

COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice, higher education leaders announce resources being provided for additional testing at colleges and universities

9/30/2020

staff,” Dr. Tucker continued. “We were incredibly grateful that he provided us the resources to do that. We worked with our local health departments and we were able to help ensure the safety of our campus communities.

“But we know the level of strain the local health departments were under trying to make sure that our whole campus community was being tested. It was a huge effort on their part, and they were just wonderful to work with, but we didn't want to continue to tax them.”

Dr. Tucker added that the HEPC has coordinated with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) and the West Virginia National Guard (WVNG) to develop a solution where the institutions will be able to administer saliva-based PCR tests themselves.

“What's wonderful about the opportunity that we have now is that we won't have to rely on or provide further strain on the local health departments so that they can continue to do other community testing,” Dr. Tucker said.

“At West Virginia’s higher education institutions, we continue to have less than one percent, week to week, of our students, faculty, and staff testing positive,” Dr. Tucker continued. “We want to keep it that way. We want to make sure that our colleges aren't contributing to the spread of COVID in our state, and this surveillance testing is a huge way for us to be able to do that.”

AGGRESSIVE TESTING: FREE COVID-19 TESTING SITES AVAILABLE ACROSS WEST VIRGINIA

Also on Wednesday, Gov. Justice offered a reminder that additional free testing events are scheduled in the upcoming weeks for several counties all across West Virginia.

“I encourage you, in every way, to take advantage of our free testing,” Gov. Justice said. “We are blanketing a bunch of areas because we want to get an appropriate cross-section of the whole county.”

Gov. Justice holds press briefing on COVID-19 response - S...



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.

RESOURCES BEING PROVIDED FOR ADDITIONAL TESTING AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

During Wednesday’s briefing, Gov. Justice was joined by Dr. Sarah Armstrong Tucker, Chancellor of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC), who announced that Gov. Justice is providing the necessary resources to allow for all of West Virginia’s public two-year and four-year institutions, as well as the state’s not-for-profit private institutions, to conduct surveillance testing on 10 percent of their students and staff each week.

“This is an ongoing measure on our part to try to make sure that our campus communities are safe,” Dr. Tucker said.

“Governor, I couldn’t be more thankful for your assistance.”

“When our colleges first went back to school face-to-face, the Governor directed us to test all of our faculty, students, and



Click here to view photo album (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157716195031973>)

In Kanawha County, where students have yet to return to school in-person due to elevated community spread, over 900 people have been tested at these free events this week alone. An additional testing site was established at George Washington High School in Charleston. Another full-day testing event will be held tomorrow from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Additional Kanawha County testing events this week include South Charleston High School tomorrow from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Riverside High School on Friday from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Additional testing will also be offered in Boone County, which reached an Orange color designation in Wednesday's County Alert System map. A free testing event will be held at the Boone County Health Department in Danville from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

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.

"I want everybody to go get tested because, even if you don't have any symptoms, we have the opportunity to identify positive cases in people who may get symptoms later," Gov. Justice said. "Then we'd be able to isolate them, do contact tracing, and everything we need. It will give us the ability to stop this dreaded disease."

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
Sept. 30 – Oct. 14**

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>)

COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice reported that the number of active COVID-19 cases across the state is at 3,991, up slightly from 3,987 on Monday. However, West Virginia's statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission – also known as Rt – once again came in at 0.94 Wednesday afternoon; tied for the **10th-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.

Gov. Justice also noted that West Virginia still has a significantly lower number of COVID-19 deaths than any of its bordering states. As of Wednesday, Pennsylvania had 8,142 such deaths, Ohio had 4,783, Maryland had 3,949, Virginia had 3,208, Kentucky had 1,170, while West Virginia had just 350.

"You've done an amazing job, West Virginia," Gov. Justice said. "You've just got to keep at it. This thing is still with us. We're trying with all in us to test more, identify more problems and spreaders, and stop it once and for all. But we all need to stay focused."

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



OUTBREAK REPORT

Also on Wednesday, Gov. Justice reported that across the entire Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, there are now seven cases of COVID-19 among inmates. Six 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 10 active church-related outbreaks across seven counties: Fayette, Harrison, Kanawha, Logan, McDowell, Nicholas, and Tucker counties.

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

Gov. Justice also reported that, per the West Virginia Department of Education, there are 17 active outbreaks in public schools across the state. These outbreaks account for 40 confirmed cases, down from 52 on Monday.

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

WEDNESDAY MAP UPDATE

Additionally Wednesday, 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

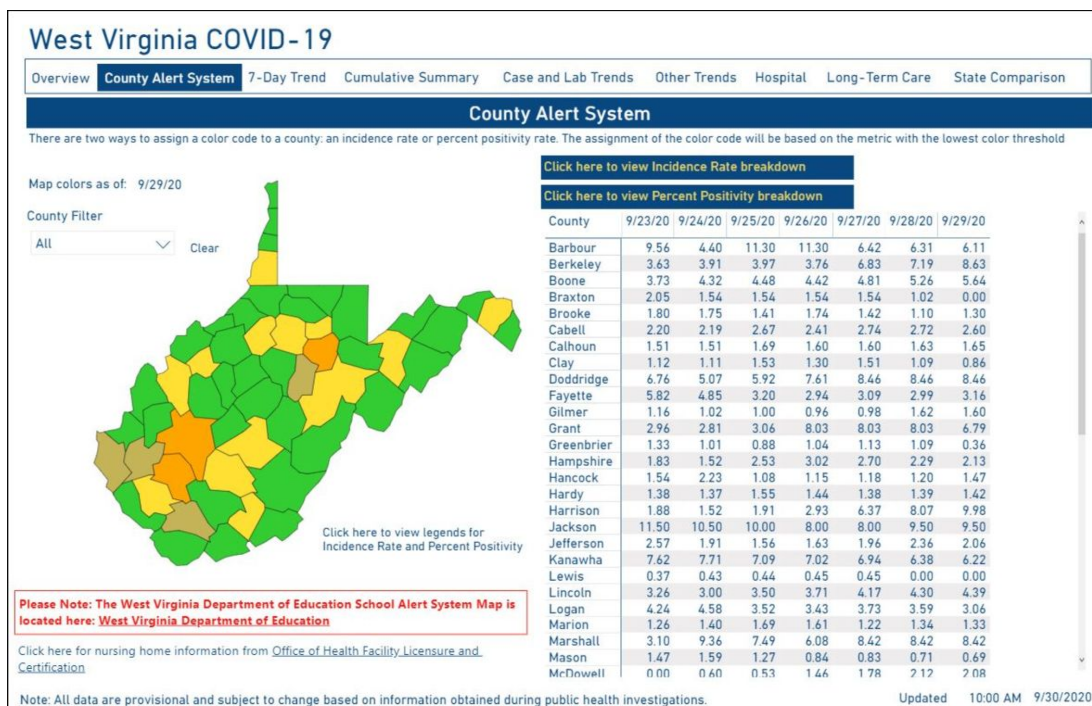
Orange counties: 3 (Barbour, Boone, Kanawha)

Gold counties: 4 (Lincoln, Upshur, Wayne, Wyoming)

Yellow counties: 13 (Berkeley, Doddridge, Fayette, Grant, Harrison, Jackson, Logan, Marshall, Nicholas, Randolph, Summers, Taylor, Wirt)

Green counties: 35 (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.



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

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FLU VACCINE REMINDER

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

"Please, I'm urging you, go get your flu shot," Gov. Justice said. "There's really not all that much to it. But what it does is really helps us, especially with this COVID situation we still have going on, it reduces the burden on hospitals and healthcare systems."

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



SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS: MORE THAN \$22 MILLION HAS NOW BEEN AWARDED

Today marks the final day that applications are open for the Governor's **West Virginia CARES Act Small Business Grant Program** (<https://grants.wv.gov/en/flexible-page?pageId=1424>).

During today's briefing, Gov. Justice provided an update on the small businesses that have applied for funding through the program, reporting that over 8,000 applications have been submitted, with more than \$22 million being awarded to date.

The initiative is making available \$150 million of West Virginia's CARES Act funding to qualifying businesses across the state. Any West Virginia-based small business, in existence on March 1, 2020, with 1-35 employees, is able to apply for up to \$5,000 in grant funding.

Gov. Justice has also opened up the West Virginia CARES Act Small Business Grant Program to sole proprietorships and self-employed individuals in West Virginia.

Any sole proprietor or self-employed person, in operation on or before March 1, 2020, is now able to apply for up to \$2,000 in grant funding.

Businesses planning to apply must first be registered as a vendor with the State to be eligible. Guidelines for the grants and instructions on how to apply are available at **Grants.wv.gov** (<https://grants.wv.gov/en>).



APPLY NOW!

JULY 15, 2020
Small Business Grant Application Now Open
Click to apply!

JUNE 24, 2020
New Coronavirus Relief Fund Grants Map
West Virginia launched a new interactive map that displays a...

APRIL 17, 2020
West Virginia receives \$625 million in federal funding
Gov. Jim Justice announced that West Virginia received the f...

Available State Grants
Find all available State funded grants related to the Coronavirus Disease 2019.

Federal Grants
Learn what types of Federal Grants and other resources are available due to the pandemic.

([https://grants.wv.gov/en/flexible-page?](https://grants.wv.gov/en/flexible-page?pageId=1424)

[pageId=1424](https://grants.wv.gov/en/flexible-page?pageId=1424))

CITIES/COUNTIES GRANT FUNDING: OVER \$127 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 \$127 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 available to view through the West Virginia State Auditor's Office **COVID-19 transparency website** (<https://stories.opengov.com/westvirginia/published/mnOzKr2wB>).



WEST VIRGINIA STRONG
The Comeback

CARES Act funding for WV Cities and Counties

Apply for CARES Act grant funding here:

grants.wv.gov

Help line: 1-833-94-GRANT

5/19/20 WEST VIRGINIA STRONG – THE COMEBACK

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

GOVERNOR SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER

Also on Wednesday, Gov. Justice issued **Executive Order 73-20** (/Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO-73-20-September-30-2020.pdf), suspending the technical requirement that public auctions for lands which are delinquent for the nonpayment of taxes be held “at the front door of the courthouse” so public auctions may take place in locations where adequate social distancing may be maintained by any desiring to attend such public auctions.

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/>).



(<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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