# COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice announces first batch of COVID-19 vaccine expected to arrive in mid-December; again urges caution ahead of Thanksgiving

11/25/2020



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.

## VACCINE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN MID-DECEMBER

After participating in a call with the White House Coronavirus Task Force earlier this week, Gov. Justice announced during Wednesday's briefing that the first batch of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is expected to arrive in West Virginia in mid-December.

The first batch of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is expected to arrive shortly thereafter. The Governor added that both vaccines require the recipient to take two doses, with the second dose approximately three to four weeks after the first dose.

Gov. Justice went on to discuss the state's vaccine distribution plan, which has been in the works since August.

"We are ready the very second we receive doses of the vaccine in our state," Gov. Justice said. "General Hoyer and the West Virginia National Guard are leading the charge on this. We've got it down pat. We're ready to go, and we just hope and pray that more and more of this vaccine will be flowing into West Virginia."



**Click here to view photo album**

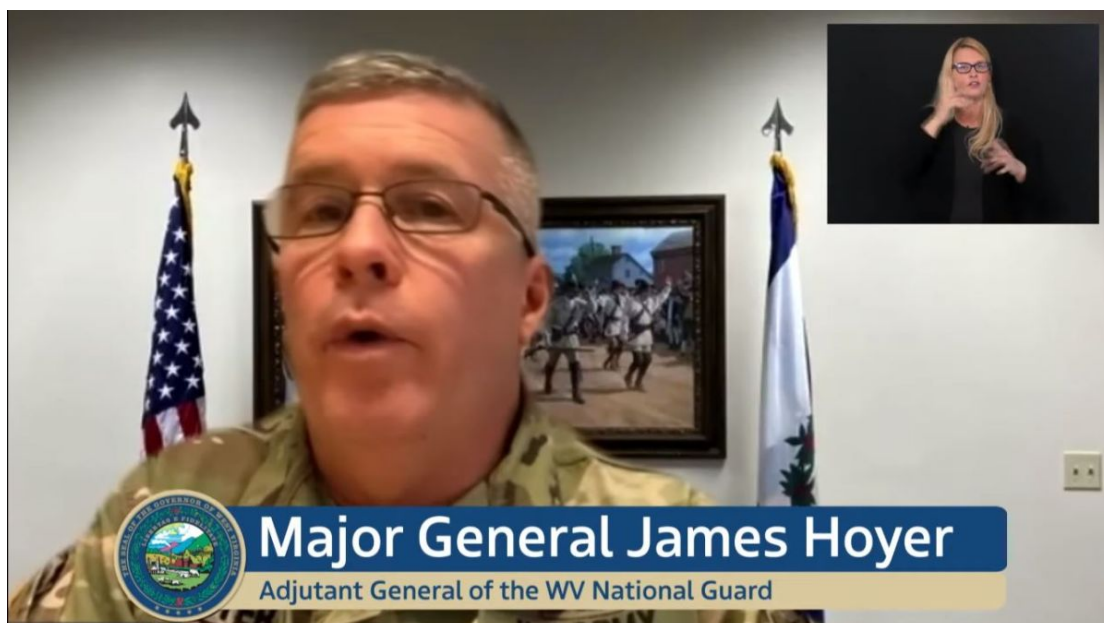(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157717042900002)

Gov. Justice also announced that he plans to issue an executive order next week to stand up the task force that will be responsible for coordinating vaccine distribution.

"The Governor has directed us to identify where we can best administer the initial vaccines – understanding that they will come in in small chunks – with a focus on mitigating fatalities, which means we will begin an initial focus in nursing home facilities since, as we know, 44 percent to almost 50 percent at times during this pandemic of our fatalities have come from those facilities," Maj. Gen. Hoyer said in his remarks during Wednesday's briefing. "Also, we will focus on maintaining the integrity of our healthcare system, particularly our acute care system. The Governor points out we are an exceptionally vulnerable population, even without the Coronavirus. We are in a time of the year when health systems continue to be worked to their maximum capacity to take care of our vulnerable citizens, exclusive of Coronavirus. So we will focus on those two areas, and based on his guidance and direction, we will be rolling out more information as we go forward.

"I want folks to understand that the Pfizer vaccine, it's great that we will be getting it, but we need to understand that it is a complicated vaccine to distribute," Hoyer continued. "It has environmental issues related to temperature, the doses have to be broken down once they come to the state of West Virginia, so a lot of work will need to be done to meet our objectives.

"It will be a whole-of-government and a whole-of-West Virginia approach. We will need everybody to help us and assist us going forward."

## **GOVERNOR AGAIN URGES CAUTION AHEAD OF THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

Also on Wednesday, Gov. Justice took time during his briefing to once again urge West Virginians to be as cautious as possible heading into the Thanksgiving holiday tomorrow.

"I would just tell you, from Cathy and I, that we wish you the happiest of all Thanksgivings – as best it can possibly be," Gov. Justice said. "But I would also tell you to be really careful."

Over the past few weeks, Gov. Justice and state health experts have urged West Virginians to be extremely cautious celebrating Thanksgiving, as indoor celebrations may cause additional virus spread. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued **guidance on Thanksgiving travel and celebrations** (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/thanksgiving.html) for the upcoming holiday.

On Wednesday, Gov. Justice called on West Virginians to use their best judgment and follow all proper safety guidelines when it comes to determining how best to celebrate the holiday.

"If you're around others, try your best to wear a mask, practice good social distancing, wash your hands and practice good hygiene," Gov. Justice said. "We'll get through this and there'll be a lot of bright days ahead. Right now, things are tough, but just try to enjoy tomorrow as best as you can and as safely as you can. I'm sending all my love and praying for all of God's blessings to all West Virginians."

## COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice reported that the current number of active cases in the state has also reached a new record high of 14,283. The number of total patients hospitalized also hit a record high of 510 and the number of ICU patients hit a record high of 144.

Meanwhile, the cumulative percent of positive cases is now 3.53%, up from 3.48% on Monday and the highest such rate seen in West Virginia since April 24, 2020.

As of Wednesday morning, the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (https://rt.live/)– also known as Rt – was 1.04; 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)

## WEDNESDAY MAP UPDATE

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

**Red** counties: **4** (Marshall, Mineral, Wirt, Wyoming)
**Orange** counties: **15** (Barbour, Berkeley, Boone, Brooke, Grant, Hampshire, Hancock, Jackson, Jefferson, Mason, Mingo, Ohio, Putnam, Ritchie, Wood)
**Gold** counties: **10** (Cabell, Doddridge, Hardy, Harrison, Morgan, Pleasants, Preston, Taylor, Wayne, Wetzel)
**Yellow** counties: **12** (Clay, Fayette, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Lincoln, McDowell, Monroe, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Tyler, Upshur)
**Green** counties: **14** (Braxton, Calhoun, Gilmer, Lewis, Logan, Marion, Mercer, Monongalia, Pendleton, Randolph, Roane, Summers, Tucker, Webster)

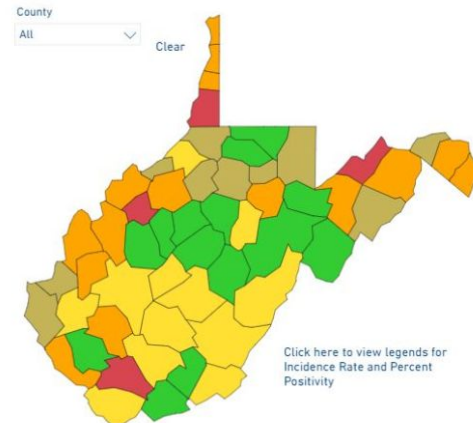The map is updated live on the **DHHR's COVID-19 Dashboard** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx) **(Click "County Alert System" tab)** throughout the week for informational purposes and to provide an indication of how each county is trending ahead of each Saturday at 5 p.m.; the time when 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.

Map colors as of: 11/24/20

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

| Click here to view Percent Positivity breakdown | | | Click here to view Infection Rate breakdown | | | |
| County | 11/18/20 | 11/19/20 | 11/20/20 | 11/21/20 | 11/22/20 | 11/23/20 | 11/24/20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Barbour** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 4.85 | 5.07 | 5.39 | 5.11 | 5.30 | 5.90 | 5.64 |
| Infection Rate | 38.23 | 45.18 | 57.35 | 59.95 | 66.91 | 74.73 | 84.28 |
| Percent Positivity | 4.85 | 5.07 | 5.39 | 5.11 | 5.30 | 5.90 | 5.64 |
| **Berkeley** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 8.00 | 53.10 | 52.39 | 58.74 | 56.46 | 60.78 | 7.89 |
| Infection Rate | 45.31 | 53.10 | 52.39 | 58.74 | 56.46 | 60.78 | 60.18 |
| Percent Positivity | 8.00 | 8.81 | 8.59 | 8.60 | 8.12 | 8.38 | 7.89 |
| **Boone** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 49.27 | 7.03 | 6.34 | 7.45 | 7.28 | 6.19 | 7.01 |
| Infection Rate | 49.27 | 44.61 | 41.94 | 47.27 | 44.61 | 39.95 | 44.61 |
| Percent Positivity | 8.50 | 7.03 | 6.34 | 7.45 | 7.28 | 6.19 | 7.01 |
| **Braxton*** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 1.98 | 2.04 | 1.88 | 1.85 | 1.66 | 1.74 | 1.13 |
| Infection Rate | 8.70 | 8.19 | 7.16 | 7.68 | 7.68 | 8.70 | 6.65 |
| Percent Positivity | 1.98 | 2.04 | 1.88 | 1.85 | 1.66 | 1.74 | 1.13 |
| **Brooke** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 6.94 | 6.86 | 6.36 | 6.93 | 7.48 | 6.98 | 7.08 |
| Infection Rate | 83.35 | 85.95 | 85.30 | 95.07 | 94.42 | 100.28 | 97.67 |
| Percent Positivity | 6.94 | 6.86 | 6.36 | 6.93 | 7.48 | 6.98 | 7.08 |
| **Cabell** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 5.41 | 5.25 | 5.12 | 4.99 | 4.87 | 4.81 | 4.68 |
| Infection Rate | 61.06 | 60.44 | 61.99 | 58.11 | 57.80 | 59.51 | 59.82 |
| Percent Positivity | 5.41 | 5.25 | 5.12 | 4.99 | 4.87 | 4.81 | 4.68 |
| **Calhoun*** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 2.99 | 3.28 | 3.75 | 3.70 | 3.42 | 2.57 | 2.59 |
| Infection Rate | 12.06 | 14.07 | 17.08 | 18.09 | 19.09 | 19.09 | 21.10 |
| Percent Positivity | 2.99 | 3.28 | 3.75 | 3.70 | 3.42 | 2.57 | 2.59 |
| **Clay*** | | | | | | | |
| Lower of Two Indicators | 5.18 | 5.35 | 4.31 | 4.46 | 5.00 | 4.45 | 3.44 |

* Indicates counties with a population under 16,000 is on a 14-day average.

All other counties have a population greater than 16,000 is on a 7-day average.

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

Updated    10:00 AM   11/25/2020

(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 Wednesday, Gov. Justice announced that Stevens Correctional Center in McDowell County is down to eight inmate and five staff cases of COVID-19 after a recent outbreak at the facility, which peaked at 266 positive inmates and 47 positive staff.

Outside of the outbreak at Stevens Correctional Center, there are now 43 active inmate cases and 39 active staff cases across the entire West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation system.

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

West Virginia now has 22 active church-related outbreaks across 16 counties: Berkeley, Cabell, Fayette, Harrison, Jackson, Kanawha, Logan, Marion, Mingo, Monroe, Preston, Raleigh, Taylor, Wayne, Wood, and Wyoming counties. These outbreaks account for a total of 302 cases, up from 291 on Monday.

There currently remain 101 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state.

The Governor also reported that, per the West Virginia Department of Education, there are 24 active outbreaks in public schools across the state. These outbreaks account for 106 confirmed cases, up from 90 on Monday.

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

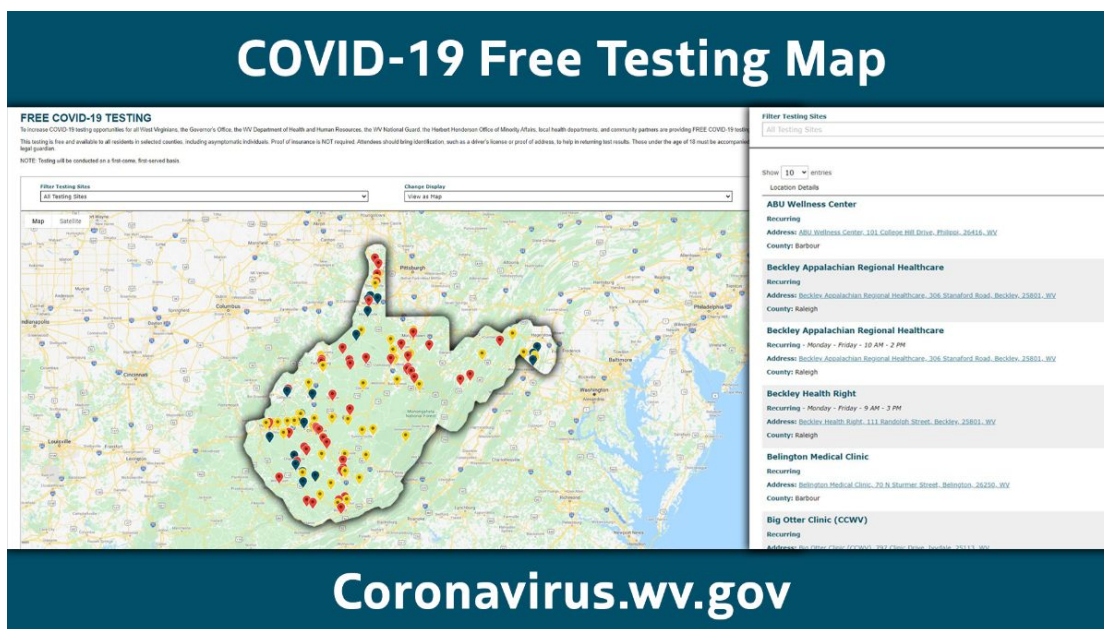## NEW INTERACTIVE ONLINE MAP OF FREE COVID-19 TESTING SITES

Once again Wednesday, Gov. Justice offered a reminder that a new online map of all free COVID-19 testing locations across West Virginia has been launched on the state's COVID-19 website.

Users can filter the map by type of testing site, including daily testing events, recurring testing events, and 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 interactive map of free COVID-19 testing sites**
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)



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

Across West Virginia, 49 counties have 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.

**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)

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.

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)

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

## <u>UPDATED FACE COVERING REQUIREMENT IN EFFECT; SIGNS AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESSES</u>

Once again today, Gov. Justice provided a reminder that his broadened Statewide Indoor Face Covering Requirement is now in effect.

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 new order also 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 now 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)

## **GOV. JUSTICE CELEBRATES SEVERAL RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACROSS WEST VIRGINIA**

Additionally Wednesday, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks on COVID-19 to discuss several recent accomplishments across West Virginia.

First, Gov. Justice celebrated his announcement Monday that DST Innovations, a UK technology company headquartered in Wales, has chosen West Virginia as the home of its new American manufacturing base; agreeing on a contract with West Virginia-based company Blue Rock Manufacturing to establish a new facility for the development of its new energy cells.

The new facility will be the forefront of green technology, using existing organic material such as coal to create new clean energy storage solutions. The development is expected to create up to 1,000 new jobs in the manufacturing and technology sectors. The manufacturing base will be located in Morgantown, with a Phase 2 expansion planned for the Southern Coalfields region of the state.

"This is an absolute 'go,'" Gov. Justice said. "We've been working on this for three years. DST Innovations believes they're going to ramp up 1,000 new jobs in West Virginia. It's phenomenal and it's unbelievably good for our state."

**READ: Gov. Justice: Agreement between UK company DST and Blue Rock Manufacturing to bring new manufacturing facility, up to 1,000 new jobs to West Virginia** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/Gov.-Justice-Agreement-between-UK-company-DST-and-Blue-Rock-Manufacturing-to-bring-new-facility-up-to-1%2c000-new-jobs-to-WV.aspx)

Second, Gov. Justice discussed WVU Medicine's announcement yesterday that they had successfully completed  West Virginia's first dual-organ transplant at Ruby Memorial Hospital.

The patient received both a new heart and kidney from an unnamed donor. The delicate and complex transplants took nine-and-a-half hours to complete, with over nine doctors involved.

"This is an absolute miracle beyond belief," Gov. Justice said. "We're so blessed to have these incredible medical professionals right here right here in West Virginia, and so many thanks go out to the WVU team."

**READ: WVU Medicine Transplant Alliance performs state's first dual-organ**

**transplant** (https://wvumedicine.org/news/article/wvu-medicine-transplant-alliance-performs-state-s-first-dual-organ-transplant/)

Lastly, Gov. Justice took time to celebrate yesterday's announcement by the U.S. Air Force that the 130th Airlift Wing, located at the West Virginia Air National Guard Base in Charleston, has been selected as a preferred alternative to convert to the C-130J-30 Super Hercules.

"We all know how great our National Guard is, but it's great to see them recognized on a national level," Gov. Justice said. "I congratulate our 130th Airlift Wing on an achievement for which they must feel incredibly honored. I could not be happier for our entire West Virginia National Guard for being recognized with this important selection by the U.S. Air Force."

Currently, the 130th Airlift Wing operates eight C-130H3 Hercules model aircraft, which are more than 25 years old. The 130th Airlift Wing has had a C-130 mission since 1975 and has converted to numerous variations of the C-130 over the years.

**READ: Gov. Justice celebrates the 130th Airlift Wing's selection as a preferred alternative for conversion to C-130Js** (/News/press-releases/2020/Pages/Gov.-Justice-celebrates-the-130th-Airlift-Wing%e2%80%99s-selection-as-a-preferred-alternative-for-conversion-to-C-130Js.aspx)

"We have all this greatness going on in West Virginia. Of course, we've always known how good we are, but now the outside world is beginning to know it too," Gov. Justice said. "The world is finding out that West Virginia is the diamond in the rough that they all missed. I couldn't be more proud."

## CITIES/COUNTIES GRANT FUNDING: OVER $191 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 $191 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?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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