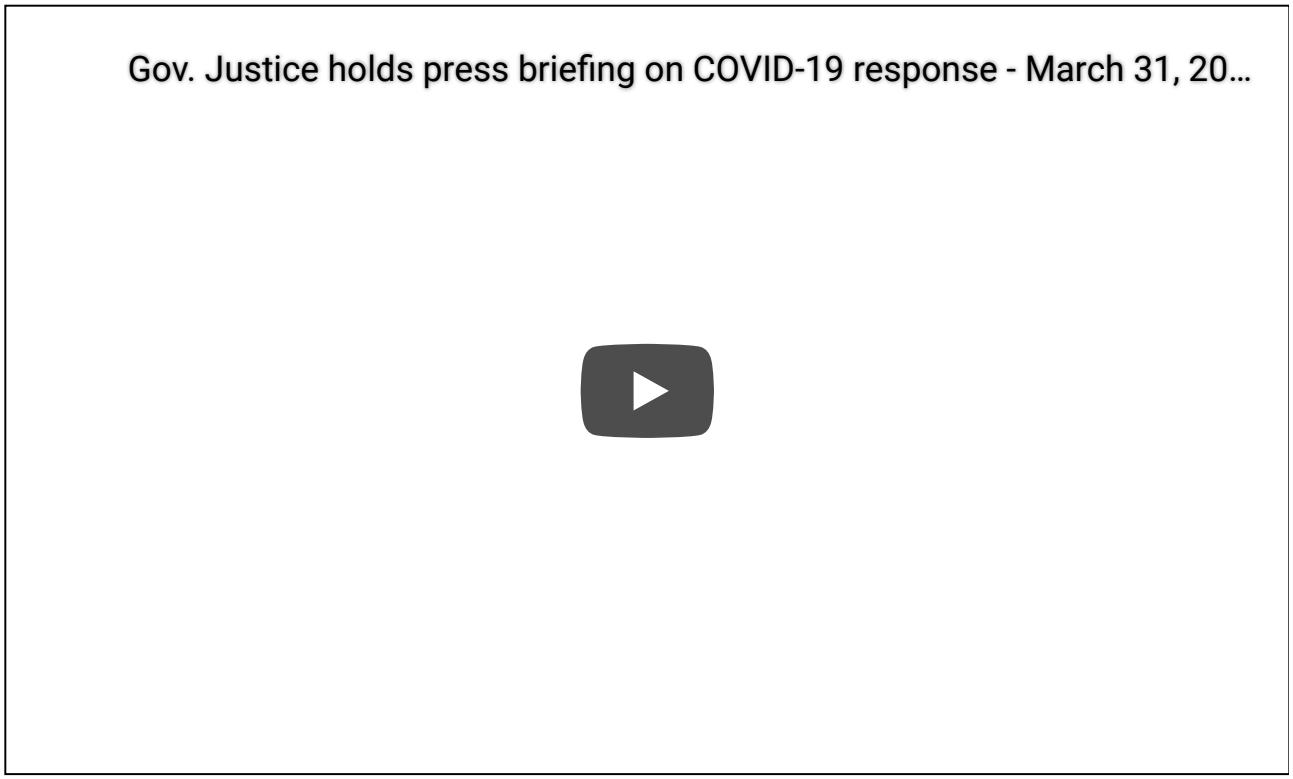
COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice announces West Virginia's vaccine supply increasing to 72,000 weekly doses

3/31/2021



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.

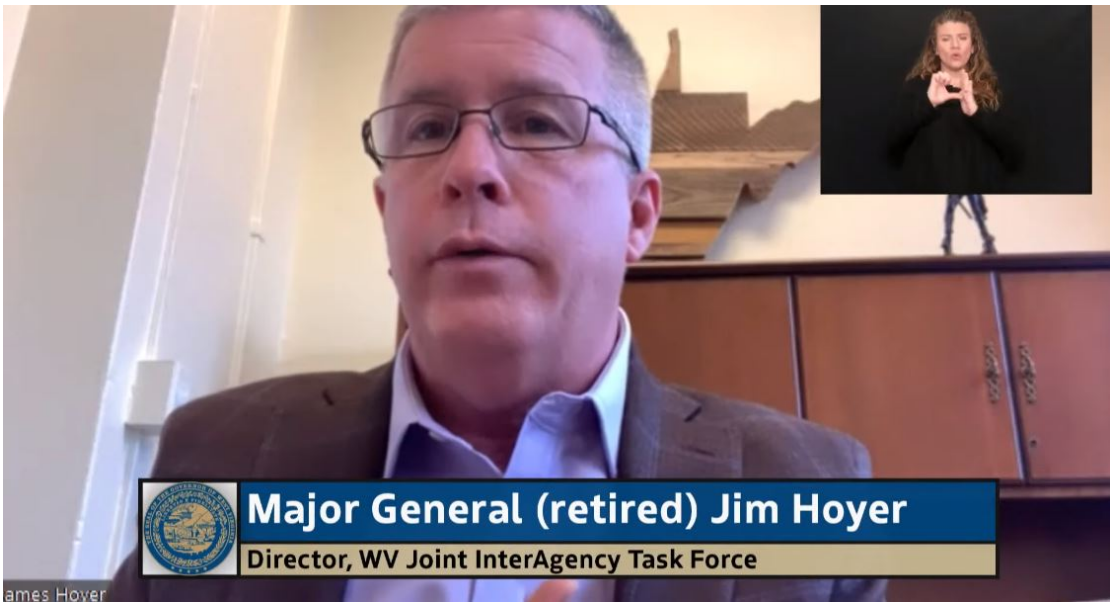
WEST VIRGINIA VACCINE SUPPLY TO INCREASE AGAIN; JIATF INCREASING VACCINE DELIVERY CAPACITY IN EASTERN PANHANDLE

During Wednesday's briefing, Gov. Justice announced that, beginning next week, West Virginia's total weekly vaccine allocation from the federal government will increase from approximately 52,000 doses per week to approximately 72,000 doses per week.

As part of the plan for the increased allocation of doses, the Governor announced that he has ordered the Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) to bolster vaccine delivery capabilities in the state's Eastern Panhandle.

"Our vaccine numbers will increase significantly next week and that will give us a lot more flexibility," said Joint Interagency Task Force Director Jim Hoyer. "We have seen some challenges at the local level in the Eastern Panhandle with the ability to get vaccines out and maintain other services. So, at the Governor's direction, we have worked with several partners, including WVU Medicine, our local health officials, and others, to increase the capacity to deliver vaccines in the Eastern Panhandle.

"That effort is beginning as we speak and will ramp up significantly next week as we see more vaccines start to come in," Hoyer continued.



"With our allocation going up, we need to amp up even more what we're doing in the Eastern Panhandle, as well as all across our state," Gov. Justice said. "We have a challenge, and we're going to run to the fire like we always do and get that knocked out."

VIEW PHOTO ALBUM
(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157718830919427)

VACCINE DISTRIBUTION UPDATE

Also on Wednesday, Gov. Justice announced that the state will now begin the process of offering vaccinations to all inmates within the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, age 65 and older, who are interested in receiving the vaccine.

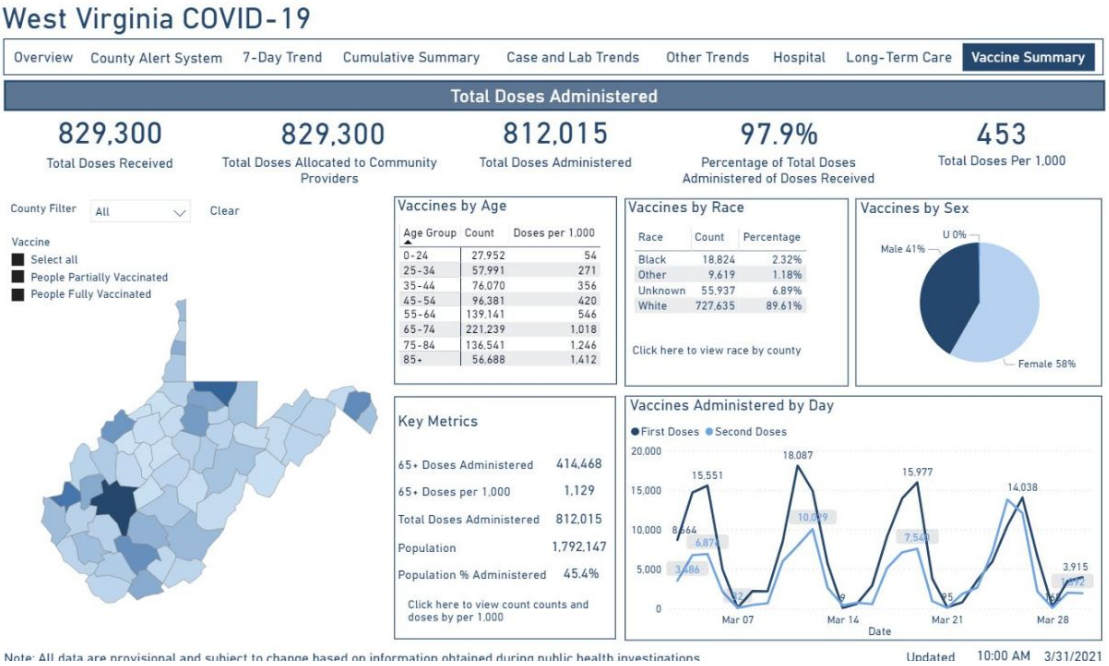
"We have a challenge within our corrections facilities, and we are immediately moving to get shots in the arms of everybody in these facilities that are 65 years of age and older that will accept and take a shot," Gov. Justice said. "Once we get those done, we will fall right down to 50 and we will stay at it until everyone who wants a vaccine gets one."

Gov. Justice went on to report that West Virginia has now successfully administered 812,015 doses after receiving a total allotment of 829,300 doses from the federal government to date; an overall administration rate of 97.9%.

West Virginia currently boasts a first dose administration rate of 104.6%, which exceeds 100% due to extra doses being extracted from vials of the vaccine, and a second dose administration rate of 88.8%.

- First doses: 498,588 administered / 476,480 allotted
- Second doses: 313,427 administered / 352,820 allotted

West Virginia COVID-19 Dashboard (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx) **(Click "Vaccine Summary" tab)**



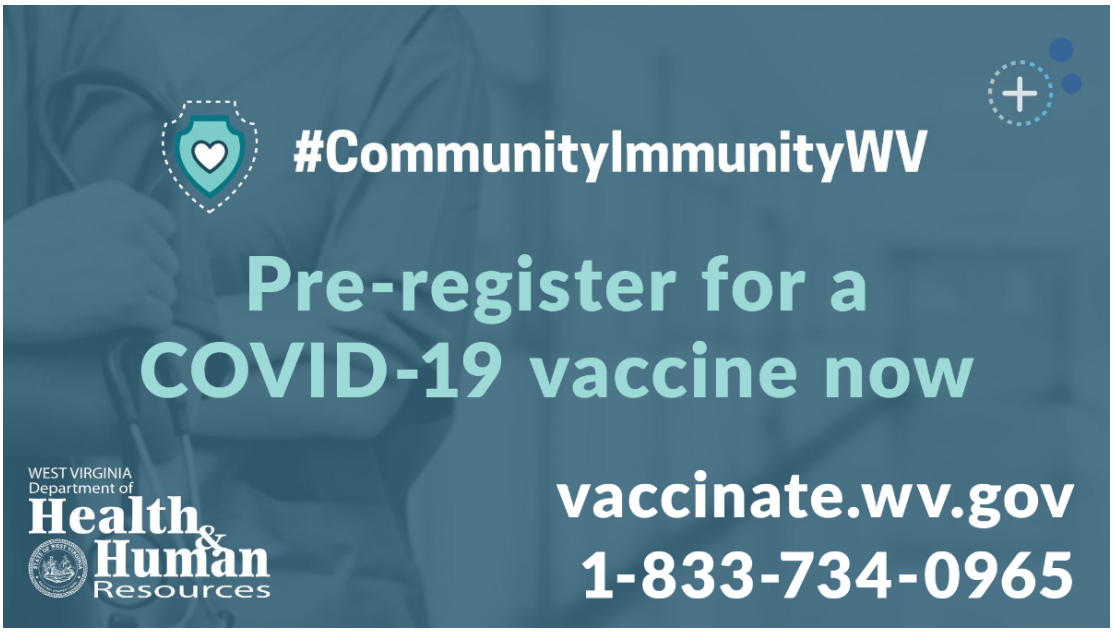
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx)

Vaccinations are now available to all West Virginians age 16 and older. However, West Virginians who are age 65 and older will continue to be prioritized first until all state residents in this age range who desire the vaccine have been vaccinated.

The Governor provided a reminder of his **announcement last week** (/News/press-releases/2021/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov.-Justice-to-allow-all-live-music-performances-to-resume.aspx) that, at his direction, the Joint Interagency Task Force is setting up three fixed-location vaccination clinics in Berkeley, Kanawha, and Monongalia counties to ensure that every West Virginian age 65 and older has access to a vaccine.

To date, 236,860 West Virginians age 65 and older have chosen to be vaccinated – over 72% of West Virginia's population in this age range – including 177,608 who are now fully vaccinated.

Any West Virginians age 65 and older are urged to pre-register for an appointment by visiting **vaccinate.wv.gov** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx) or calling the **West Virginia Vaccine Info Line: 1-833-734-0965**. The info line is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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

The Governor and state pandemic response leaders also offered a reminder of their **announcement Monday** (/News/press-releases/2021/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov.-Justice-announces-worlds-first-Toyota-plant-vaccination-clinic-held-in-West-Virginia.aspx) that Walmart and additional independent pharmacies will begin receiving doses of COVID-19 vaccines, joining Walgreens and the Med Shoppe/Leader network of pharmacies as part of the federal pharmacy partnership in West Virginia.

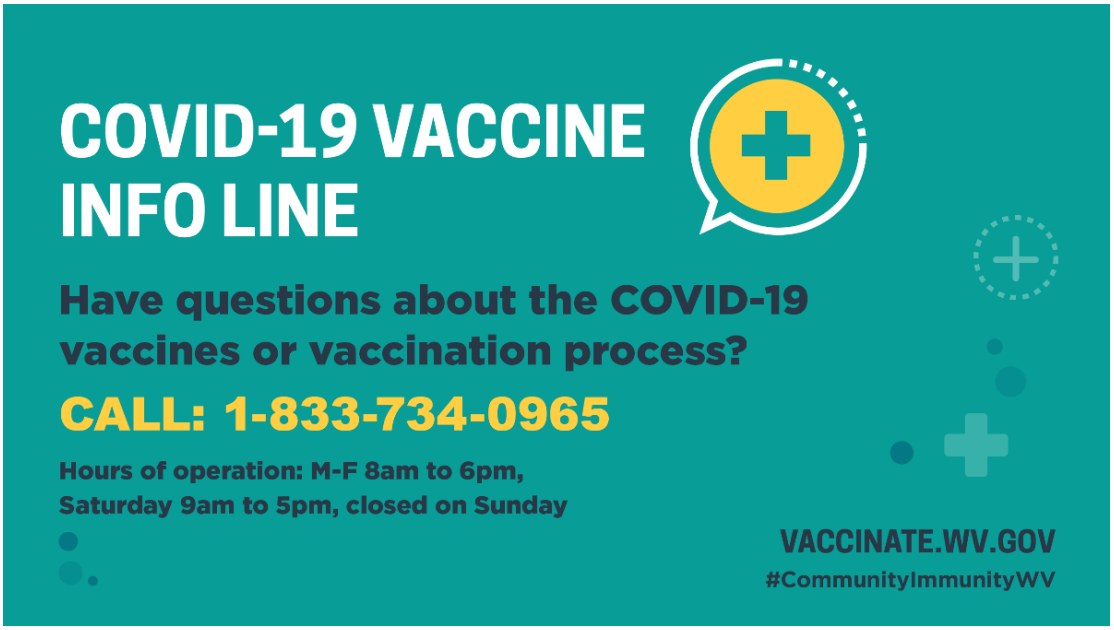
West Virginians can go to **vaccinefinder.org** (https://vaccinefinder.org/) for assistance in locating and securing an appointment at one of these federal pharmacy partners.

(https://vaccinefinder.org/)

The JIATF continues to reach out to manufacturers and businesses across the state to increase vaccine access for employees and their families choosing to be vaccinated by organizing vaccination clinics at these facilities.

Additionally, church leaders are still being urged to contact the JIATF for help organizing vaccination clinics for interested members of their congregations.

Anyone interested in organizing one of these vaccination clinics is asked to contact the **West Virginia Vaccine Info Line: 1-833-734-0965**.



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

INVESTIGATION INTO DEATH DATA COMPLETED; REPORT RELEASED

Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice announced that the recent investigation into the reason why certain COVID-19-related deaths were not properly reported has been completed.

The investigation concluded that there was no willfulness and intent by any reporting authority to cause incorrect data to be reported or not reported to the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR).

"Due to the lag time to prepare, submit, and issue a West Virginia death certificate, it is not possible, today, to use a death certificate for near real-time reporting of a COVID-19 death," Gov. Justice said. "But this all has got to be changed, and we have to do it right now."

As a result, Gov. Justice announced that he has directed the DHHR to immediately begin the process of implementing a new electronic death reporting system.

"West Virginia is one of the only states in the country that does not have an electronic system like that," Gov. Justice said. "We probably didn't need that in West Virginia until we got into this pandemic. But now that we've gotten into this situation, our people at DHHR should've recognized this and moved. They didn't move and I am not happy about that. But I can tell you that it is clear there was no intent to report incorrect data.

"With the help of our National Guard, we are on it and we're going to get it fixed," Gov. Justice continued.

Click here to view the full investigation report (/Documents/DHHR-Special-Investigations-Report-March-2021.pdf)

The Governor went on to report that the DHHR recently discovered that another 35 COVID-19-related deaths were not properly reported by various healthcare facilities across the state. Gov. Justice took time to honor each of these West Virginians during his briefing Wednesday.

"I truly hate this so bad," Gov. Justice said. "These people deserve our respect and our love. I'm sure we have both for them. But, absolutely, to not report them in a timely way is not good. I hate this and I'm sorry for this."

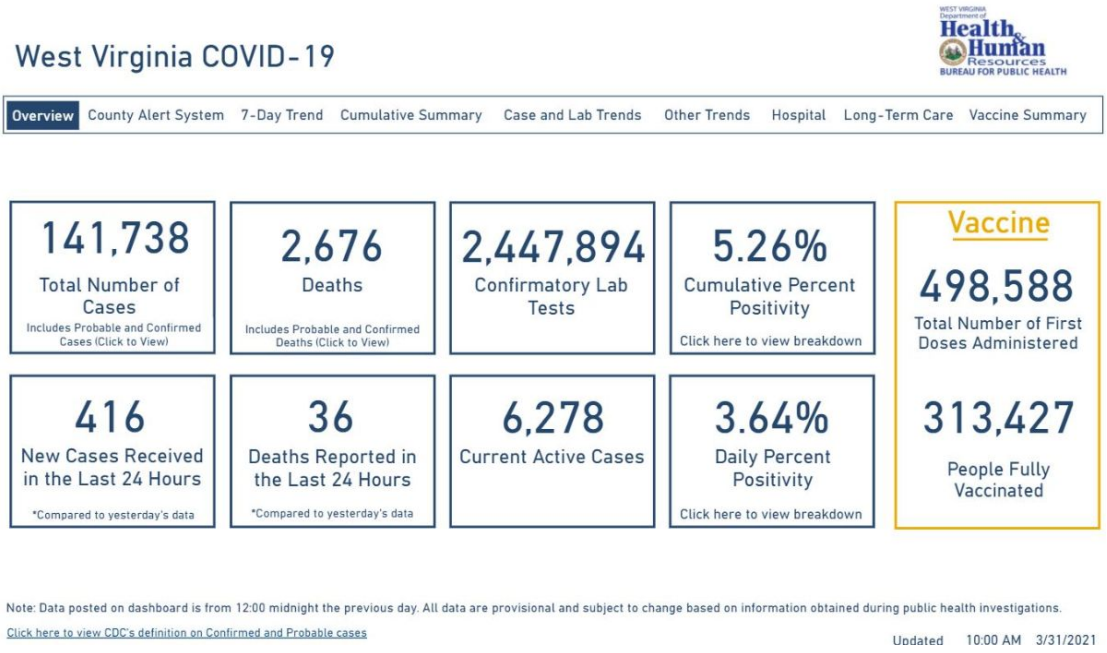
COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state is now 6,278, up from 6,252 as of his previous COVID-19 briefing on Monday.

The number of active hospitalizations is now 237, up from 222 on Monday. Of those currently hospitalized, 80 patients are in the ICU, down from 83 such patients on Monday.

The cumulative percent of positive cases is now 5.26%, down from 5.27% on Monday.

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



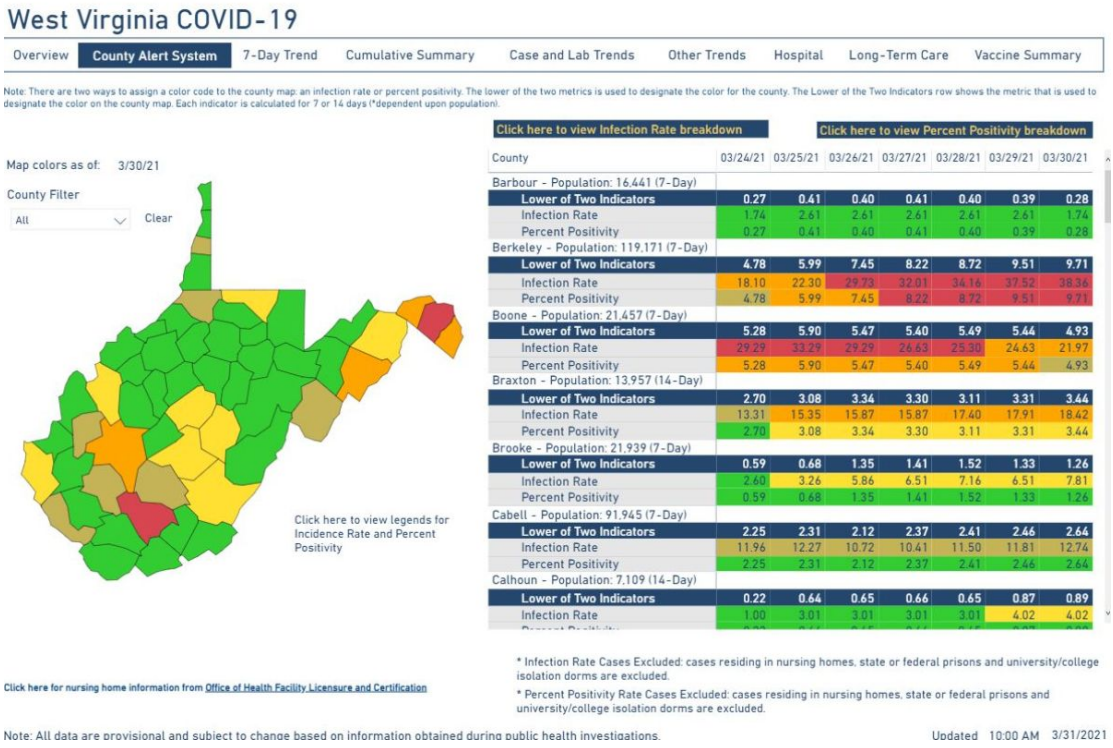
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx)

WEDNESDAY MAP UPDATE

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

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.

Red counties: **2**
Orange counties: **4**
Gold counties: **7**
Yellow counties: **8**
Green counties: **34**



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

OUTBREAK REPORT

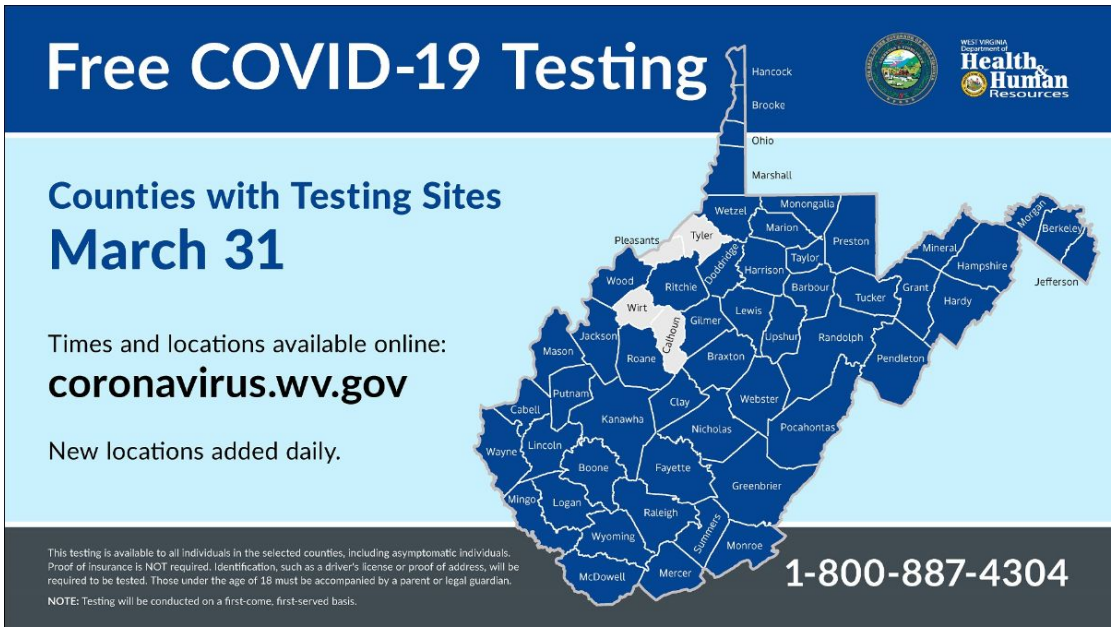
Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice reported that there are now six active church-related outbreaks in West Virginia, down from seven such outbreaks as of his previous COVID-19 briefing on Monday. The active outbreaks are located in Fayette, Harrison, Kanawha, Nicholas, and Raleigh counties and account for a total of a total of 82 cases, down from 101 such cases on Monday.

There remain four active outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state.

The Governor also reported that there are now just three inmate cases across the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, down from four such cases on Monday. Meanwhile, there are now 12 active staff cases across the DCR system, up from nine such cases on Monday. To view the latest DCR case update, **click here** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Correctional-Facilities.aspx).

AGGRESSIVE TESTING CONTINUES ACROSS STATE

Also on Wednesday, Gov. Justice provided an overview of the 51 counties across the state that have free testing events scheduled through the Governor's Aggressive Testing initiative.

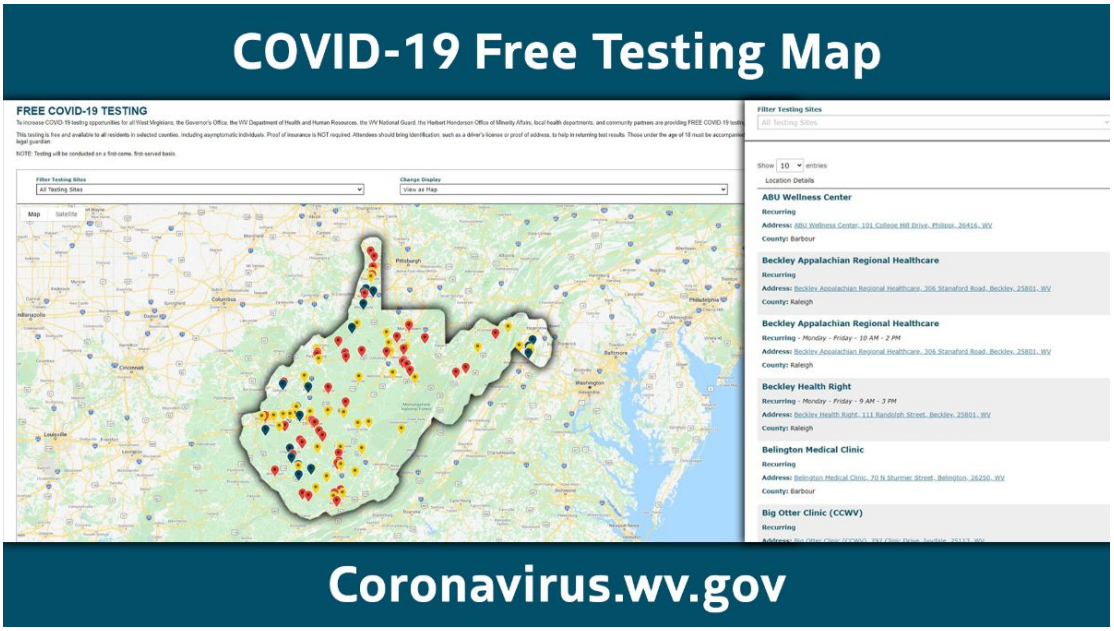


(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)

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.

An interactive online map of all free testing locations across West Virginia is available online. 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. Users can also filter by county. 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)

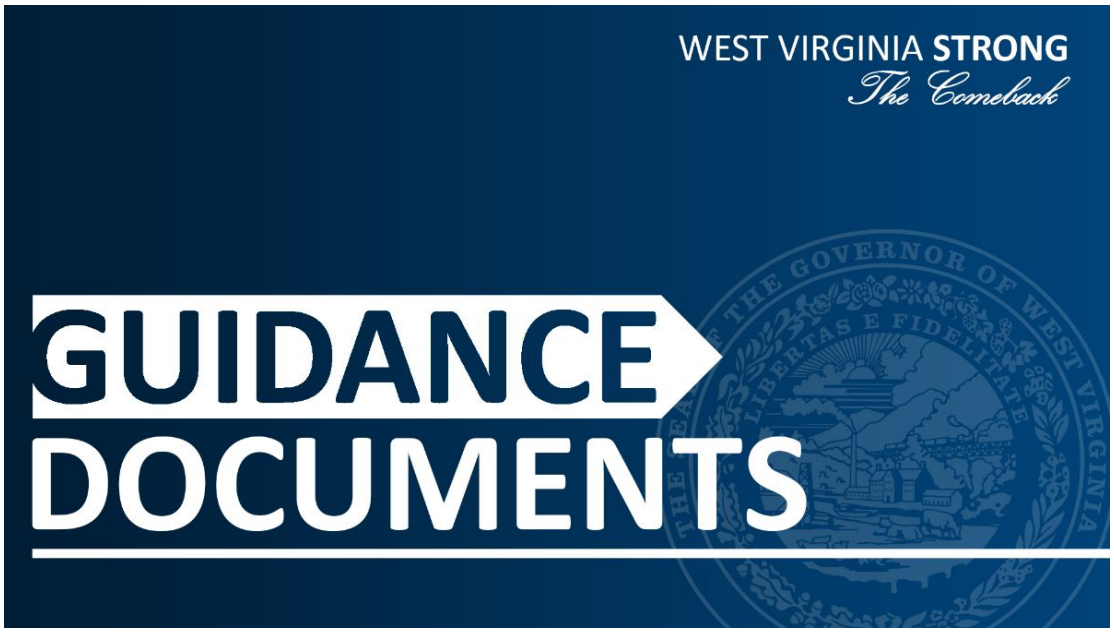


(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)

ALL BUSINESSES MUST CONTINUE TO FOLLOW COVID-19 SAFETY GUIDELINES

Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice took time to provide a reminder that all businesses in West Virginia must continue to follow all applicable COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Click here to view all active guidance documents (/The-Comeback/Pages/default.aspx)



(/The-Comeback/Pages/default.aspx)

FACE COVERING REQUIREMENT REMAINS IN EFFECT

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

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)

DONATE BLOOD AND PLASMA

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

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 may be able to be used as a 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/)

GOVERNOR SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER 11-21

Also, Gov. Justice announced that he signed **Executive Order 11-21** (/Documents/2021%20Executive%20Orders/EO-11-21-March-29-2021.pdf) Monday, which states that WorkForce West Virginia shall not recover or attempt to recover unemployment benefits that were incorrectly but non-fraudulently distributed to claimants if such unemployment benefits were directly funded by monies received by the State of West Virginia from the United States government and only to the extent that the United States government grants the State of West Virginia the authority to waive the recovery of such incorrectly but non-fraudulently distributed benefits.

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).

Contact Information

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