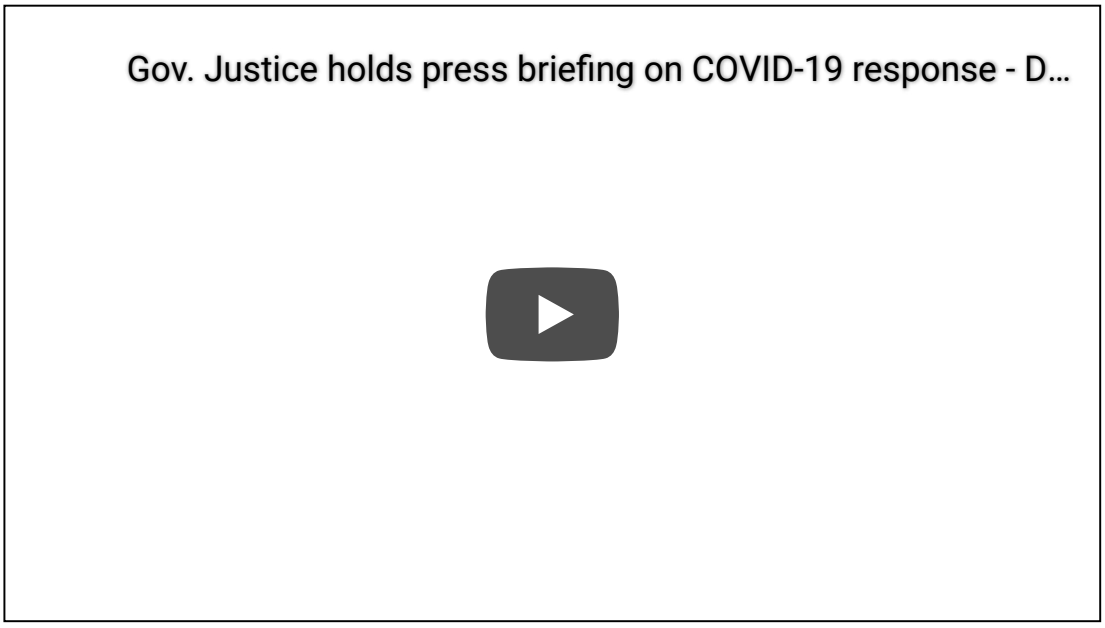
COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice provides new details on phases of vaccine allocation plan

12/11/2020

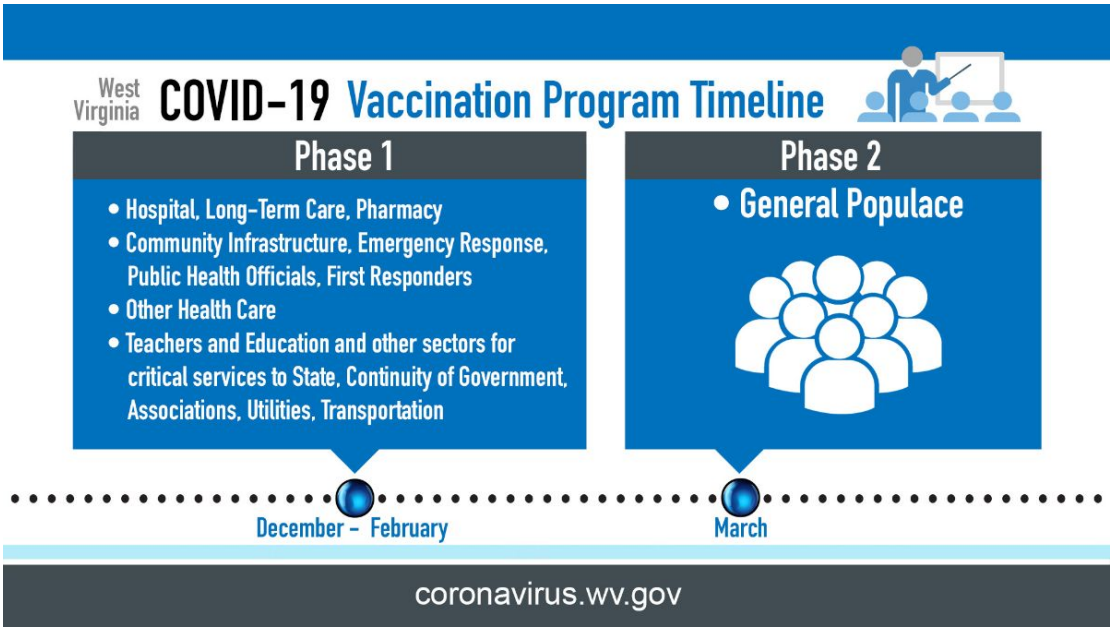


CHARLESTON, WV – Gov. Jim Justice joined West Virginia health leaders and other officials today for his latest daily press briefing regarding the State's COVID-19 response.

NEW VACCINE ALLOCATION PLAN DETAILS

During Friday's briefing, Gov. Justice provided new details on the different phases of the state's vaccine allocation plan.

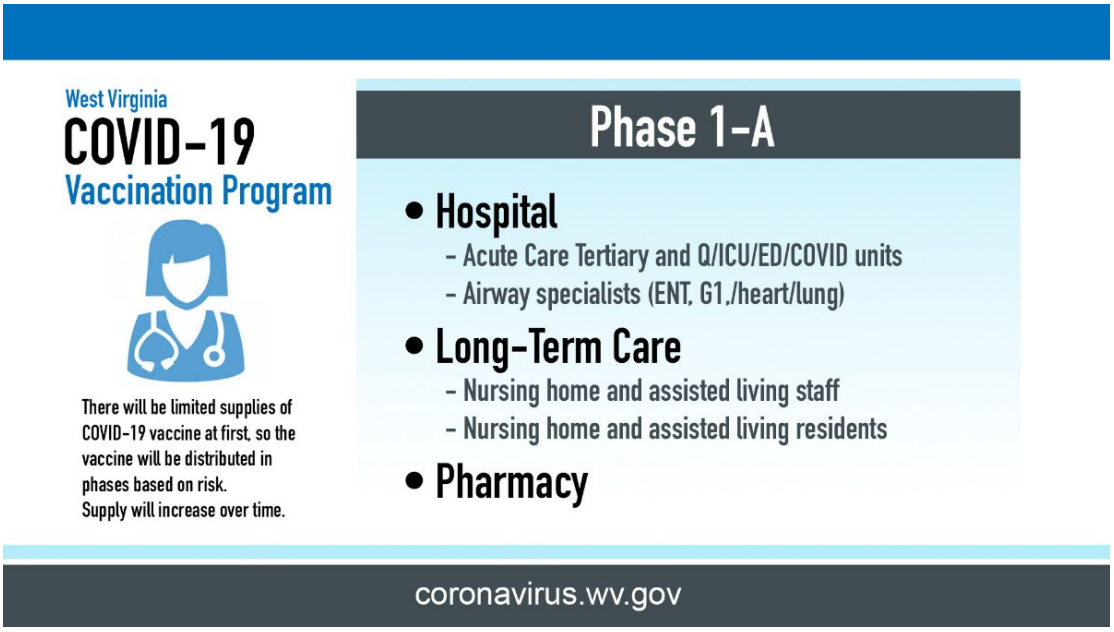
"We will get a limited supply of vaccines at first, so our team of experts are still finalizing the plan to make sure that the vaccines are available to all West Virginians, starting with those who are at the highest risk," Gov. Justice said.



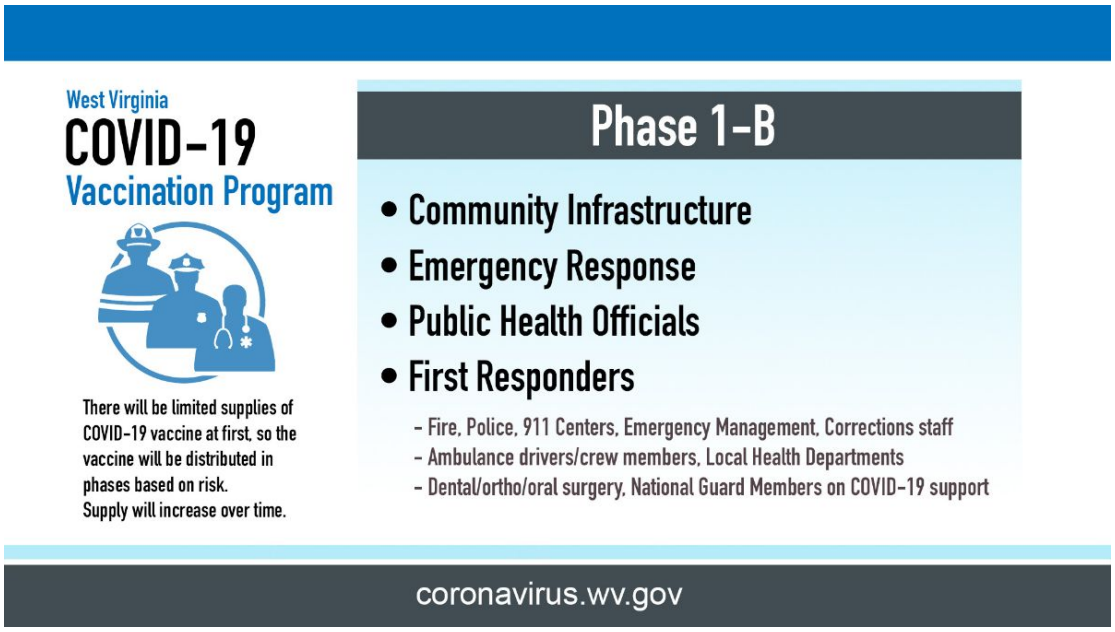
The Governor explained that there will be two main phases of vaccine allocation. Phase 1 will include those at the highest risk of serious complications from COVID-19, as well as individuals who are essential frontline workers fighting this pandemic. Phase 2 is the general population.

Phase 1 is broken down into four subsections: Phase 1-A through Phase 1-D:

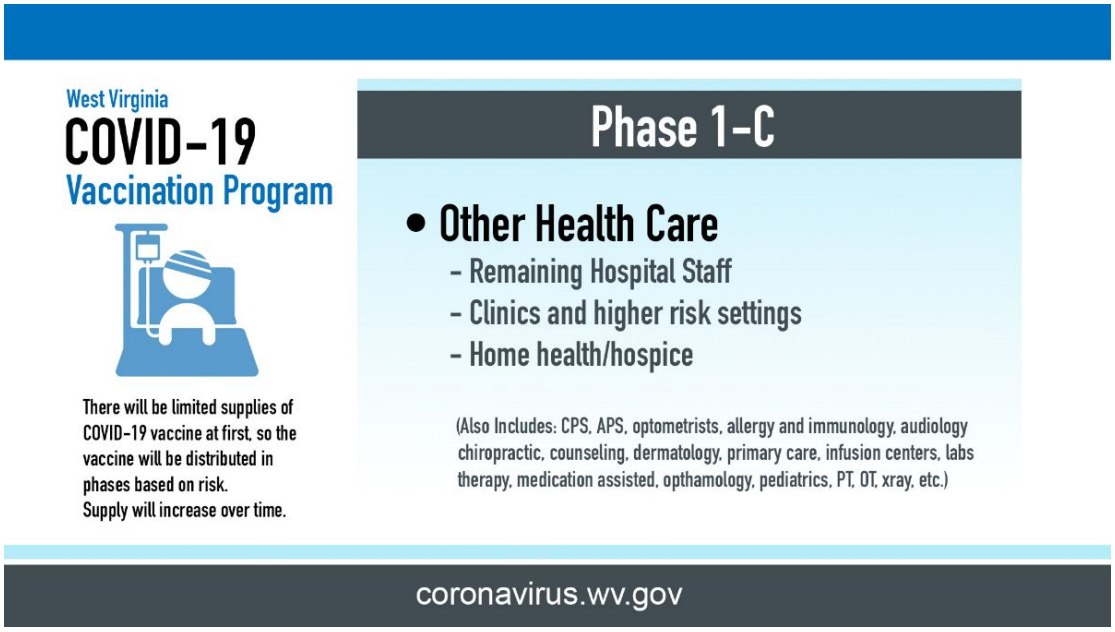
Phase 1-A *includes hospital, long-term care facility and staff, and pharmacies*



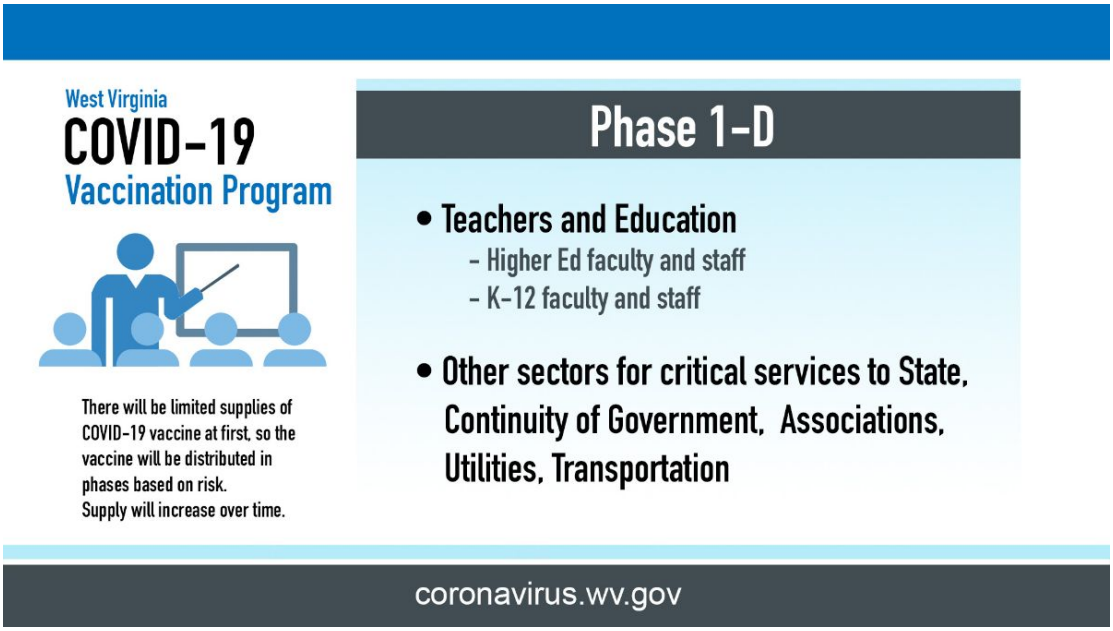
Phase 1-B *includes community infrastructure and emergency response, public health officials, and first responders*



Phase 1-C *includes other healthcare workers, like home health providers*



Phase 1-D *includes teachers and education staff in higher education and K-12 and other sectors for critical services for our state, such as utility and transportation workers*



"We are planning to offer vaccines to all individuals identified in Phase 1-A through Phase 1-D within the first six weeks, based on our allocation of vaccines," Gov. Justice said. "As our allocation increases and distribution occurs, we may be able to move through the phases more quickly.

"In Phase 2, which is the general population, we will place initial emphasis on our most vulnerable in the general population based on guidance from the CDC," Gov. Justice continued.

Click here to view photo album

(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157717255122956)

The FDA's independent advisory committee met yesterday to discuss Pfizer's request for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). While the committee voted in favor of recommending that the FDA approve the EUA, that final step has not been taken yet, meaning that the FDA has not yet granted authorization for emergency use for Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine.

However, the Governor said, within 24 hours of that final approval taking place, the federal government is expected to begin distributing vaccines to the states.

Once West Virginia receives the vaccine, in-state distribution will begin within 24 hours.

Read more about WV COVID-19 vaccine plan (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx)

"The rollout of our COVID-19 vaccination program will be challenging," Gov. Justice said. "It will take a lot of work. But without any question, between the National Guard and all the players that are working with them, we'll get this done."

Meanwhile on Friday, members of the West Virginia Joint Interagency Task Force for Vaccines held a Rehearsal of Concepts (ROC) drill at the WVNG Joint Forces Headquarters in Charleston to finalize operational plans for and to simulate COVID-19 vaccine shipment receipt, handling, and distribution processes to Phase 1 recipients across the Mountain State.

The Governor also announced that, today, the state will be placing its initial order for the 32,600 doses of the Moderna vaccine; the maximum ordering cap allowed for West Virginia at this time.

The FDA independent advisory committee will meet again next Thursday, Dec. 17, to discuss Moderna's request for Emergency Use Authorization.

100,000 FACE COVERINGS PROVIDED TO WEST VIRGINIA SENIORS

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice offered his appreciation to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living for donating 100,000 face coverings to the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services this week.

These face coverings will be distributed throughout the West Virginia Aging Network to senior centers in all 55 counties.

"We can never thank the HHS enough for this important donation to help our seniors in West Virginia," Gov. Justice said. "Our West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services Commissioner Robert Roswall and all the aging staff across West Virginia also continue to do amazing work. We've absolutely made a real commitment to taking care of our seniors and I'm proud of everything we're doing."

COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state is now 19,971, which is down from 20,059 active cases during the Governor's previous COVID-19 briefing on Wednesday. However, a new record high of 697 hospitalizations has been reached, with a new record high of 193 of those patients currently in the ICU.

The cumulative percent of positive cases is now 3.99%, up from 3.95% on Wednesday and the highest such rate seen in West Virginia since April 22, 2020.

Click here to view the latest COVID-19 data (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx)

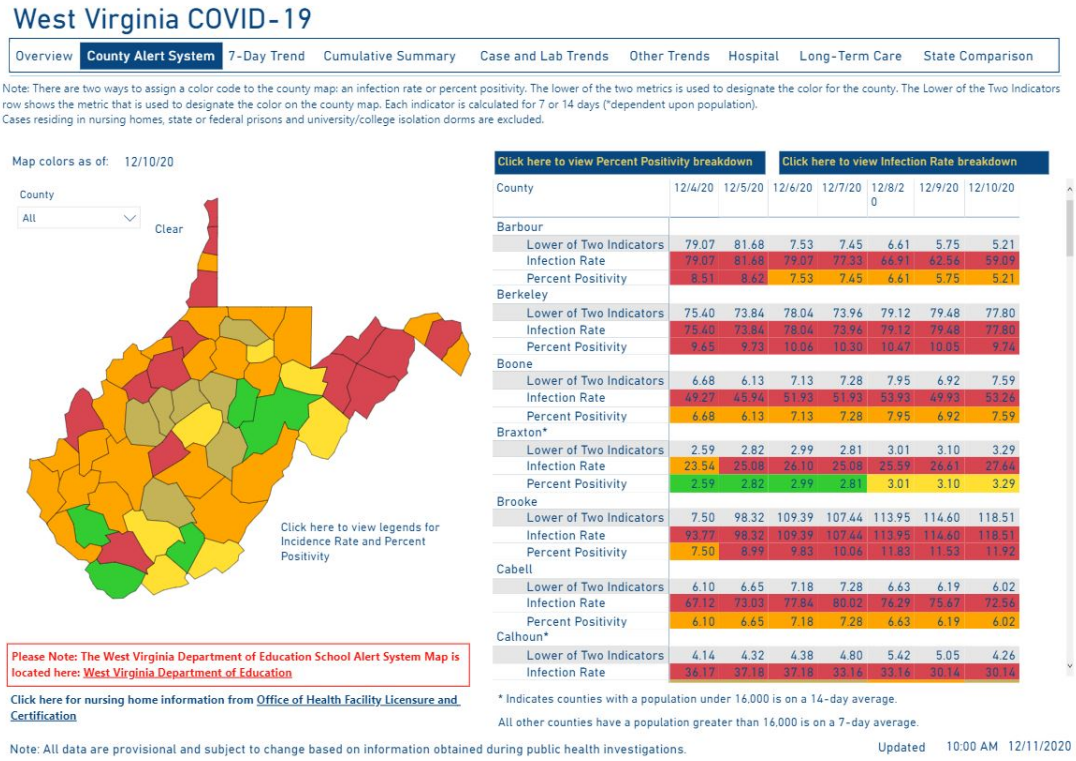
Meanwhile, as of Friday morning, the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (https://rt.live/)– also known as Rt – was 1.13; tied for the 12th-worst such rate of any state in the country.

FRIDAY MAP UPDATE

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice provided a look at West Virginia's latest mid-week County Alert System map update.

Red counties: **14** (Berkeley, Brooke, Clay, Grant, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Marshall, Mason, Mineral, Ritchie, Tyler, Wirt, Wyoming)
Orange counties: **22** (Barbour, Boone, Cabell, Doddridge, Greenbrier, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Kanawha, Lincoln, Mingo, Monongalia, Morgan, Nicholas, Ohio, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Preston, Putnam, Wayne, Wetzel, Wood)
Gold counties: **7** (Calhoun, Fayette, Gilmer, Lewis, Marion, Roane, Webster)
Yellow counties: **7** (Braxton, Mercer, Monroe, Pendleton, Raleigh, Taylor, Tucker)
Green counties: **5** (Logan, McDowell, Randolph, Summers, Upshur)

The map is updated live on the **DHHR's COVID-19 Dashboard** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx) **(Click "County Alert System" tab)** throughout the week for informational purposes and to provide an indication of how each county is trending ahead of each Saturday at 5 p.m.; the time when each county is assigned its official color designation for the next week, which determines the level of scholastic, athletic, and extracurricular activities permitted in each county for that particular week.



(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx)

DHHR's COVID-19 Dashboard **(Click "County Alert System" tab)**
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx)

OUTBREAK REPORT

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice reported that, per the West Virginia Department of Education, there are 21 active outbreaks in public schools across the state. These outbreaks account for 72 confirmed cases, up from 66 on Wednesday.

Click here to view the WVDE's Current Outbreaks in Schools chart
(https://wvde.us/schooloutbreaks)

West Virginia now has 17 active church-related outbreaks across 12 counties: Braxton, Cabell, Fayette, Harrison, Marion, Mineral, Mingo, Nicholas, Raleigh, Taylor, Webster, and Wyoming counties. These outbreaks account for a total of 131 cases, down from 227 on Wednesday.

There are now 112 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, down from 116 such outbreaks as of Wednesday.

The Governor also reported that there are now 315 active inmate cases across the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, down slightly from 321 on Wednesday. The current actives include 282 combined cases between the Northern Regional Jail and the Northern Correctional Facility, plus 26 others at the Pruntytown Correctional Center.

There are 76 active staff cases across the DCR system, down from 78 on Wednesday.

Click here to view the latest corrections facility update
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Correctional-Facilities.aspx)

GOVERNOR STATEMENT ON VIATRIS CLOSURE IN MORGANTOWN

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks on COVID-19 to discuss this morning's announcement that Viatris, which is the new name for Mylan Pharmaceuticals, will close their Morgantown manufacturing facility by July 31, 2021.

"You're talking about 1,500 employees that will lose their jobs, and that means 1,500 great West Virginia families are really going to be affected," Gov. Justice said. "These are great, high-paying jobs and, absolutely, this is a shame beyond belief.

"This news came right out of the blue," Gov. Justice continued. "The net of the whole thing is that we're not going to give up in trying to find a way to save these jobs, but right at this moment, it is devastating news."

Gov. Justice went on to announce that he had a phone call scheduled later in the day with the Viatris management team. During this call, the Governor expressed his disappointment in the suddenness of the news and offered to help in any way possible. While the Viatris team did not offer to reverse their decision, they did commit to working with the Governor and the State to try to find a new operator for the facility to preserve as many of these jobs as possible.

Click here to read more (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/Gov.-Justice-issues-statement-after-call-with-Viatris-management-team.aspx)

GOVERNOR STATEMENT ON WEST VIRGINIA POWER

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice took time to discuss the announcement Wednesday that Major League Baseball has not yet extended an invitation to the West Virginia Power to remain a part of affiliated Minor League Baseball for the 2021 season.

"Obviously, there still remain financial obstacles between the owners of the West Virginia Power, Major League Baseball, and the city and county as well," Gov. Justice said. "I am standing ready to try to help any and everybody. My office has been on the phone with Major League Baseball as recently as yesterday afternoon, and they assured us that we would have a team and we would be playing Minor League Baseball at Power Park.

"There's still some rough edges that have to be worked out," Gov. Justice continued. "But I am very confident that the Power will prove what a fantastic partner they've been and they'll continue to be, and that this will all get worked out with Major League Baseball."

Click here to read more (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/-Gov.-Justice-issues-statement-on-West-Virginia-Power.aspx)

UPDATED FACE COVERING REQUIREMENT IN EFFECT; SIGNS AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESSES

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice provided a reminder that his broadened Statewide Indoor Face Covering Requirement remains in effect.

The order requires all West Virginians age 9 and older to wear a face covering at all times inside all indoor public places, regardless of whether or not they are able to maintain proper social distance. The order requires that all businesses and organizations that invite the public into their facilities must post adequate signage advising guests of the requirement and are also responsible for enforcing the requirement to ensure it is being followed.

Click here to read more details about the face covering requirement (/Pages/Statewide-Indoor-Face-Covering-Requirement.aspx)

Posters are available on the DHHR's **online Face Covering Toolkit** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Face-Covering-Toolkit.aspx) for businesses or organizations to print and display. Social media graphics are also available for download and use by the general public.

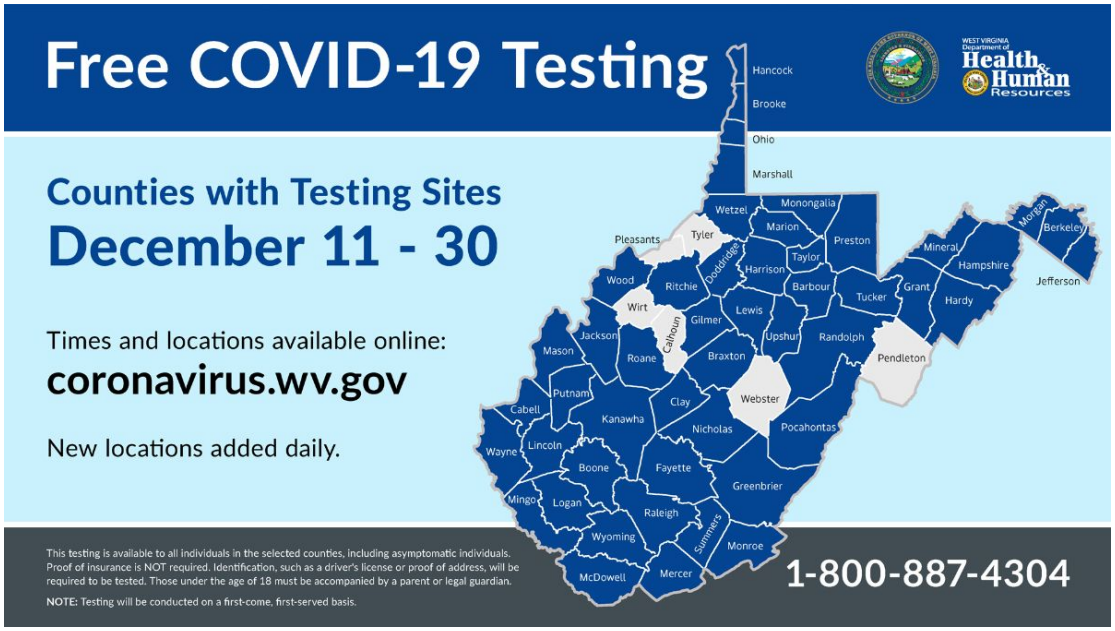
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Face-Covering-Toolkit.aspx)

AGGRESSIVE TESTING CONTINUES ACROSS STATE

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice provided an overview of the 49 counties that have upcoming free testing events scheduled for the near future through the Governor's Aggressive Testing initiative.

This testing is available to all residents, including asymptomatic individuals. Proof of insurance is not required. Attendees should bring identification, such as a driver's license or proof of address, to help in returning test results. Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Click here to view all locations, dates, times, and more details
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)

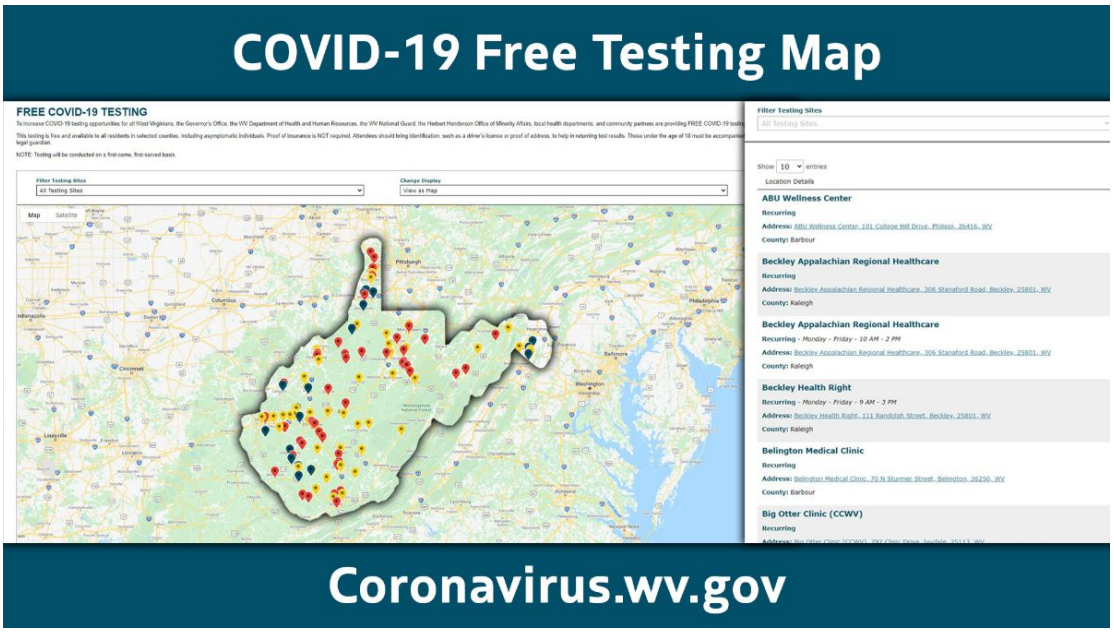


(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)

Meanwhile Friday, DHHR Secretary Bill Crouch took time to report that the recently announced free in-home testing program through Vault Health has been discontinued.

An interactive online map of all active free testing locations across West Virginia is available on the state's **COVID-19 website** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx). Users can filter the map by type of testing site, including daily testing events, recurring testing events, as well as Walgreens and Fruth Pharmacy testing locations. Each location is marked on the map with a pin. After finding a testing location nearby, users are able to click on the pin for more information about that particular testing site, including the specific location and timeframe during which testing will be held.

Click here to view all locations, dates, times, and more details (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)



(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)

WEST VIRGINIANS CALLED UPON TO DONATE BLOOD AND PLASMA

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice once again encouraged all West Virginians to consider donating blood and plasma through the American Red Cross.

In the Governor's recent call with the White House Coronavirus Task Force, Vice President Mike Pence said that there is still a shortage of plasma and blood all across the nation.

Those fully recovered from a verified COVID-19 diagnosis may have plasma in their blood containing COVID-19 antibodies that can attack this virus. This plasma is being evaluated as a possible treatment for currently ill COVID-19 patients.

For more information, visit **redcross.org** (https://www.redcross.org/) or call the local American Red Cross offices at **304-340-3650**.

(https://www.redcross.org/)

CITIES/COUNTIES GRANT FUNDING: OVER $220 MILLION HAS NOW BEEN AWARDED

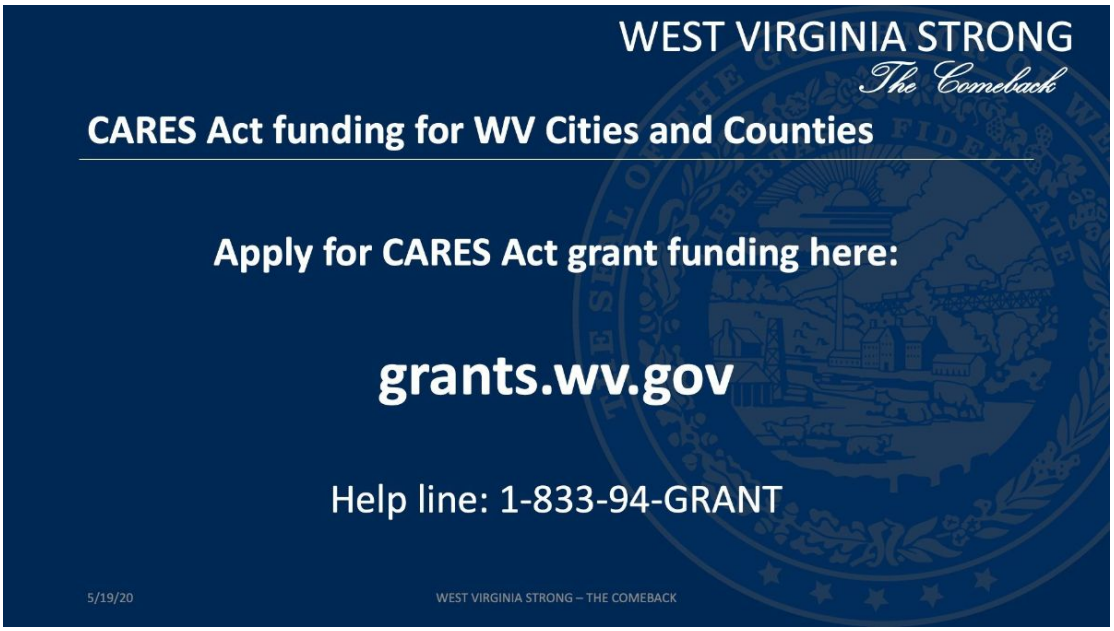
Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice provided an update on cities and counties throughout West Virginia applying for funds through the federal CARES Act, reporting that more than $220 million has now been awarded all across the state.

The total amount of CARES Act funding allocated for these grants has been adjusted from $200 million to $225 million to ensure that applicants are able to receive all necessary grant funds before the Dec. 15 deadline.

"We're coming to the end of this program through our CARES dollars," Gov. Justice said. "If you have an application, and you want to get it in, you've got to get it in soon."

A **web portal** (https://grants.wv.gov/en) is available for city and county government officials to apply. Interested parties can also call the helpline: **1-833-94-GRANT**.

Each of the recipients of CARES Act funding, along with grant amounts, are now available to view through the West Virginia State Auditor's Office **COVID-19 transparency website** (https://stories.opengov.com/westvirginia/published/mnOzKr2wB).



(https://grants.wv.gov/en)

FLU VACCINE REMINDER

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks on COVID-19 to remind and encourage all West Virginians to get their flu vaccine.

According to health officials, everyone 6 months and older should receive this vaccine.

Locate a flu vaccine near you through the **DHHR website** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx).

(https://dhhr.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Click here to view all Executive Orders and other actions (https://governor.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d525ab9ade4d860d2b5772468&id=3029d4fcc4&e=5c140b96bc) taken by Gov. Justice to combat the spread of COVID-19 in West Virginia.

For more information about COVID-19 prevention and more, call the State's toll-free hotline at **1-800-887-4304** or visit **Coronavirus.wv.gov** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx).

(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157717255122956)

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