

# *COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice urges all West Virginians to follow guidelines to save lives in statewide address*

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Gov. Justice addresses West Virginia on COVID-19 respons...



**CHARLESTON, WV** – During a live, statewide address at the State Capitol in Charleston tonight, Gov. Jim Justice urged West Virginians to take all necessary precautions to help slow the spread of COVID-19, including staying home as much as possible.

"We might be able to prevent us from getting to a point where we've got to shut down the entire state, but to do that we've got to move and we've got to move stronger than we already are right now," Gov. Justice said. "Right now, you've got to really bear down and buckle up.

"We know that there's been bingo halls open and gatherings happening in an unsafe way and it has to stop now," Gov. Justice said. "This truly is real. It's the event of all of our lifetimes unlike any that we've ever seen before."



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During his address, the Governor thanked members of the healthcare community for the leadership and bravery they have displayed during this pandemic. He also thanked grocery stores and their workers for staying open and providing resources to those who are taking shelter at home.

Gov. Justice went on to thank the West Virginia National Guard and everyone working under the West Virginia Department of Education, who have worked to provide meals to 200,000 children across the state while schools remain closed.

The Governor also urged businesses across the state to find ways to allow more of their employees to work from home to help contain the spread of the disease.

"If we're going to keep our state open, our businesses need to let our people work from home," Gov. Justice said. "Our power is in our ability to stay apart. As we stay apart and the numbers flatten out then our health care systems can take care of us."

The Governor was joined for the address by Dr. Clay Marsh, Vice President and Executive Dean for Health Sciences at West Virginia University.

Marsh praised the swift actions taken Gov. Justice, including closing schools and a variety of other places with large gatherings of people, before there was a single confirmed case of COVID-19 in West Virginia.

"I commend the Governor for his leadership," Dr. Marsh said. "I think it is setting a standard for the rest of the country. But our work is not over. In fact, our work is just starting."



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"We need to do the things we need to do to protect each other," Dr. Marsh said. "Stay in our homes, don't congregate, wash your hands thoroughly – 20 seconds, soap and water, or using hand sanitizer, between your fingers, around your wrists, sing Happy Birthday twice, sing the ABCs, sing Country Roads – don't put your hands around your face.

"To save lives, to help save our healthcare workers, to save our systems of healthcare that we rely on, not only for the coronavirus, but for heart attacks, strokes and other treatments – West Virginia – now is the time," Dr. Marsh continued. "It's our time to be West Virginia strong. I'm very proud to be a citizen of this state and a citizen that's led by Governor Jim Justice. It's our time."

Gov. Justice also asked all citizens who have the ability to stay home to make doing so a top priority.

"All of us are really really worried, where's our next paycheck going to come from? How are we going to sustain ourselves? I would tell you that the government, in every way, is stepping up as a nation and a state. You'll be made as whole as you can possibly be made."



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