

COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice: West Virginia becomes first state in nation to complete vaccinations at all nursing homes, assisted living facilities

1/29/2021

Gov. Justice holds press briefing on COVID-19 response - January 29, 2...



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.

VACCINATIONS COMPLETE AT ALL LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES IN WEST VIRGINIA

During Friday's briefing, Gov. Justice announced that West Virginia has become the first state in the nation to complete its second round of COVID-19 vaccinations at all nursing homes and assisted living facilities statewide.

To-date, 17,763 residents and 19,836 staff members at each of West Virginia's 214 long-term care facilities have chosen to be vaccinated.

"We know the percentage was overwhelming on the number that took it, and we're already starting to see some positive impacts," Gov. Justice said. "The number of infections in our nursing homes and assisted living facilities have really decreased, we are down to 55 active outbreaks in our nursing homes and 18 active outbreaks in assisted living facilities, and we have cut the number of active outbreaks in nursing homes by 50 percent since the beginning of January – just in 29 days.

"It's great work," Gov. Justice continued. "A lot of people are really pulling the rope here."



Click here to view photo album

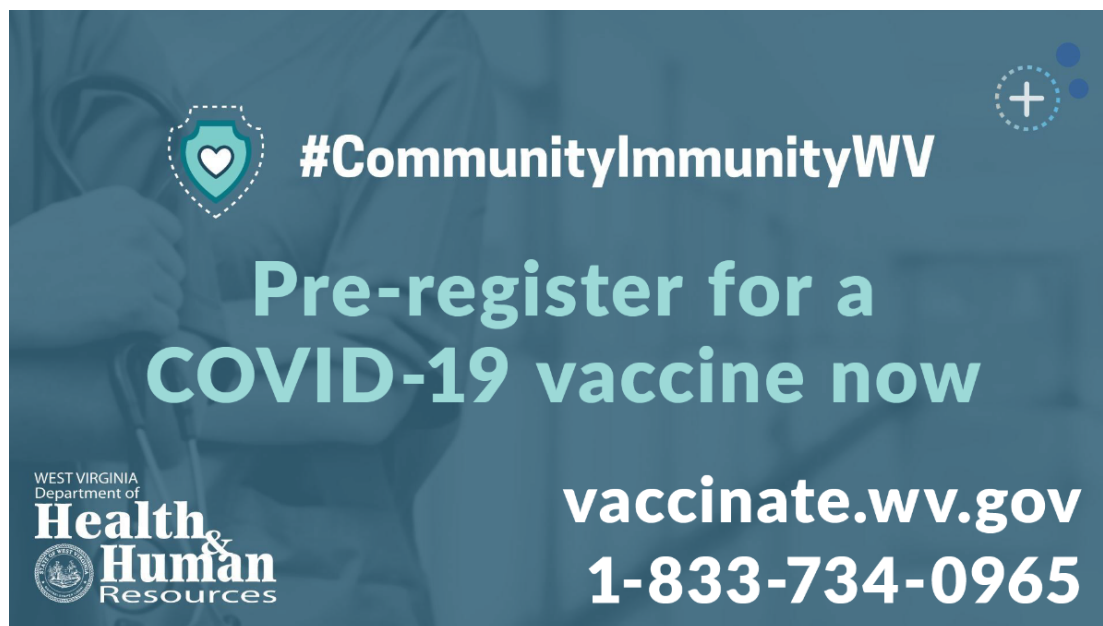
(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157718088394207>)

VACCINATIONS FOR TEACHERS, SERVICE PERSONNEL, AND ALL SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Additionally, Gov. Justice took time to address what he called “wrong information” circulating throughout West Virginia, which incorrectly claimed that all vaccinations for teachers, service personnel, and school employees were being stopped.

“I don’t really have any idea why or what would motivate someone to perpetuate these rumors,” Gov. Justice said. “If you don’t have your shot, and you’re wanting a shot, you can pre-register right now and you will be treated as essential. Being told that you can’t pre-register is ridiculous.”

Gov. Justice reiterated that all teachers, service personnel, and other school employees who are interested in being vaccinated, but who have not yet received the first dose, should register at **vaccinate.wv.gov** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>).



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

"If you're 50 or older and you passed on getting the shot at first, but now you've changed your mind, or if you're under 50 and you're interested, I would tell you to go register," Gov. Justice added. "Again, you have always been, and still are considered essential."

The Governor went on to add that West Virginia's new, online pre-registration system through Everbridge allows for those signing up to list their occupation and place of work.

West Virginia is the only state in the country to prioritize school employees as essential, moving them to elevated status to receive the vaccine.

While receiving the vaccine was not mandated for school employees to return to work, Gov. Justice made vaccinations available for the "super-prioritized" category of school teachers, service personnel, and other employees age 50 and older. **Dozens of vaccination clinics** (</News/press-releases/2021/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov.-Justice-WV-leading-nation-in-multiple-vaccine-distribution-metrics-Save-Our-Wisdom-efforts-continue.aspx>), specifically for such school employees, were held in the month of January.

"As of 5 p.m. today, all school employees age 50 and above who had requested a vaccine during the first round will have received it," Gov. Justice said Friday. "And let me be perfectly clear: all school employees who are scheduled for a second dose will absolutely get their second dose, and will receive them at the school where they received the first dose."

COVID-19 Czar Dr. Clay Marsh explained that, after studying epidemiological data in West Virginia and across the nation, state health experts have found that, with the proper mitigation measures in place, the spread of COVID-19 in a classroom setting is "much lower" than transmission rates in the community.

"We believe that the classroom is actually a safe place to be at this point," Dr. Marsh said. "The vaccines are an extra precaution, but not a requirement to get back in the classroom."



"I'm so proud of the fact that, not only were we able to immunize all the teachers over 50 who decided that they wanted to take the vaccine, but that we immunized over 85,000 West Virginians who are over 65," Dr. Marsh continued "Those are the groups that are dying and going to the hospital."

"To all of our service personnel and to all of our teachers, I thank you for the job that you're doing," Gov. Justice said. "We can't make it perfect, we know that. But we also know just how precious our children are, and just how incredibly behind that they're getting."

"Everybody is doing every single thing that they can do to get our teachers and all West Virginians vaccinated," Gov. Justice said. "Don't listen to the noise. All you've got to do is know that you're still classified as essential. Absolutely, register as quickly as you possibly can if you have not. Know that, if you have been vaccinated, you will get the second dose right on time, and absolutely we will get to all of you as quickly as we can come up with the doses to be able to keep everything going and get to you as well."



VACCINE DISTRIBUTION UPDATE

Once again Friday, Gov. Justice reported that West Virginia remains among the national leaders in the rate of COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration.

National COVID-19 vaccination trackers: **CDC** (<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>) | **Bloomberg** (<https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/covid-vaccine-tracker-global-distribution/>)

According to the latest vaccine numbers posted to the **COVID-19 Dashboard** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>) (**Click "Vaccine Summary" tab**) Friday morning, West Virginia now boasts a first dose administration rate of 101.9 percent. This number exceeds 100 percent due to extra doses being extracted from vials of the vaccine.

West Virginia COVID-19



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

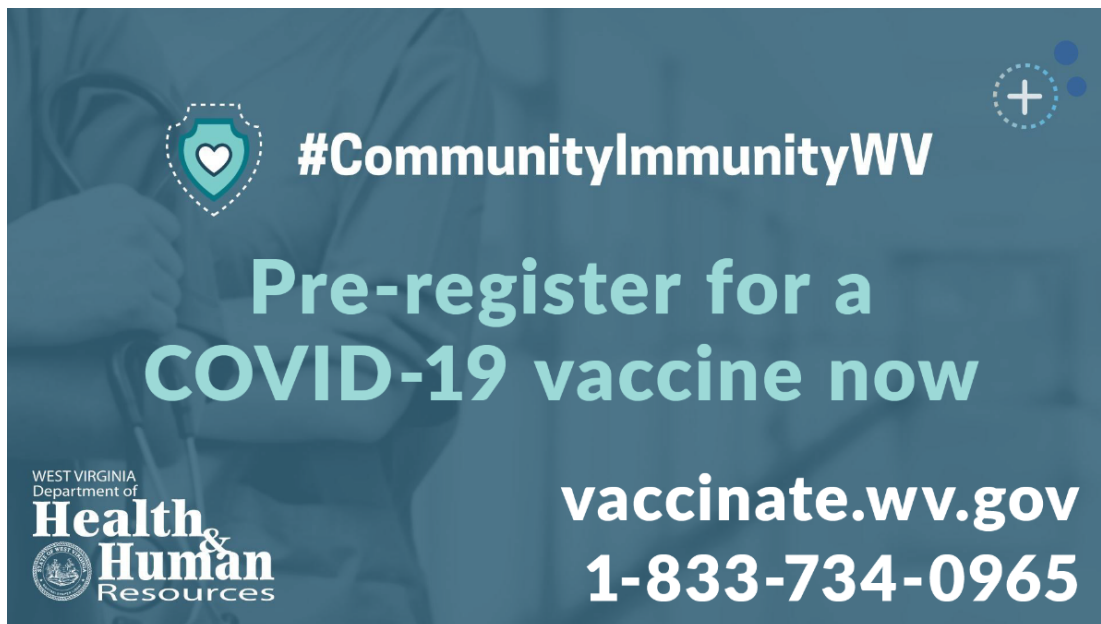
Meanwhile, West Virginia now has a second dose administration rate of 59.9 percent; the best such rate of any state in the nation.

To-date, West Virginia has administered 183,390 first doses and 59,047 second doses, totaling 242,437 doses administered overall statewide.

The Governor went on to encourage all West Virginians age 16 and older to pre-register for the vaccine through the state's new online COVID-19 vaccine pre-registration system available to the public through **vaccinate.wv.gov** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>).

On Monday, West Virginia became the **first state in the nation** (</News/press-releases/2021/Pages/COVID-19-UPDATE-Gov.-Justice-announces-more-than-62%2c000-West-Virginians-have-pre-registered-to-be-vaccinated-after-launch.aspx>) to put this kind of system in place statewide. The new digital tool allows West Virginians to add themselves to a list of people who are interested in being vaccinated, and will notify those who sign up about the availability of vaccine doses to help streamline vaccination efforts.

As of Friday morning, more than 133,000 West Virginians have signed up to be added to the pre-registration list.

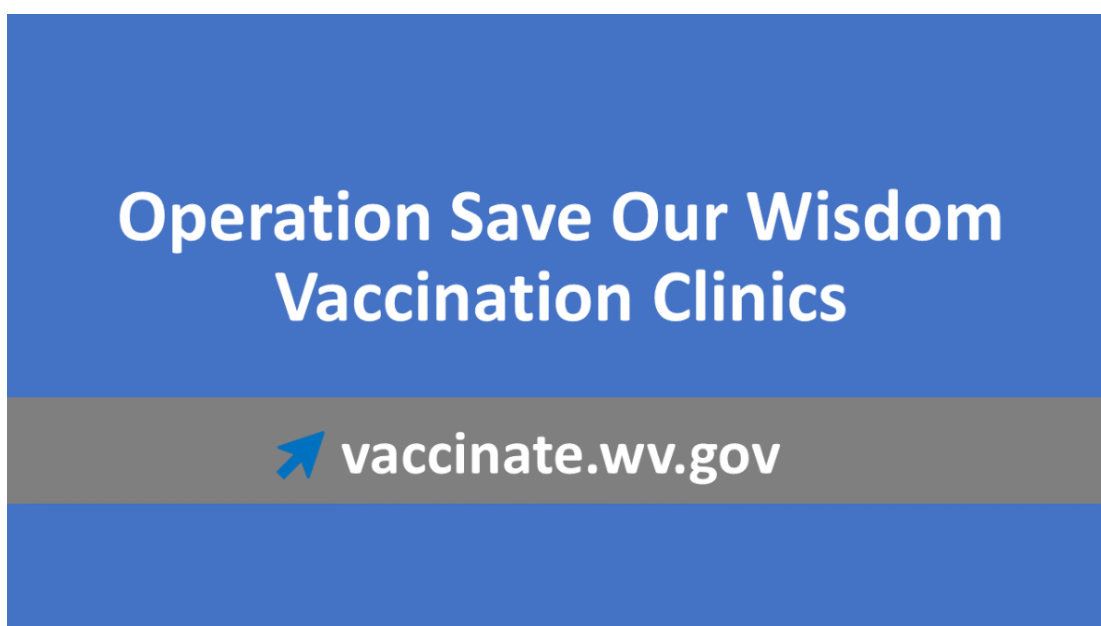


(<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>)

West Virginians can **pre-register online** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>) or call the **COVID-19 Vaccine Info Line (1-833-734-0965)** to get help pre-registering.

Users will get a message after registering to confirm they are in the system, and will be sent updates regularly. The system sends texts, email, and phone calls.

The Governor added a reminder that 25 community vaccination events are being held in 17 counties across the state this week through operation "Save Our Wisdom" to serve West Virginians who are age 65 and older.



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

Visit **[vaccinate.wv.gov](https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx)** (<https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>) to view all current clinic locations and schedules.

Qualifying residents from any county in West Virginia may access an appointment at any vaccination clinic with availability, regardless of their county of residence. However, many clinics are full at this time and are utilizing waitlists. All clinics require appointments and walk-ins will not be accepted.

To-date, 84,791 West Virginians age 65 and older have received the first dose of the vaccine, while 16,951 residents in the same age range have received the second dose and are now fully vaccinated.



UPDATE ON COVID-19 ADVISORY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN DISPARITIES VACCINATION PLAN BY REV. JAMES PATTERSON

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice was joined during his briefing by Rev. James Patterson with the Partnership of African American Churches.

Rev. Patterson took time to discuss the work that the State's COVID-19 Advisory Commission on African American Disparities has been doing to get vaccines administered to minority populations within the coming weeks.

"We are, right now, putting together four additional teams that are going to be doing vaccinations in communities of color, particularly around people that are hard to reach," Rev. Patterson said. "Our strategy is simply going to be to have a permanent location in the five counties where 60 percent of the state's African American population is represented, and so, by permanent we mean that we will be vaccinating in those counties at least once a week or biweekly, and then our units will be mobile. So they will be going into communities where people of color are to do vaccinations.

"We've already talked to the National Guard and they have agreed to support us to the nth degree, in terms of anything that we need," Rev. Patterson continued. "We expect to have the vaccinations up and running by the second week in February."



GOV. JUSTICE COMMENDS WEST VIRGINIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION LETTER TO BIDEN ADMINISTRATION SEEKING MORE VACCINE DOSES

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice applauded U.S. Representative Carol Miller, who was joined by senators Shelley Moore Capito and Joe Manchin, as well as representatives David McKinley and Alex Mooney, in sending a letter to President Joe Biden's administration, urging prioritization of West Virginia in the next round of COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

"The letter cites West Virginia's record for successful vaccine distribution and the high number of at-risk West Virginians as reasons for the request," Gov. Justice said. "I want to thank them all – all of the Congressional delegation – for helping to push us, to try to get more and more vaccines."



COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Friday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state is now 22,570, down from 23,571 cases as of the Governor's previous COVID-19 briefing on Wednesday.

The number of daily active cases in West Virginia has now decreased for 13 straight days.

The Governor added that the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (<https://rt.live/>) – also known as Rt – increased to 0.93 Friday morning; tied for the 27th-best such rate in the country. He noted that, as a whole, Rt rates continue to improve nationwide, with 44 of 50 states currently under the 1.00 threshold that represents whether COVID-19 spread is growing or shrinking.

The number of active hospitalizations is now 519 patients, down from 550 on Wednesday, with 138 of those patients currently in the ICU.

The cumulative percent of positive cases remains 5.60 percent.

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



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.

(<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.

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.

Red counties: **15** (Berkeley, Boone, Doddridge, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Logan, Marshall, Pendleton, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Ritchie, Tyler, Wetzel, Wirt)

Orange counties: **29** (Barbour, Braxton, Brooke, Cabell, Clay, Grant, Greenbrier, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Kanawha, Marion, Mason, Mineral, Mingo, Monongalia, Monroe, Nicholas, Ohio, Preston, Putnam, Raleigh, Randolph, Roane, Taylor, Upshur, Wayne, Wood, Wyoming)

Gold counties: **5** (Gilmer, Lewis, Lincoln, McDowell, Morgan)

Yellow counties: **4** (Calhoun, Fayette, Mercer, Webster)

Green counties: **2** (Summers, Tucker)

West Virginia COVID-19

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

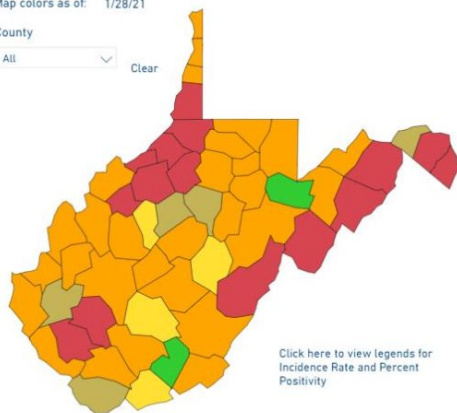
Note: There are two ways to assign a color code to the county map: an infection rate or percent positivity. The lower of the two metrics is used to designate the color for the county. The Lower of the Two Indicators row shows the metric that is used to designate the color on the county map. Each indicator is calculated for 7 or 14 days (dependent upon population).

Map colors as of: 1/28/21

County

All

Clear



Click here to view legends for Incidence Rate and Percent Positivity

Please Note: The West Virginia Department of Education School Alert System Map is located here: [West Virginia Department of Education](#)

Click here for nursing home information from [Office of Health Facility Licensure and Certification](#)

Note: All data are provisional and subject to change based on information obtained during public health investigations.

Updated 10:00 AM 1/29/2021

Click here to view Infection Rate breakdown

Click here to view Percent Positivity breakdown

County	1/23/21	1/24/21	1/25/21	1/26/21	1/27/21	1/28/21
Barbour - Population: 16,441 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	5.91	5.74	6.36	6.67	6.28	5.84
Infection Rate	53.87	46.92	57.35	55.61	56.48	49.68
Percent Positivity	5.91	5.74	6.36	6.67	6.28	5.84
Berkeley - Population: 119,171 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	63.65	53.70	53.94	51.19	49.75	45.43
Infection Rate	63.65	53.70	53.94	51.19	49.75	45.43
Percent Positivity	11.47	11.42	11.84	11.00	11.06	10.53
Boone - Population: 21,457 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	49.93	49.27	53.26	50.60	45.27	42.61
Infection Rate	49.93	49.27	53.26	50.60	45.27	42.61
Percent Positivity	9.11	9.77	10.66	10.11	9.34	8.95
Braxton - Population: 13,957 (14-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	47.60	7.86	46.06	7.38	7.90	7.97
Infection Rate	47.60	42.89	46.06	41.92	42.68	44.52
Percent Positivity	8.14	7.86	8.31	7.38	7.90	7.97
Brooke - Population: 21,939 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	68.37	54.70	7.59	7.19	6.73	7.28
Infection Rate	68.37	54.70	49.43	48.85	42.33	46.34
Percent Positivity	9.42	8.29	7.59	7.19	6.73	7.28
Cabell - Population: 91,945 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	6.27	6.78	5.86	5.58	5.55	5.30
Infection Rate	48.48	44.70	45.99	42.26	41.99	37.29
Percent Positivity	6.27	6.78	5.86	5.58	5.55	5.30
Calhoun - Population: 7,109 (14-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	5.31	4.85	4.43	4.10	3.89	3.77
Infection Rate	33.16	29.14	27.13	25.12	25.12	25.12
Percent Positivity	5.31	4.85	4.43	4.10	3.89	3.77

* Infection Rate Cases Excluded: cases residing in nursing homes, state or federal prisons and university/college isolation dorms are excluded.

* Percent Positivity Rate Cases Excluded: 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 there remain six active church-related outbreaks across five counties: Clay, Hampshire, Nicholas, Summers, and Wetzel counties. These outbreaks account for a total of 63 cases, up from 47 cases on Wednesday.

There are now 73 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, down from 85 outbreaks on Wednesday.

The Governor also reported that there are now 132 inmate cases across the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, down from 155 on Wednesday. Of these active inmate cases, 122 are at Lakin Correctional Center. Meanwhile, there are now 38 active staff cases across the DCR system, down from 40 on Wednesday.

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 51 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 January 29

Times and locations available online:
coronavirus.wv.gov

New locations added daily.

1-800-887-4304

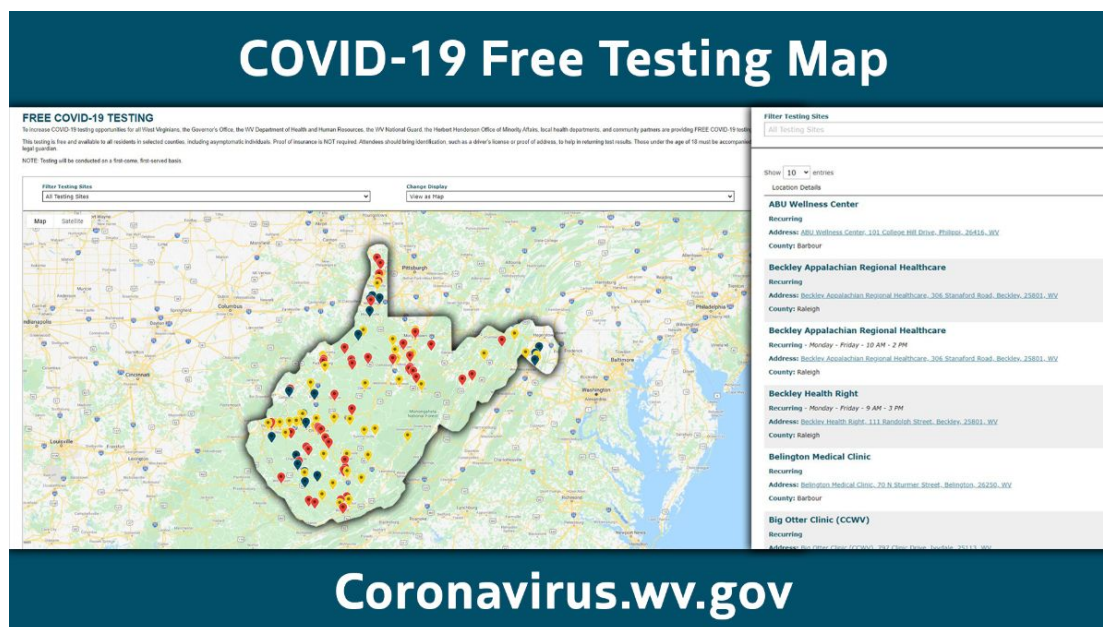
This testing is available to all individuals in the selected counties, including asymptomatic individuals. Proof of insurance is NOT required. Identification, such as a driver's license or proof of address, will be required to be tested. Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal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

(<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. Users can also filter by county. 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

Additionally Friday, 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>)

MONOCLONAL ANTIBODY TREATMENT REMINDER

Also on Friday, Gov. Justice offered a reminder that West Virginia has begun utilizing monoclonal antibodies to treat COVID-19 more frequently, following the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's recent emergency authorization of the treatment.

Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-made proteins that mimic the immune system's ability to fight off viruses.

The Governor again urged all West Virginians over the age of 65 who test positive to ask their doctor if they qualify for this type of treatment.

WEST VIRGINIANS CALLED UPON TO DONATE BLOOD AND PLASMA

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

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 may be able to be used as a 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/>)

FLU VACCINE REMINDER

Also on Friday, 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>)

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>).



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