

# *COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice broadens statewide indoor face covering requirement; announces adjustments to school and athletics calendars*

11/13/2020

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.

## **STATEWIDE INDOOR FACE COVERING REQUIREMENT UPDATED**

With COVID-19 case numbers continuing to set record highs in West Virginia, Gov. Jim Justice announced Friday that he has issued an **executive order**

(/Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO%2077-20%20Face%20Covering%20Amendment.pdf), amending and broadening his **Statewide Indoor Face Covering Requirement** (/Pages/Statewide-Indoor-Face-Covering-Requirement.aspx).

"In West Virginia, today, we have 339 people hospitalized. That's an all-time record. We have 104 patients in our ICUs. That's another record. We're up to 565 deaths," Gov. Justice said. "We have got to realize what we're dealing with here, it is a massive massive killer. We have knocked it out of the park with our numbers so far in comparison to others. But, West Virginia, we've got to tighten up."

The new order requires all West Virginians age 9 and older to wear a face covering at all times inside all indoor public places. This differs from the Governor's initial indoor face covering requirement, which allowed masks to be removed in such places if adequate social distancing could be maintained. Under the new order, that exception no longer exists.

The requirement does not apply to anyone who has trouble breathing or anyone who is otherwise unable to remove their own face covering without assistance. It also does not apply to anyone inside a restaurant and actively consuming food or beverages, anyone is inside a closed room by themselves, or inside one's residence.

Additionally, the new 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.

The background of the slide features a large, faint, circular seal of the State of West Virginia. The seal contains the text "WEST VIRGINIA" at the top and "1863" at the bottom, with a central emblem depicting a landscape with a river, mountains, and a ship.

**WEST VIRGINIA STRONG**  
*The Comeback*

**Statewide Indoor Face Covering Requirement**  
Amended – Nov. 13, 2020

- Face covering must be worn at all times in all public indoor places
- Does not apply to children under the age of 9 or anyone who has trouble breathing or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance
- Does not apply when you are at a restaurant and actively consuming food or drink, or in a closed room by yourself
- All businesses must post signs and ensure requirement is being followed
- Takes effect Saturday, November 14, 2020 at 12 a.m.

WEST VIRGINIA STRONG – THE COMEBACK

(/Pages/Statewide-Indoor-Face-Covering-Requirement.aspx)

"I am calling for all business owners and managers in West Virginia to step up to make sure that everyone in these businesses is wearing a face covering all the time inside these buildings," Gov. Justice said. "Let's go one step further and say, to our business owners, what follows this is the shutting down of businesses. From the standpoint of where we are right now, if you don't step up, business owners, and make it mandatory to wear face coverings when people are entering your businesses, we are going to end up having to take further steps because we will not be able to slow this thing down and stop it."

For children ages 2 years old through 8 years old, face coverings are not required. However, it is recommended that parents or guardians use their best judgment as to when to assist their children, ages 2 through 8, with wearing a face covering.

Under **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance**

([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html)), children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, and anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance should not wear face coverings and are exempt from the face covering requirement.

Face shields are an acceptable substitute for those with physical conditions that may cause them to be unable to properly wear a face covering.

The updated indoor face covering requirement will go into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14.

Guidance documents that are a part of the Governor's reopening plan – **West Virginia Strong – The Comeback** (/The-Comeback/Pages/default.aspx) – will be revised to reflect the new requirement.

The **original Statewide Indoor Face Covering Requirement** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov.-Justice-announces-statewide-indoor-face-covering-requirement.aspx) was established by executive order on July 7.

View the latest COVID-19 data at **Coronavirus.wv.gov** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>).



**[Click here to view photo album](#)**

(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157716869006531>)

## **WINTER INTERSCHOLASTIC AND TRAVEL SPORTS SEASONS DELAYED**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice announced that he has issued an **executive order** (</Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO%2080-20%20-%20Youth%20Winter%20Sports.pdf>), postponing the start date for all youth winter sports teams and leagues.

The order prohibits all youth winter sports teams and leagues, whether school-sanctioned or otherwise, including but not limited to basketball, swimming, wrestling, and cheerleading, from bringing players and/or spectators together into a common area within West Virginia for practices, games, or any other type of competition until no sooner than Monday, Jan. 11, 2021.

Any winter sports teams that have begun to practice must cease immediately.

All fall sports that were previously underway will be permitted to conclude their seasons, provided that teams are eligible to compete in accordance with their county's color code in the **WVDE's School Alert System map** (<https://wvde.us/school-reentry-metrics-protocols/>) and the **DHHR's County Alert System map** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>) (**Click "County Alert System" tab**).

"We have been fortunate, in West Virginia, to be able to play sports in the fall. Virginia and Maryland have not had any fall sports," Gov. Justice said. "But winter sports are indoor sports, and I don't know how on this planet we can possibly think about playing indoors right now. It's just going to make things worse."

"We are very hopeful that we'll be able to start back up on January 11th," Gov. Justice continued. "This will give us the opportunity to settle this thing down."

The West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission will soon issue a new interscholastic winter sports schedule, which will be made available on the **WVSSAC website** (<https://www.wvssac.org/>).

The Governor added that when youth travel sports leagues and other non-school-affiliated sports programs resume, teams will be required to follow the county alert system maps in the same manner as interscholastic teams.



## **THANKSGIVING BREAK EXTENDED FOR ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice issued an **executive order** (</Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO%2078-20%20-%20Thanksgiving%20Break.pdf>), extending Thanksgiving break for all public and private schools in West Virginia by an additional three days.

"We all know that families are going to come together over Thanksgiving, and as families come together, we all know the probability of more of a spread is right at our fingertips again," Gov. Justice said. "So, from Thursday of Thanksgiving, until the next Thursday, no one will go to school."

Public and private schools in all 55 counties may resume in-person instruction on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2020.

"That will give us at least a seven-day period that the medical experts tell us will be a big help in making sure any potential spread from Thanksgiving is contained before it becomes a problem," Gov. Justice said.

## **BAND FESTIVALS CANCELED**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice announced that, at the request of the West Virginia Bandmasters, who oversee all the public school bands across the state, all band festivals scheduled for this coming spring have been canceled.

The Governor also announced the cancellation of all concert band festivals for the rest of this year.

"The Bandmasters made this recommendation to the state Board of Education and to me and we all agreed that it's the right thing to do," Gov. Justice said.

## **NURSING HOME AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY EMPLOYEES TO BE TESTED TWICE WEEKLY**

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice issued an **executive order** (/Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO%2079-20%20-%20Nursing%20Home%20and%20Assisted%20Living%20Testing.pdf), requiring that all doctors, nurses, staff, and employees working at nursing homes and assisted living facilities throughout the state be tested for COVID-19 twice a week.

"We must do all we can to protect our most vulnerable citizens, especially the residents of our nursing homes and assisted living facilities," Gov. Justice said. "Every time they've needed help, we've run to the fire. But we want to do even more to be proactive."

Under the leadership of Gov. Justice, West Virginia was the first state in the nation to order the full testing of all residents and staff at **nursing homes** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-West-Virginia-becomes-first-state-in-nation-to-begin-testing-all-nursing-home-residents-and-staff.aspx) and **assisted living facilities** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-West-Virginia-first-state-in-nation-to-begin-testing-all-assisted-living-facility-residents-and-staff.aspx). Later, the **CDC sent a letter to all 50 states** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov-Justice-West-Virginia-national-standard-for-nursing-home-testing.aspx), calling on them to follow West Virginia's lead by focusing their COVID-19 testing efforts on nursing homes and other vulnerable communities.

The new twice weekly staff testing requirement will remain in place until rescinded or adjusted by further executive order.





### **COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE**

On Friday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state has also reached a new record high of 8,531, including 4,611 new positive cases in the just the past seven days and 742 in the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the cumulative percent of positive cases is now 3.14%, up from 3.11% on Wednesday and the highest such rate seen in West Virginia since April 24, 2020.

As of Friday afternoon, the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (<https://rt.live/>) – also known as  $R_t$  – was 1.12; tied for the 19th-best such rate of any state in the country. Only one state across America currently has a  $R_t$  values under the 1.00 threshold indicating whether the disease is spreading or contracting.

However, 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>)

## **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: **0**

**Orange** counties: **13** (Barbour, Fayette, Hardy, Jefferson, Lincoln, Logan, Marshall, Mineral, Mingo, Randolph, Tyler, Wood, Wyoming)

**Gold** counties: **12** (Berkeley, Boone, Cabell, Hancock, Jackson, Kanawha, Morgan, Nicholas, Ohio, Putnam, Upshur, Wayne)

**Yellow** counties: **14** (Brooke, Clay, Hampshire, Harrison, Lewis, Mason, McDowell, Mercer, Monroe, Pleasants, Preston, Raleigh, Ritchie, Wetzel)

**Green** counties: **16** (Braxton, Calhoun, Doddridge, Gilmer, Grant, Greenbrier, Marion, Monongalia, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Roane, Summers, Taylor, Tucker, Webster, Wirt)

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

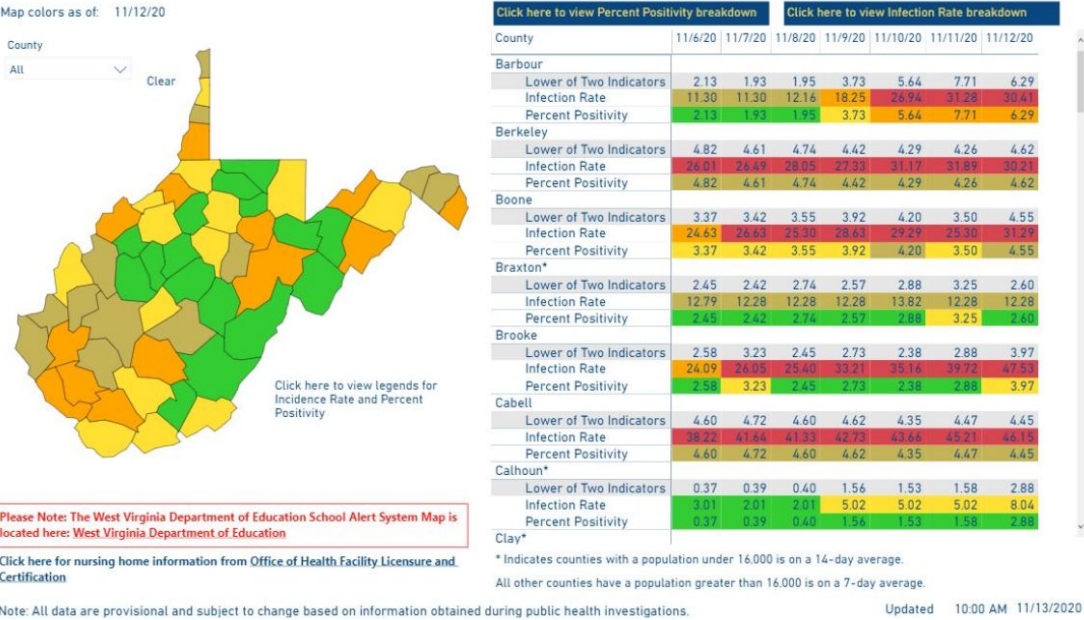
Other Trends

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>)

## **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 118 confirmed cases.

**Click here to view the WVDE's Current Outbreaks in Schools chart**

(<https://wvde.us/schooloutbreaks>)

West Virginia now has 19 active church-related outbreaks across 13 counties: Cabell, Fayette, Hardy, Jefferson, Kanawha, Lewis, Mingo, Monroe, Raleigh, Ritchie, Tyler, Wood, and Wyoming counties.

There are now 78 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, up from 72 on Wednesday.

The Governor also announced that the full testing of Stevens Correctional Center in McDowell County has resulted in the identification of 40 active inmate cases and 22 active staff cases to date after a recent outbreak was discovered at the facility. The West Virginia National Guard remains on standby to sanitize once the outbreak has been isolated and the scope of the infection is known.

Outside of the outbreak at Stevens Correctional Center, there are now five active inmate cases and 29 active staff cases across the entire DCR system.

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

## **AGGRESSIVE TESTING CONTINUES ACROSS STATE**

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice provided an overview of the 46 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.

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.

**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 13-21

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.



WEST VIRGINIA  
Department of  
**Health & Human  
Resources**

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

The Walgreens logo, featuring the word "Walgreens" in a red, cursive script font.

**coronavirus.wv.gov**

Pre-registration is required. Registration links are available at [coronavirus.wv.gov](https://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](https://coronavirus.wv.gov) | 1-800-887-4304

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



## **CITIES/COUNTIES GRANT FUNDING: OVER \$179 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 \$179 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>).



(<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?](https://governor.us15.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d525ab9ade4d860d2b5772468&id=3029d4fcc4&e=5c140b96bc)

[u=d525ab9ade4d860d2b5772468&id=3029d4fcc4&e=5c140b96bc](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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