

*COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice offers prayers to President Trump, First Lady; announces Aggressive Testing initiative curbing spread in West Virginia*

10/2/2020



**Click here to view photo album** (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157716220537358>)

### Gov. Justice holds press briefing on COVID-19 response - O...



**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.

#### **GOV. JUSTICE OFFERS PRAYERS TO PRESIDENT TRUMP AND FIRST LADY**

Gov. Justice began today’s briefing by offering his prayers and well-wishes to President Donald J. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump, who announced in the early morning hours Friday that they had tested positive for COVID-19.

“Our Bible teaches us to offer prayers for our leaders all the time,” Gov. Justice said. “I’d like for us all, no matter our differences, to come together today as Americans and offer up a prayer for our President and First Lady.

“Cathy and I wish them both a speedy recovery from this terrible disease,” Gov. Justice continued. “And also, I would offer up a prayer to God above, for the 355 West Virginians we’ve now lost.”

**AGGRESSIVE TESTING INITIATIVE CONTINUES TO CURB SPREAD**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice reported that new free testing sites, established through the Governor's "Aggressive Testing" initiative, have helped curb the spread of COVID-19 in West Virginia.

In Kanawha County, a total of 2,054 tests have been conducted so far this week, resulting in the discovery of several asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic carriers of the disease.

"Out of those 2,054 tests, we had 85 people that have come back with a positive test," Gov. Justice said. "Now what does that mean? It probably means that those 85 people were walking around and had no earthly idea that they had this disease. We could never have identified those 85 spreaders if we hadn't aggressively tested, and that 85 could have turned into 150, then into 300, then many, many more.

"Absolutely, more testing is the key to this entire thing," Gov. Justice continued. "Now we need you to continue to come out and be tested – in Kanawha County or in any other county – when we're offering up the testing, come out."



Several additional free testing events are scheduled in the upcoming weeks for many counties all across West Virginia.

This testing is available to all residents in selected counties, 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>)

# Free COVID-19 Testing

Counties with Testing Sites  
**October 2-17**

Times and locations available online:  
**coronavirus.wv.gov**

New locations added daily.

This testing is available to all individuals in the selected counties, including asymptomatic individuals. Proof of insurance is NOT required. Identification, such as a driver's license or proof of address, will be required to be tested. Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.  
NOTE: Testing will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis.

**1-800-887-4304**

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

## **FRIDAY MAP UPDATE**

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice provided a look at West Virginia's latest mid-week County Alert System map update, which continues to show significant improvement with Aggressive Testing efforts underway in several regions.

**Red** counties: 0

**Orange** counties: 4 (Harrison, Boone, Taylor, Upshur)

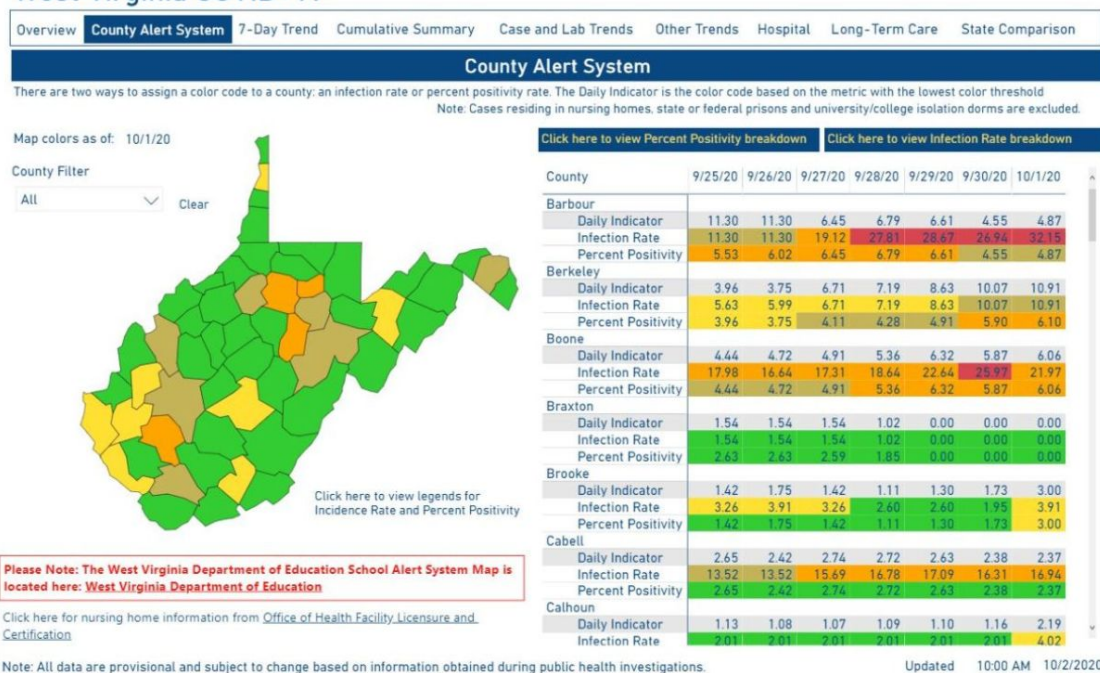
**Gold** counties: 7 (Barbour, Berkeley, Doddridge, Jackson, Kanawha, Randolph, Wyoming)

**Yellow** counties: 8 (Brooke, Grant, Lincoln, Mingo, Nicholas, Putnam, Summers, Wayne)

**Green** counties: 36 (All others)

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.

## West Virginia COVID-19



(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-

19/Pages/default.aspx)

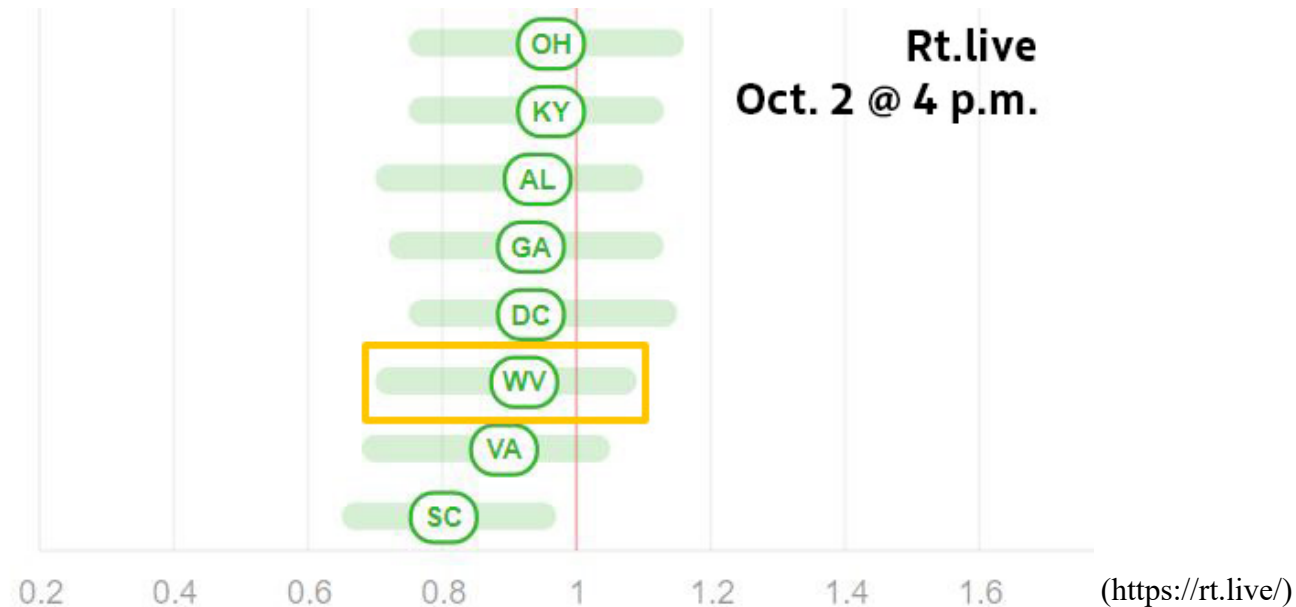
**COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice reported that the number of active COVID-19 cases across the state has now reached 4,153. However, West Virginia's statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission – also known as  $R_t$  – continued to improve Friday afternoon, reaching 0.92; the **3rd-best such rate** (<https://rt.live/>) of any state in the country.

West Virginia continues to outperform the national average – as well as the rates of all of its bordering states – in percentage of population tested, percentage of population positive, and percentage of positive test results.

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





### **ATHLETE TESTING UPDATE**

Gov. Justice also announced Friday that, after seeing media reports about student athletes intentionally getting tested multiple times to drive numbers down, state health experts have begun to investigate these claims.

"Across the entire state, with thousands of tests being done, we found only 13 incidences where we believe this type of behavior may have been taking place," Gov. Justice said. "Still, we need to do everything we can to make sure this is not happening."

The Governor went on to announce that he has asked West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Executive Director Bernie Dolan to issue a ruling regarding any coaches of athletes who may try to test excessively.

"I'm asking Bernie to come up with some level of suspension or punishment for anyone that would do such a thing," Gov. Justice said.



### **GOV. JUSTICE RECEIVES FLU VACCINE LIVE ON-AIR; ENCOURAGES WEST VIRGINIANS TO BE VACCINATED**

In order to encourage all West Virginians to be vaccinated for the flu this year, Gov. Justice took time out of his briefing on Friday to receive the flu vaccine live on-air.

"I encourage everybody to go out and get your flu shot," Gov. Justice said. "It's really easy and it's more important than ever this year."

According to health officials, everyone 6 months and older should receive this vaccine. In addition to personal protection, the vaccine also reduces the burden on hospitals and healthcare systems.



## **OUTBREAK REPORT**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice reported that across the entire Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, there are now just five remaining active cases of COVID-19 among inmates. Four of the cases are located within Mount Olive Correctional Complex in Fayette County, while one case is located within North Central Regional Jail in Doddridge County.

There are now 16 active cases among DCR employees, nine of whom work at Mount Olive.

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

West Virginia is now up to 11 active church-related outbreaks across seven counties: Fayette, Harrison, Kanawha, Logan, McDowell, Nicholas, and Tucker counties.

There are now 37 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, up from 36 on Wednesday.

Gov. Justice also reported that, per the West Virginia Department of Education, there are 19 active outbreaks in public schools across the state. These outbreaks account for 46 confirmed cases, up from 40 on Wednesday.

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

## **GOLD STAR MONUMENT DEDICATED ON WOODY WILLIAMS' BIRTHDAY**

Additionally, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks about COVID-19 to announce that a virtual dedication ceremony was held Friday for the new, completed Gold Star Monument on the State Capitol grounds in Charleston.

The monument will forever honor the memory of the West Virginians who have paid the ultimate price by giving their life in defense of America, while at the same time recognizing and honoring the families of the fallen, and the challenges they continue to face in the absence of their loved ones.



"It's the largest Gold Star monument in the nation," Gov. Justice said. "I was honored to pitch in the remaining funding from my contingency fund to get this monument built."

Today's dedication ceremony coincided with the 97th birthday of American war hero, Medal of Honor recipient, and West Virginia native; Hershel "Woody" Williams.

"On behalf of all West Virginians I want to wish Woody a happy birthday," Gov. Justice said. "Woody is West Virginia's only living Medal of Honor recipient and is a true treasure and hero to us all."

The driving force behind the completion of the monument, the Hershel Woody Williams Congressional Medal of Honor Education Foundation honors Gold Star children, families, and relatives who have sacrificed a loved one in the service of their country.





## **LIVE MUSIC UPDATE**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice announced that he and his administration are close to resolving the issue of outdoor music performances, which are currently not allowed to take place.

"We're getting requests all the time about live music," Gov. Justice said. "We're working through all the guidelines with our medical experts, trying to find a safe way to allow this to happen.

"We're really close and I believe we're going to get it done in a matter of days," Gov. Justice continued.



### **DMV OFFICES OPEN**

Additionally Friday, as a follow-up to a question asked during Wednesday's briefing, Gov. Justice clarified that all DMV offices are currently open across the state, for both appointments and walk-in visits.

"They are taking all the necessary safety protocols and everything to keep the people safe," Gov. Justice said. "Last week, we had 6,724 West Virginians that made an appointment at the DMV and we also had 6,394 who walked in at offices across the state."

For more information, visit **DMV.wv.gov** (<https://transportation.wv.gov/dmv/Pages/default.aspx>) or call **304-558-3938**.



(<https://transportation.wv.gov/dmv/Pages/default.aspx>)

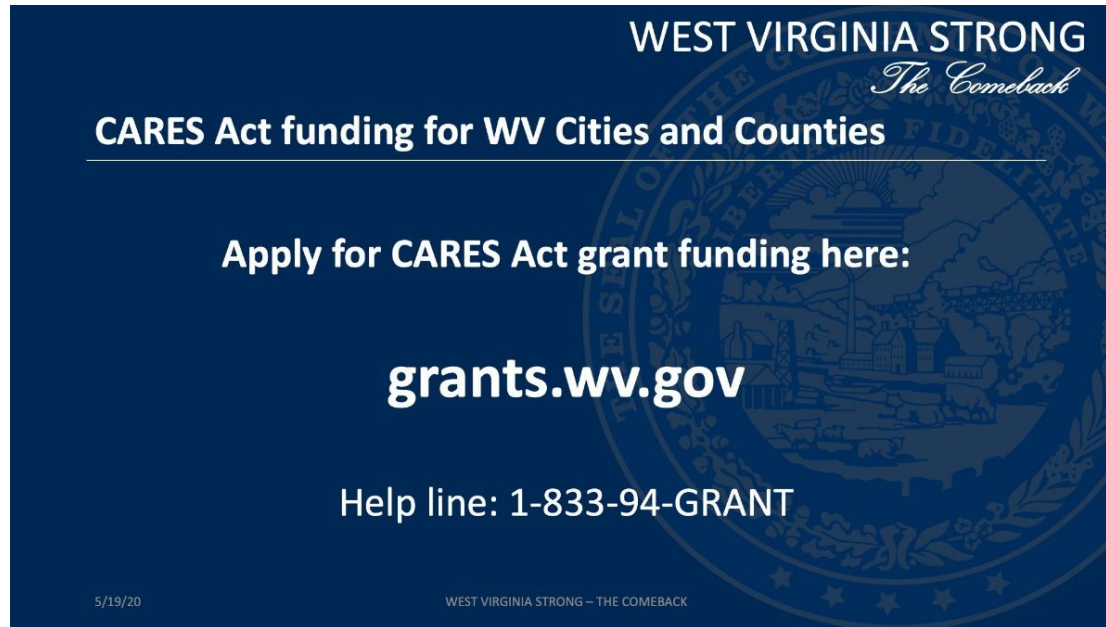
### **CITIES/COUNTIES GRANT FUNDING: OVER \$132 MILLION HAS NOW BEEN AWARDED**

Also today, Gov. Justice provided an update on cities and counties throughout West Virginia applying for funds through the federal CARES Act, reporting that more than \$132 million has now been awarded all across the state. To date, 191 cities and counties have applied for this grant funding.

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>)

## **WEST VIRGINIA REMAINS AMONG NATIONAL LEADERS IN CENSUS RESPONSE RATE; ALL URGED TO PARTICIPATE**

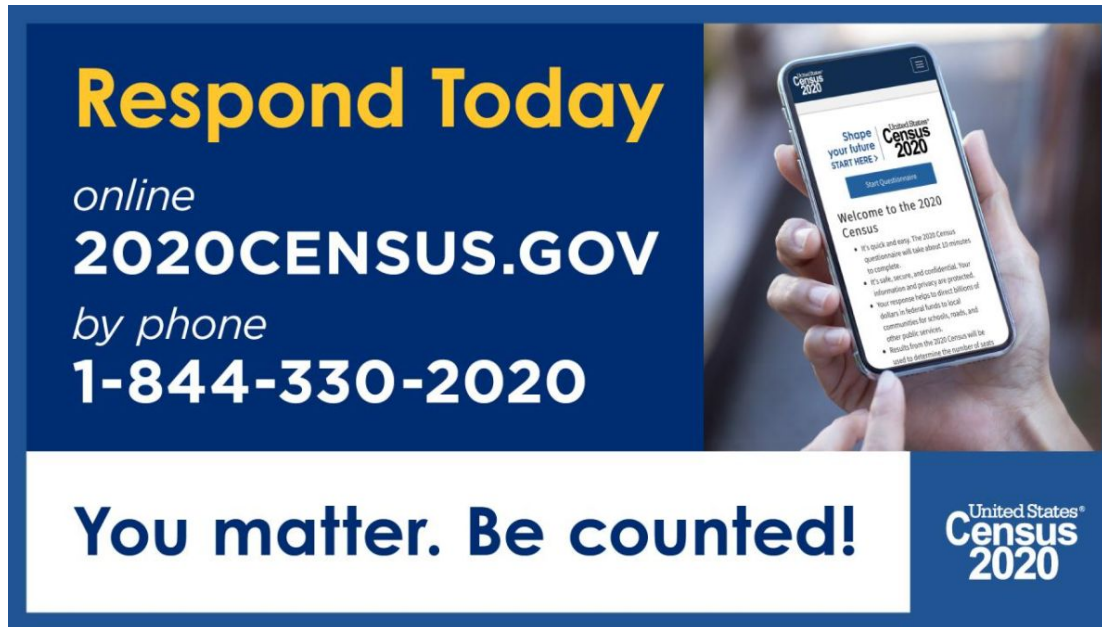
Once more today, Gov. Justice asked all West Virginians to participate in the 2020 United States Census.

West Virginia remains tied atop the national standings with the #1 best Census response rate in the country: 99.9 percent.

For perspective, during the last Census in 2010, the state's final response rate was just 74 percent.

Every West Virginian who does not respond to the Census represents a loss of \$20,000 in federal funds over the next 10 years for the state and its local communities. The funds can go toward things like healthcare, education, infrastructure, school lunch programs, and more.

Be counted in minutes: **2020census.gov** (<https://2020census.gov/>).

A promotional graphic for the 2020 Census. The left side has a dark blue background with yellow and white text. The right side shows a hand holding a smartphone displaying the Census app interface. At the bottom right is the 'United States Census 2020' logo.

**Respond Today**  
*online*  
**2020CENSUS.GOV**  
*by phone*  
**1-844-330-2020**

**You matter. Be counted!**

United States<sup>®</sup>  
**Census  
2020**

(<https://2020census.gov/>)

### **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>).



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