

COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice urges West Virginians to take advantage of abundant free testing opportunities to help slow the spread

11/2/2020

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



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.

GOVERNOR CALLS ON WEST VIRGINIANS TO BE TESTED

During Monday's briefing, Gov. Justice once again called on all West Virginians to take the initiative to take advantage of the numerous free testing opportunities across the state.

"You've got to show up to be tested," Gov. Justice said. "For crying out loud, if I'm willing to commit the dollars, if I'm willing to put a stake in the sand and make testing available to where you don't have to run all over kingdom come to be tested – to make getting tested so easy it's unbelievable – then you've got to do you part and show up."

Free testing sites will be available in nearly every West Virginia county before the holiday season begins, with events scheduled within 45 counties between now and Friday, Nov. 20, 2020.

"If we test enough people, it will give you the ability to go to school faster, it will give you the ability to play ball faster, but what it will give you, more than anything in the world, it will give you the ability to stop this thing because we will find people that are asymptomatic," Gov. Justice said. "West Virginia, you have a Governor who is willing to commit millions of dollars to facilitate this testing. If you don't show up because you're afraid to know and you're positive, the odds are that you're going to know anyway because you're going to get sick and even if you don't get sick, the odds are you're going to make somebody else sick. You could also end up in a situation where, down the road, you could end up with some chronic problem

"There's no good reason not to get tested," Gov. Justice continued. "It takes no time. The effort that the West Virginia National Guard, the DHHR, and our local health officials are putting in is off-the-charts. Now, you've got to do your part."



[Click here to view photo album](#)

(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157716723528936>)

AGGRESSIVE TESTING CONTINUES ACROSS STATE

Also on Monday, Gov. Justice offered a reminder that, as part of the Governor's Aggressive Testing initiative, each county reaching **Red** or **Orange** status in the **DHHR's County Alert System map** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>) (**Click "County Alert System" tab**) is required to set up at least one free testing site within the same day. Each county reaching **Gold** status is required to set up at least one free testing site within 48 hours.

As of Monday, the only **Red** county was Mingo County. **Orange** counties included Berkeley, Jackson, Marshall, Mineral, Ohio, Putnam, Tyler, Wayne, Wood, and Wyoming counties. **Gold** counties included Braxton, Hampshire, Jefferson, Lincoln, Logan, Ritchie, Summers, and Upshur counties.

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 November 2-20

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>)

Gov. Justice also offered a reminder that, as part of his administration's efforts to expand free COVID-19 testing throughout West Virginia, the State is now partnering with Walgreens and West Virginia-based company Fruth Pharmacy to offer dozens of new free testing sites at several of their pharmacy drive-thrus.

Walgreens is now offering free testing at 54 locations statewide, including several new testing sites. Locations include stores in Berkeley, Boone, Brooke, Cabell, Clay, Fayette, Gilmer, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Marion, McDowell, Mercer, Monongalia, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Preston, Putnam, Raleigh, Randolph, Summers, Taylor, Upshur, Wayne, Wetzel, Wood, and Wyoming counties.

Fruth Pharmacy is also offering free testing at 12 of their locations statewide, including stores in Cabell, Jackson, Kanawha, Mason, Putnam, Roane, and Wood counties.

Pre-registration is required for pharmacy drive-thru testing.

Click here to find the testing location closest to you (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx>)

Free Drive-Thru COVID-19 Testing



coronavirus.wv.gov

Pre-registration is required. Registration links are available at coronavirus.wv.gov.
Proof of insurance may be requested. Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.



coronavirus.wv.gov | 1-800-887-4304

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

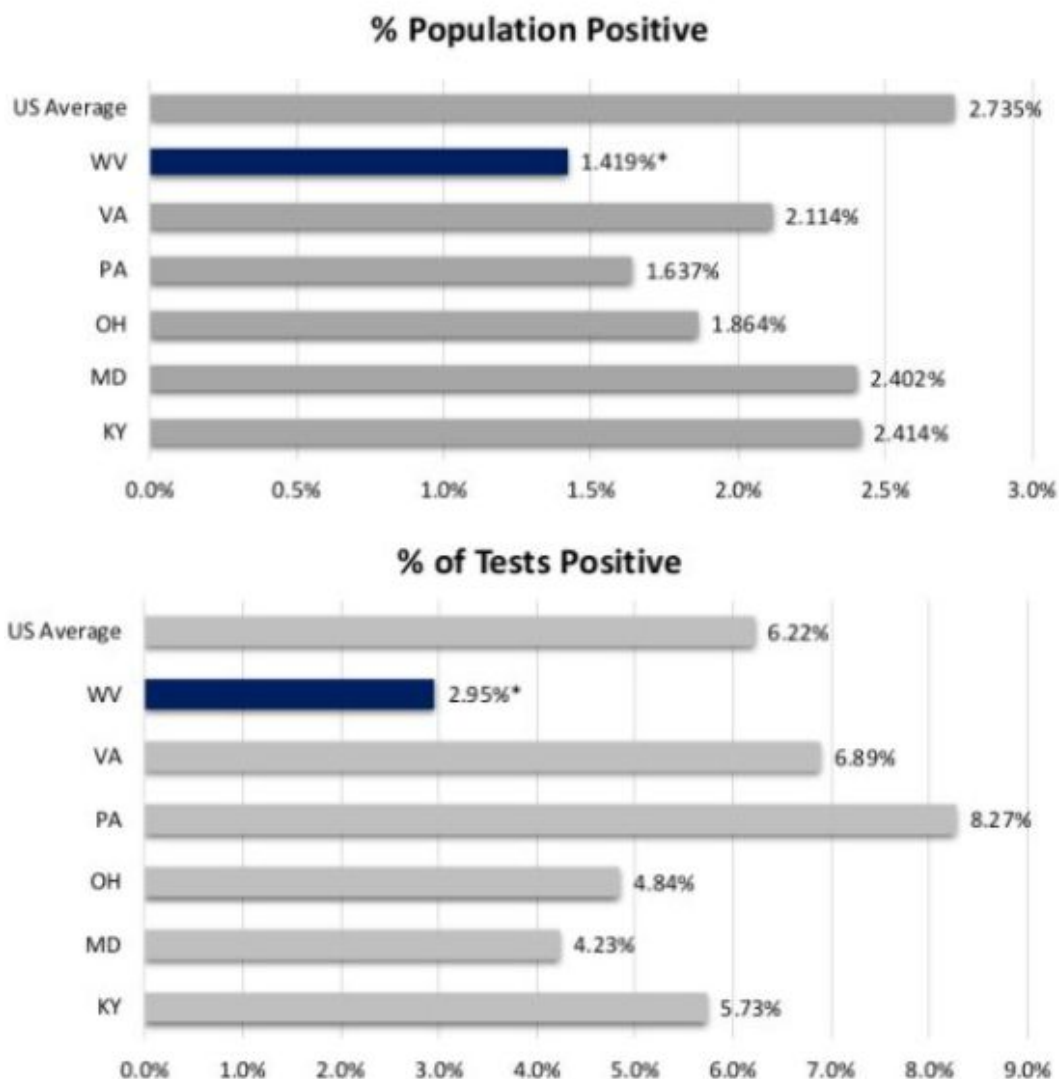
COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state is now 5,557. Meanwhile, the cumulative percent of positive cases is 2.95%, up from 2.91% on Friday.

The Governor also added that the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (<https://rt.live/>) – also known as Rt – had increased to 1.10 as of Monday morning; tied for the 17th-best such rate of any state in the country.

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

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>)

MONDAY MAP UPDATE

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

Red counties: 1 (Mingo)

Orange counties: 10 (Berkeley, Jackson, Marshall, Mineral, Ohio, Putnam, Tyler, Wayne, Wood, Wyoming)

Gold counties: 8 (Braxton, Hampshire, Jefferson, Lincoln, Logan, Ritchie, Summers, Upshur)

Yellow counties: 10 (Boone, Brooke, Cabell, Kanawha, Marion, Morgan, Raleigh, Roane, Wetzel, Wirt)

Green counties: 26 (All others)

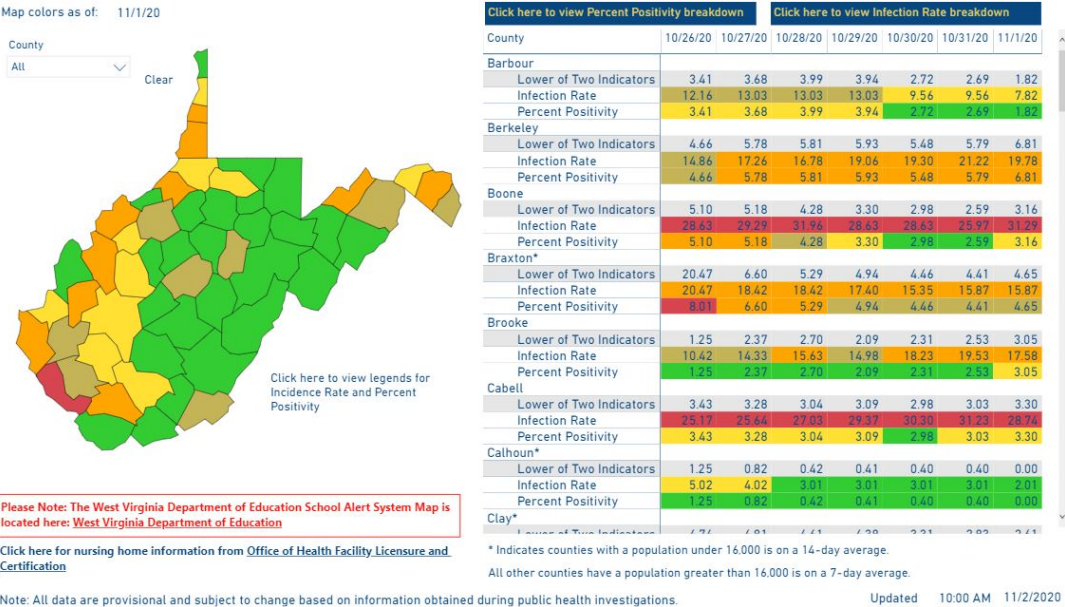
The map is updated live on the **DHHR's COVID-19 Dashboard**

(<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

Overview **County Alert System** 7-Day Trend Cumulative Summary Case and Lab Trends Other Trends Hospital Long-Term Care State Comparison

Note: There are two ways to assign a color code to the county map: an infection rate or percent positivity. The lower of the two metrics is used to designate the color for the county. The Lower of the Two Indicators row shows the metric that is used to designate the color on the county map. Each indicator is calculated for 7 or 14 days (*dependent upon population). Cases residing in nursing homes, state or federal prisons and university/college isolation dorms are excluded.



(<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>)

\$21.3 MILLION FINAL REVENUE SURPLUS FOR OCTOBER; \$111.7 MILLION CUMULATIVE SURPLUS FOR FISCAL YEAR

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice took time to announce that West Virginia's final revenue collections for the month of October came in at \$21.3 million above estimates, nearly \$1 million higher than the preliminary surplus projected by officials with the West Virginia Department of Revenue during their **briefing on the state's finances** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/Gov.-Justice-announces-\$20.4M-revenue-surplus-for-October%3b-WV-records-\$298M-cash-balance-through-first-4-months-of-FY2021.aspx) last Friday.

"We gave you the preliminary numbers on Friday because the end of the month fell on the weekend," Gov. Justice said. "And now, we've increased and gotten even a little bit better since then.

"We are recording these surpluses in a time where there's a pandemic and in a year where our original estimates were based on our all-time state record numbers for growth," Gov. Justice continued. "We are really moving in a positive way in West Virginia, economically, and from that, we're just going to be able to continue to help lots and lots of people."



West Virginia's year-to-date general revenue collections also increased, coming in at \$111.7 million above estimate and 9.8% above prior year receipts.

West Virginia has now banked surpluses in each of the first four months of Fiscal Year 2021.



\$25 MILLION IN CARES ACT DOLLARS BEING PROVIDED TO HELP QUALIFYING WEST VIRGINIANS PAY UTILITY BILLS

Once again Monday, Gov. Justice provided a reminder that \$25 million of CARES Act relief funds allocated to assist qualifying West Virginians pay their utility bills is being distributed across the state.

The money will go to local Public Service Districts so they can pass it along to customers.

Customers of electric, natural gas, water, and sewer utility companies who have experienced economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, causing them to have unpaid utility bills from the period of March 1 – July 31 of this year, may receive financial assistance to pay those bills.

Qualifying customers will receive a letter and application in the mail. Customers must complete and return the application by Thursday, November 12, 2020.



OUTBREAK REPORT

On Monday, Gov. Justice announced that there remain zero active cases of COVID-19 among the state's inmate population. There have not been any active inmate cases since last Thursday. However, according to the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR), there are 10 active cases among DCR employees.

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

West Virginia now has 15 active church-related outbreaks across 12 counties: Cabell, Doddridge, Kanawha, Lewis, Mingo, Monroe, Raleigh, Ritchie, Tyler, Wayne, Wetzel, and Wood counties.

The Governor reported there are now 47 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, down from 48 last Friday.

Finally, the Governor reported that, per the West Virginia Department of Education, there are 23 active outbreaks in public schools across the state. These outbreaks account for 95 confirmed cases.

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

REVIEW OF LATEST DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SATURDAY MAP UPDATE

Also on Monday, Gov. Justice reviewed this past Saturday's 5 p.m West Virginia Department of Education color-coded **School Alert System map update** (<https://wvde.us/school-reentry-metrics-protocols/>), which determines the level of scholastic, athletic, and extracurricular activities permitted in each county for the following week.

The results of the update on Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020, were as follows:

Red counties: 1 (Mingo)

Orange counties: 5 (Berkeley, Morgan, Upshur, Wayne, Wyoming)

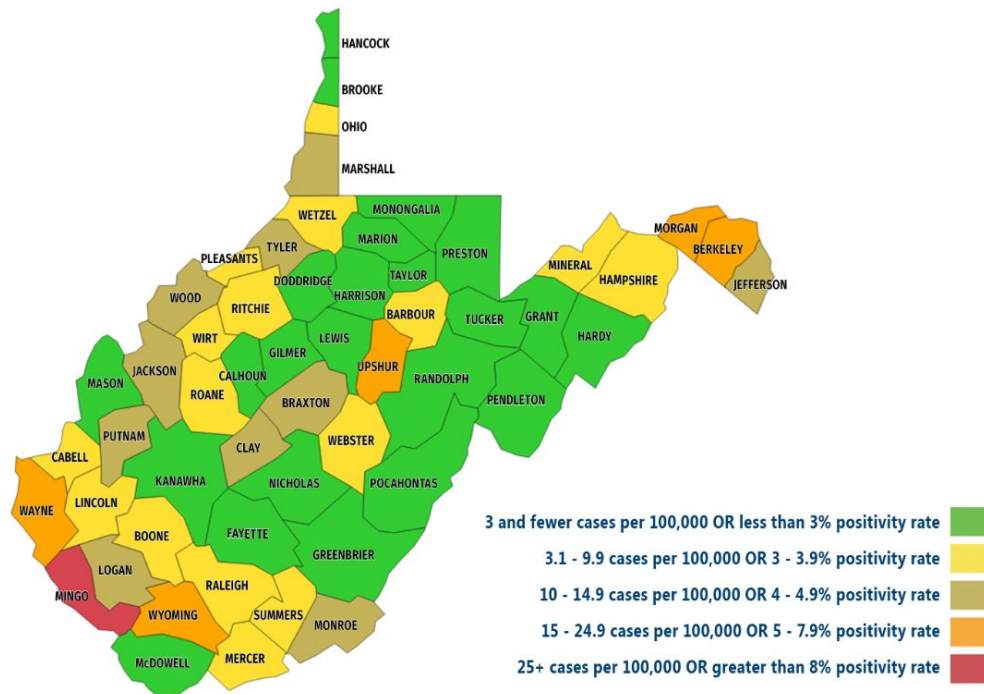
Gold counties: 10 (Braxton, Clay, Jackson, Jefferson, Logan, Marshall, Monroe, Putnam, Tyler, Wood)

Yellow counties: 16 (Barbour, Boone, Cabell, Hampshire, Lincoln, Mercer, Mineral, Ohio, Pleasants, Raleigh, Ritchie, Roane, Summers, Webster, Wetzel, Wirt)

Green counties: 23 (All others)

State health leaders who make up the COVID-19 Data Review Panel verified the data to ensure the map was a true indication of the safety level in each county.

Saturday Education Map



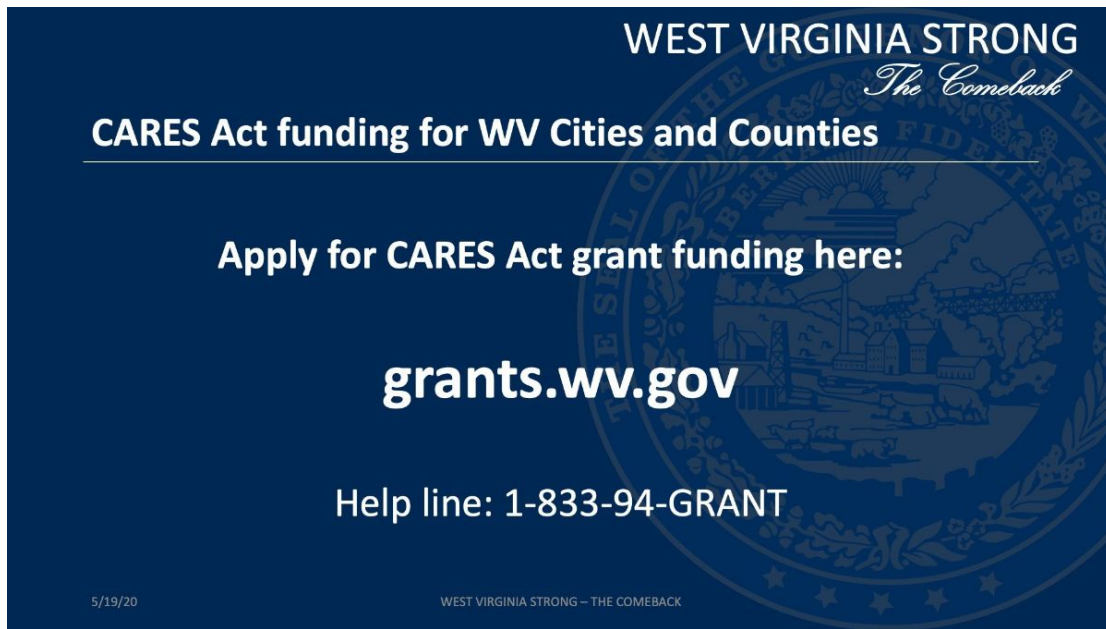
(<https://wvde.us/school-reentry-metrics-protocols/>)

CITIES/COUNTIES GRANT FUNDING: OVER \$168 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 \$168 million has now been awarded all across the state.

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>).



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>)

FLU VACCINE REMINDER

Once again today, 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>).



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