service reports that the four officers served as leaders of the Overland Park Police Officers Foundation, which had the goal of supporting families of officers who died or suffered serious injuries on the job. They resigned in 2023 after an audit found that they had spent donation dollars on veterinary bills, scholarships, gift cards and other personal expenses. Now, without

=====

**Kansas Attorney General Sues Transgender Advocacy Group over Alleged Misuse of Donations**

UNDATED (KNS) — Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach is suing a transgender advocacy group that he says improperly used donation money. The Kansas News Service reports that the lawsuit accuses Justin Brace, executive director of Trans Heartland, of using donations for personal benefit. That includes over \$11,000 worth of charitable contributions that the legal filing says ended up in Brace’s personal bank accounts. An affidavit says some of that money was used to pay traffic fines. Kobach is asking a Johnson County District Court judge to bar the organization from collecting any more donations and to order them to pay damages.

=====

**K-State Grain Research Lab Resumes Work**

LIBERAL, Kan. (KNS) – A grain research lab at Kansas State University is resuming work after the Trump administration initially froze its research funding. The Kansas News Service reports that the hybrid grains being developed there could help Kansas farmers. The grains are being developed for their ability to tolerate drought and resist disease. Out of 17 labs where work stopped, the [Climate Resilient Cereals Innovation Lab](#) in Kansas is the only one so far that’s been allowed to continue. Lab director Timothy Dalton says he’s grateful to keep doing his work, but remains worried about the losses to the research community. “My deep seated worries about the termination of international collaborative research is that US farmers are going to be kneecapped,” he added. Without those studies, Dalton says Kansas farmers' crops are vulnerable to disease and pests. But Dalton is excited about the work the lab will get to do this year.

=====

**Multi-Fatality Collision Kills Woman, Two Children in Southwest Kansas**

KIOWA COUNTY (KAKE) - The Kansas Highway Patrol says a woman and two children have been killed on U.S. Highway 54, about a mile east of Mullinville, in Kiowa County. The victims have been identified as 68-year-old Teresa Davis, 13-year-old Travis Welch and 10-year-old Hunter Welch. [KAKE TV reports](#) that all three are from Meade, Kansas. The collision took place late Wednesday afternoon between the Ford County and Kiowa County line. The crash involved two-semis and two passenger vehicles. This is the second multi-fatality collision in Kansas in less than a week. On Sunday, eight people were killed in a two-vehicle, head-on collision in Franklin County.

=====

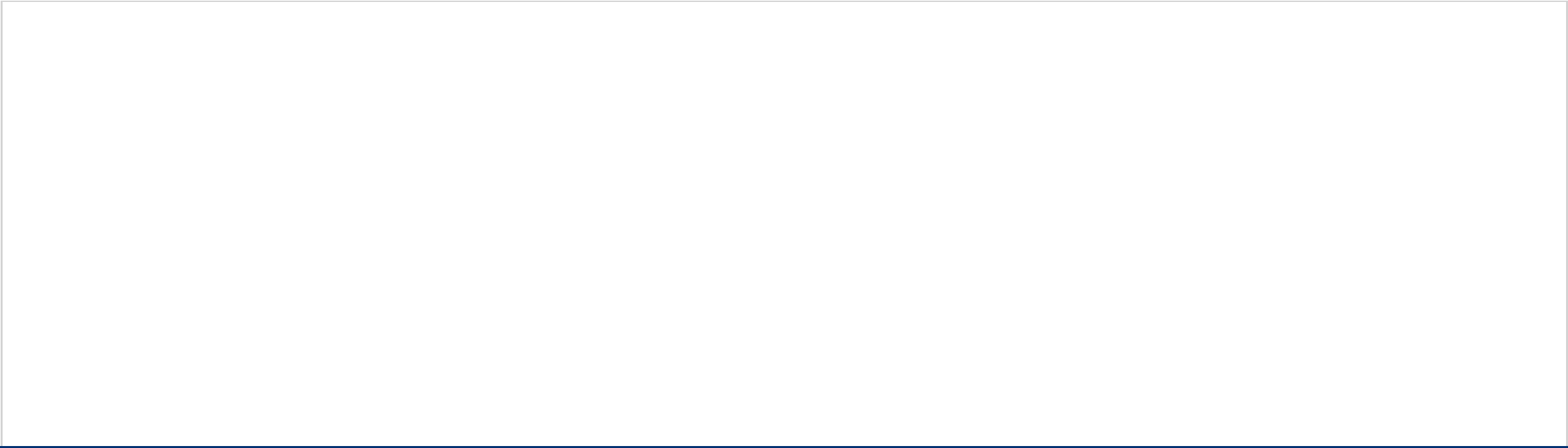
**Elder Abuse: State of Kansas Not Tracking Number of Adult Protection Cases**

UNDATED (The Beacon) — Kansas doesn’t track how many cases its adult protective services staff have. One caseworker is investigating 70 claims of elder abuse. [The Beacon reports](#) that one family's case has been open since October. Kansas says it doesn’t share case assignments because that information is confidential. Caseloads are not a perfect measurement though. Some cases are simple and others are more complicated. Kendra Kuehn is with the National Adult Protective Services Association. She says case outcomes and how quickly the case was investigated are the best data to track. Few, if any, states have that information. “It’s challenging to have a gold standard when there are so many factors,” she explained. There is work to standardize adult protective services, but the Trump administration has proposed funding cuts that could complicate that.

=====

*This summary of area news is curated by KPR news staffers. Our headlines are generally published by 10 am weekdays and are updated through 7 pm. This ad-free news summary is made possible by KPR members. Become one today. And follow [KPR News on X](#) (formerly Twitter).*

Daily Headlines







# SUPPORT THE KPR STATEHOUSE NEWS FUND



# *Support the Jim Seaver Classical Music Fund*

© 2025 Kansas Public Radio

91.5 FM | KANU | Lawrence, Topeka, Kansas City  
96.1 FM | K241AR | Lawrence (KPR2)  
89.7 FM | KANH | Emporia  
99.5 FM | K258BT | Manhattan  
97.9 FM | K250AY | Manhattan (KPR2)  
91.3 FM | KANV | Junction City, Olsburg  
89.9 FM | K210CR | Atchison  
90.3 FM | KANQ | Chanute

See the Coverage Map for more details

FCC On-line Public Inspection Files Sites:  
KANU, KANH, KANV, KANQ

Questions about KPR's Public Inspection Files?  
Contact General Manager Feloniz Lovato-Winston at fwinston@ku.edu

ABOUT US

Contact Us  
History  
KPR Staff  
Employment  
Coverage Map & Frequencies  
Board of Advisors  
Reports and Compliance  
Audio-Reader

wish you have a great day

wish you have a great day

,

SUPPORT & SPONSOR

- Pledge, Join, Renew
- Sustaining Membership
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Planned Giving
- Dick Wright Legacy Society
- Sponsorship
- Vehicles for Charity
- Volunteer

KPR

Jazz in the Night

Clifford Brown - Memorial Album (T...

Hymn of the Orient

wish you have a great day

,