

COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice: West Virginia continues to be national leader in vaccine distribution; announces arrival of Moderna vaccine

12/21/2020

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



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 CONTINUES TO BE NATIONAL LEADER IN VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

During Monday's briefing, Gov. Justice announced that West Virginia continues to lead the nation in the rate of COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration.

As of Monday morning, West Virginia had administered 15,135 doses of the Pfizer vaccine, out of 16,575 doses received, which is a 91.3% administration rate. According to Bloomberg.com's **COVID Vaccine Tracker** (<https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/covid-vaccine-tracker-global-distribution/>), this is the highest administration rate of any state in the nation at this time.

"West Virginians, you ought to be really proud; proud of what we're doing in government, proud of what our National Guard and all of our health officials are doing," Gov. Justice said. "While other states all around the nation are sitting around, trying to come up with a plan, we're not waiting in West Virginia. We're getting it done.

"Now it's up to our West Virginians to answer the call and take the vaccine when it becomes available to you," Gov. Justice continued.



Click here to view photo album

(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157717455776891>)

VACCINE DATA ADDED TO WEST VIRGINIA COVID-19 DASHBOARD

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice announced that the **West Virginia COVID-19 Dashboard** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>) has been updated to include the total number of vaccines received in West Virginia, as well as the number of doses administered. This information will be updated daily.

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: Data posted on dashboard is from 12:00 midnight the previous day. All data are provisional and subject to change based on information obtained during public health investigations.

[Click here to view CDC's definition on Confirmed and Probable cases](#)

Updated 10:00 AM 12/21/2020

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

MODERNA VACCINE, ADDITIONAL DOSES OF PFIZER VACCINE ARRIVE TODAY

Gov. Justice also announced that the second COVID-19 vaccine available in America – created by biotech company Moderna – was scheduled to arrive today in West Virginia.

"Another safe, quality, and effective COVID-19 vaccine is coming to West Virginia," Gov. Justice said during his briefing Monday morning.

The Moderna vaccine received Emergency Use Authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration late Friday evening.

A combined total of 44,300 doses of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are expected to be delivered in West Virginia this week alone.



ALL LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES EXPECTED TO HAVE VACCINES THIS WEEK

Also on Monday, Gov. Justice announced that West Virginia continues to lead the nation in distributing COVID-19 vaccines to nursing homes and assisted living facilities throughout the state.

After receiving the additional shipments of COVID-19 vaccines in West Virginia today, the Governor announced that officials plan to provide vaccinations to all 160 of the remaining long-term care facilities in West Virginia within the next week.

"We anticipate finishing with our nursing homes and our assisted living facilities by Monday, December 28th," Gov. Justice said. "Quite literally, we may be finishing our vaccination to long-term care facilities before some states even start. It's really quite a tribute to our National Guard, all of our health teams, and everyone who's working this.

"We want to continue to get this stuff out as fast as we possibly can, lead the nation in every way, and stay on top of it trying to help our people," Gov. Justice continued.

CDC RECOMMENDATIONS MIRROR WEST VIRGINIA VACCINATION PLAN

Additionally, Gov. Justice reported that the U.S. CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) met yesterday to discuss recommendations for what groups of people across the country should be vaccinated next.

"In their discussions and recommendations, they outlined that essential workers and those who are 75 years of age and older should be next to receive the vaccine," Gov. Justice said. "Now doesn't that sound familiar?"

Last week, Gov. Justice made several adjustments to the state's vaccine allocation plan to prioritize West Virginia's oldest citizens first.

"You can see how the CDC is adopting our ways again. West Virginia is leading the way," Gov. Justice said. "We came out and said we wanted to put our primary focus on age.

"It's just as simple as mud; 77.5 percent of our people that are dying have been among our most elderly – those over 70 years old," Gov. Justice continued. "Meanwhile, as we wait to get more and more doses of the vaccine, if you're up there in age, and you feel even the least bit bad, go get a test right away. If you go get a test, and we can catch this in the first few days, you're probably going to be okay. But if you let it drag on, thinking it's a cold or a headache, and you don't get a test, it will be much more difficult because the drugs that will work in the first few days aren't much good after that."

MERCER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND TO PROVIDE INCLUSIVE VACCINATION OPTIONS

Also on Monday, Gov. Justice was joined by Mercer County Health Department Director Dr. Steven Stefancic, who provided insight as to his organization's plan to make the COVID-19 vaccine more accessible for various populations across the county.

"In rural settings, we know that access to healthcare can be difficult. This can be because of transportation, it could be because of general isolation – West Virginia has a lot of absolutely wonderful communities that tend to be a little farther from the central hubs of their county seats and larger access points," Dr. Stefancic said. "So, in order to help combat that and get the vaccine to the people, we came up with a plan.

"We have developed a tentative mobile vaccine plan," Dr. Stefancic continued. "We have partnered with a number of different agencies and we are, essentially, prepared to give the vaccine with no resources available. We have portable electricity. We've got portable tents...We are ready for anything."

Dr. Stefancic added that local health officials offered their first mobile clinic this past week.

"Princeton Rescue Squad has a new emergency shelter community center and we were able to vaccinate prehospital providers. We had a wonderful turnout," Dr. Stefancic said. "We were able to cater to the community...we want to provide all of our area with an opportunity to get the vaccine. We understand that there might be transportation issues. We understand it might be a long trip, as far as traveling from the edge of the county to the center of the county. We want to take it to our citizens.

"Governor, I want to thank you for hosting me and allowing me to participate in this," Dr. Stefancic continued. "Thanks for your heart for the state and I appreciate being able to share what we're doing down here and help others throughout the state."



(<https://youtu.be/dz5zDKIHOpU?t=1569>)

CABELL-HUNTINGTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT VIDEO

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice spotlighted the Cabell-Huntington Health Department for their production of a new video about the importance of wearing a mask, called "It's not forever, it's for each other."

Click here to watch video (<https://cabellhealth.org/>)



(<https://cabellhealth.org/>)

COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state has now reached a record high of 22,877, up from 22,028 active cases during the Governor's previous COVID-19 briefing Friday last week.

West Virginia has recorded 995 new positive cases over the past 24 hours, and 8,819 new positive cases in the past seven days.

The number of active hospitalizations dropped again to 695, with 167 of those patients currently in the ICU, down from 193 on Friday.

The cumulative percent of positive cases is now 4.38%, up from 4.27% on Friday and the highest such rate seen in West Virginia since April 20, 2020.

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

As of Monday afternoon, following the Governor's briefing, the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (<https://rt.live/>)– also known as Rt – was 1.14; tied for the 3rd-highest such rate of any state in the country.

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: **32** (Berkeley, Boone, Brooke, Doddridge, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Lincoln, Logan, Marshall, Mason, Mercer, Mineral, Mingo, Monongalia, Morgan, Ohio, Pleasants, Preston, Ritchie, Taylor, Tyler, Upshur, Wayne, Wetzel, Wood, Wyoming)

Orange counties: **14** (Barbour, Braxton, Cabell, Clay, Fayette, Kanawha, Marion, Monroe, Nicholas, Pendleton, Putnam, Raleigh, Webster, Wirt)

Gold counties: **4** (Gilmer, Lewis, Pocahontas, Summers)

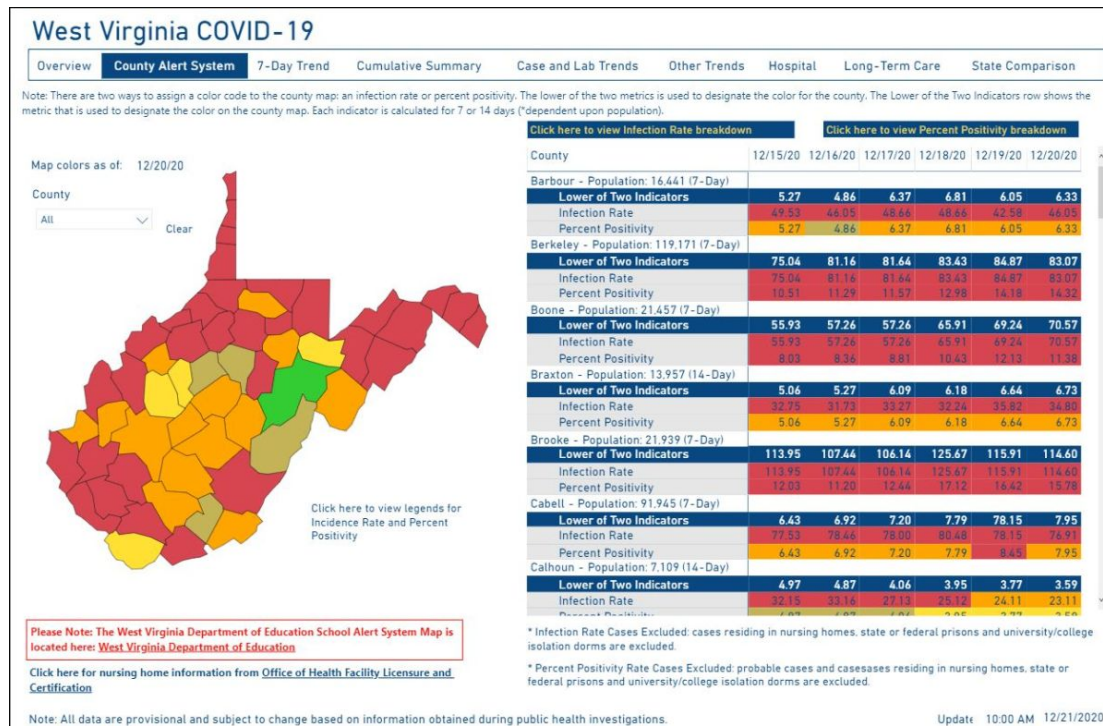
Yellow counties: **4** (Calhoun, McDowell, Roane, Tucker)

Green counties: **1** (Randolph)

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-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 Monday, Gov. Justice reported that that there are now 199 active inmate cases across the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, up from 112 on Friday last week. Among the cases that are currently active, 71 are at Saint Marys Correctional Center, 61 are at Eastern Regional Jail, and 36 are at Central Regional Jail.

There are 55 active staff cases across the DCR system, up from 48 on Friday.

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 14 counties: Braxton, Greenbrier, Harrison, Jackson, Lewis, Marion, Mineral, Mingo, Monongalia, Nicholas, Raleigh, Summers, Webster, and Wyoming counties. These outbreaks account for a total of 145 cases, up from 119 on Friday.

There are now 117 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, up from 114 such outbreaks as of Friday.

The Governor also reported that, per the West Virginia Department of Education, there are 14 active outbreaks in public schools across the state. These outbreaks account for 79 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.

Results of the update on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020, were updated on Monday, Dec. 21, 2020, to account for several counties turning Red. The latest School Alert System map designations are as follows:

Red counties: **33** (Berkeley, Boone, Brooke, Cabell, *Doddridge, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Lincoln, Logan, Marshall, Mason, *Mercer, Mineral, Mingo, *Monongalia, Morgan, Ohio, Pleasants, Preston, Ritchie, Taylor, *Tyler, *Upshur, Wayne, Wetzell, Wood, Wyoming)

Orange counties: **14** (Barbour, *Braxton, Clay, Fayette, Gilmer, Kanawha, *Marion, Nicholas, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Putnam, Raleigh, Webster, Wirt)

Gold counties: **4** (*Calhoun, *Lewis, Monroe, Tucker)

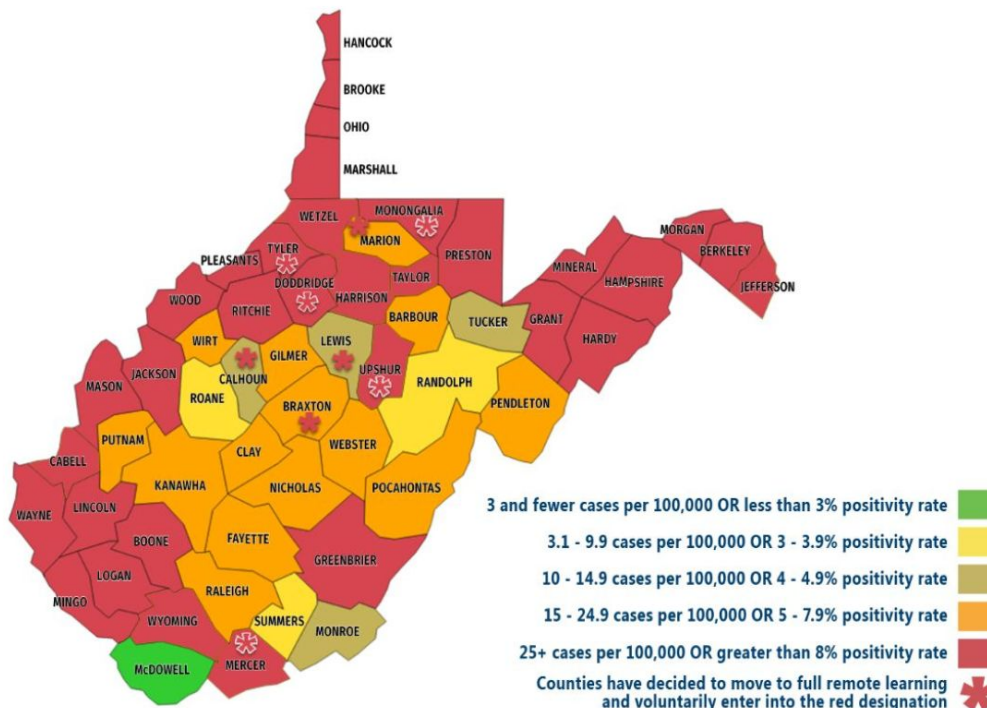
Yellow counties: **3** (Randolph, Roane, Summers)

Green counties: **1** (McDowell)

(*=Counties marked with an asterisk have opted to move to full remote learning and voluntarily enter into the Red designation, regardless of their color qualification.)

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



(/News/press-

releases/2020/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov.-Justice-announces-initial-allocation-plan-for-COVID-19-vaccine.aspx)

AGGRESSIVE TESTING CONTINUES ACROSS STATE

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice provided an overview of the 50 counties across the state that have free testing events scheduled 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.

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
December 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.

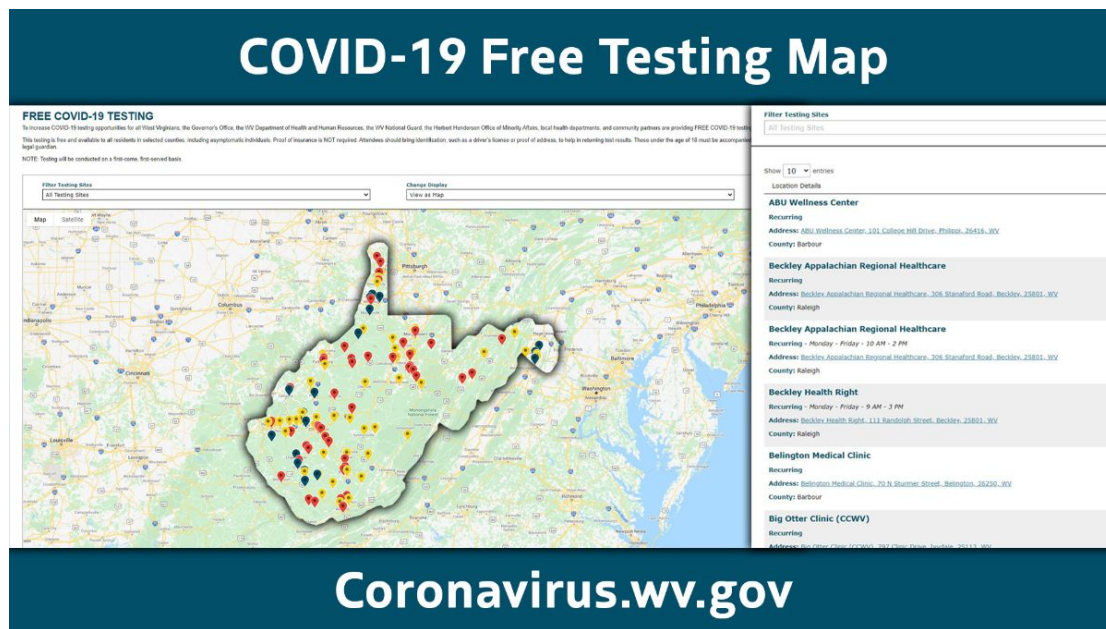
1-800-887-4304

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

An interactive online map of all free testing locations across West Virginia is available on the state's **COVID-19 website** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>). 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. 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>)

UPDATED FACE COVERING REQUIREMENT IN EFFECT; SIGNS AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESSES

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

The order requires 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>)

GOVERNOR DISCUSSES FEDERAL STIMULUS DEAL

Additionally Monday, Gov. Justice took time to discuss news out of Congress that a bipartisan deal has been reached on COVID-19 relief.

According to early reports, the deal would tie approximately \$900 billion in COVID-19 relief to a \$1.4 trillion bill to fund the government until Oct. 1, 2021.

"There are lots of parts of this new stimulus that I think will be really great for all West Virginians, especially our businesses that are really hurting like our restaurants, the hospitality business, and so many others," Gov. Justice said. "God knows I've said over and over that this is something that should have been done months ago. But, now that it's close to done, from the standpoint of our small businesses and our people, it's a little bit of light at the end of the tunnel that we can all be happy about."



WEST VIRGINIANS CALLED UPON TO DONATE BLOOD AND PLASMA

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

In the Governor's recent call with the White House Coronavirus Task Force, Vice President Mike Pence said that there is still a shortage of plasma and blood all across the nation.

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 is being evaluated as a possible 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**.



**American
Red Cross**

Give Blood or Plasma 

redcross.org
304-340-3650

Your donation could save a life!

(<https://www.redcross.org/>)

GOVERNOR SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER

Also on Monday, Gov. Justice issued **Executive Order 83-20**

(/Documents/2020%20Executive%20Orders/EO-83-20-December-21-2020.pdf), relating to the suspension of CSR § 143-1-14.3.a as it applies to State employees. Further guidance will be forthcoming.

FLU VACCINE REMINDER

Additionally Monday, 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.

In addition to providing protection from the flu, this vaccine helps reduce the burden on hospitals and healthcare systems.

Locate a flu vaccine near you through the **DHHR website**

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



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

HOLIDAY TROUT STOCKING: DNR STOCKING 30,000 ADDITIONAL TROUT

Also on Monday, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks on COVID-19 to offer a reminder of his recent announcement that, at his request, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources is stocking 30,000 trout in streams around the state, so anglers and their families can enjoy fishing opportunities during the holiday season.

This special Holiday Trout Stocking includes over 15,000 pounds of trout at 15 streams throughout West Virginia. The stockings follow a fruitful production year that resulted in an abundance of trout at the state's hatcheries.

Click here to find stocking locations (</News/press-releases/2020/Pages/Gov.-Justice-announces-WVDNR-to-stock-30%2c000-additional-trout-for-holidays.aspx>)



(/News/press-

releases/2020/Pages/Gov.-Justice-announces-WVDNR-to-stock-30%2c000-additional-trout-for-holidays.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>).



(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157717455776891>)

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