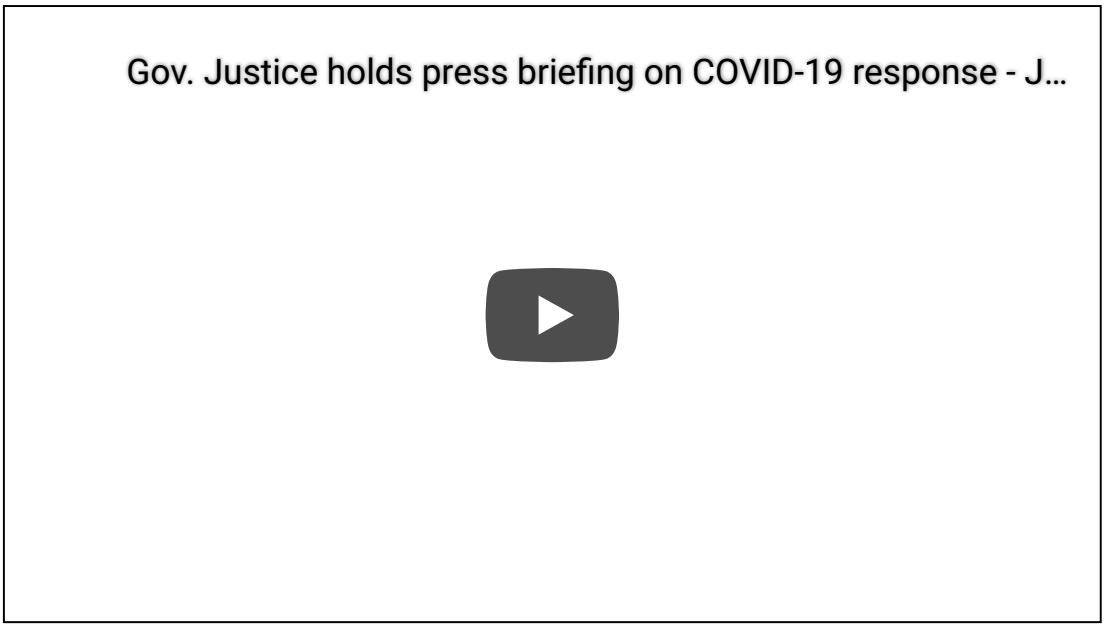
COVID-19 UPDATE: Gov. Justice makes vaccinations available to West Virginians age 65 and older

1/19/2021

Governor also pays tribute to West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance Secretary Dennis Davis after his unexpected passing



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 NOW AVAILABLE TO ALL WEST VIRGINIANS AGE 65 AND OLDER; MORE CLINICS ANNOUNCED

During Tuesday's briefing, Gov. Justice announced that West Virginia will start offering COVID-19 vaccines to state residents age 65 and older beginning immediately.

"This is what the CDC is asking us to do, and we surely don't want any obstacles in front of us to get more vaccines moving forward," Gov. Justice said. "Our clinics will have the ability to vaccinate 10,000 West Virginians age 65 and older every day.

"Imagine how many lives we're saving," Gov. Justice continued. "Three weeks ago, we were thinking that we probably weren't going to be able to get to people in this age group until April. But then we moved and we really kicked it in gear."

Click here to view photo album

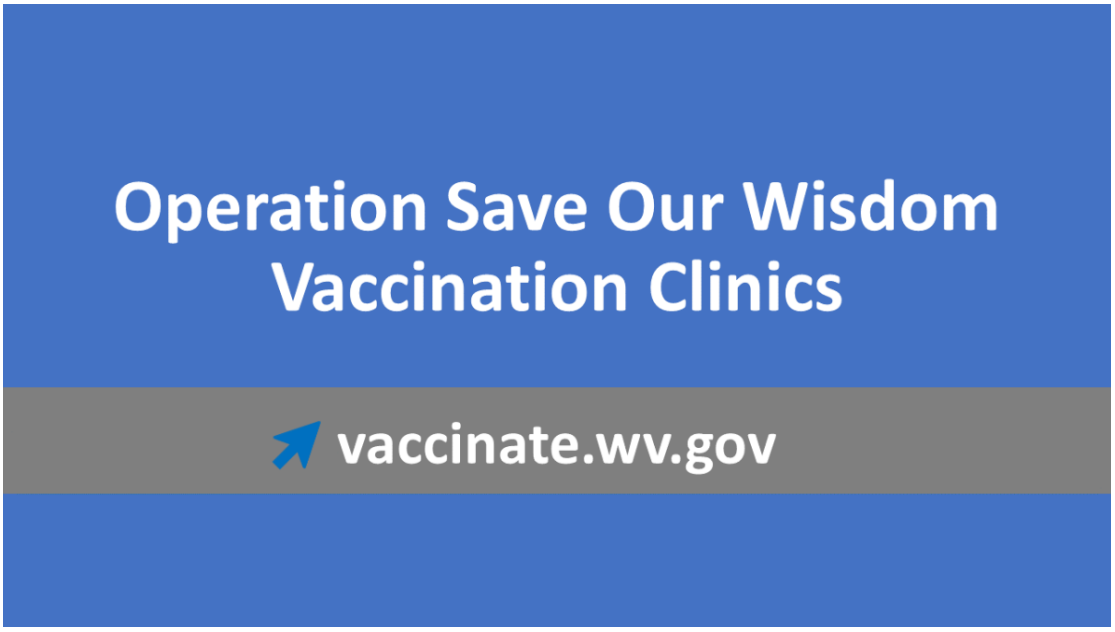
(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govjustice/albums/72157717958061648)

The Governor also announced that several additional COVID-19 vaccine clinics will be held across the state this week through operation "Save Our Wisdom."

The free vaccination clinics will be held in Berkeley, Braxton, Cabell, Greenbrier, Hancock, Hardy, Harrison, Kanawha, Logan, Marshall, Mercer, Monongalia, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Randolph, and Wood counties. Residents from any county in West Virginia may access an appointment at any of the vaccination clinics listed, regardless of their county of residence.

Many clinics are listed as full as they are utilizing existing waitlists. However, they will continue to place new individuals on a waitlist. All clinics require appointments and walk-ins will not be accepted.

Click here for all clinic locations and schedules (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx)



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

WVU MEDICINE TO HOST ONGOING COVID-19 VACCINE CLINICS AT MORGANTOWN MALL

Also on Tuesday, Gov. Justice commended WVU Medicine for their announcement today that they will be opening a community-based COVID-19 vaccine clinic for Morgantown-area residents at the former Sears building at the Morgantown Mall.

The clinic will operate on Thursday and Friday this week. However, WVU Medicine officials plan to host the clinic on an ongoing basis, starting early next week, as vaccine supplies are available.

READ: "WVU Medicine to set up at former Sears site at mall"
(https://www.dominionpost.com/2021/01/18/wvu-medicine-lauches-free-covid-19-vaccine-clinic-at-former-morgantown-mall-sears-store-starting-thursday/)
-The Dominion Post

"They'll determine the days of the week they have it, but people will be able to know that's the place in that area where they can go for the vaccine," Gov. Justice said. "I want to thank WVU for their incredible leadership.

"This 'superhub' model, I hope, will be something that we can expand on statewide, with the assistance of other local partners," Gov. Justice continued. "The good thing about this is that it's all going to be in the same place. We'll announce what days it's going to be open, but it's all dependent on one thing: the federal government sending us enough doses of vaccines."

WEST VIRGINIA REMAINS NATIONAL LEADER WITH 99.6 PERCENT FIRST DOSE VACCINATION RATE

Additionally Tuesday, Gov. Justice once again reported that West Virginia continues to lead the nation in the rate of COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration.

According to the latest vaccine numbers posted to the **COVID-19 Dashboard** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx) Tuesday morning, West Virginia is now up to a first dose administration rate of 99.6 percent.

"West Virginia is knocking it so far out of the park, it's unbelievable," Gov. Justice said. "I congratulate all those that are making it all happen. I'm not ashamed of the fact that I've pushed and pushed, and I'm still going to continue to do that.

"I want the shots in people's arms," Gov. Justice continued. "If we're at 99.6, I want to take it to 100 percent. We want to not only lead the whole nation, we want to lap the field."

If you adjust for Tuesday's numbers on **Bloomberg.com's COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker** (https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/covid-vaccine-tracker-global-distribution/), West Virginia's administration rate is more than 20 percent ahead of second place North Dakota.

West Virginia also remains the top-ranked state in the country for vaccine distribution on a per capita basis, according to the **CDC's COVID-19 Vaccination Tracker** (https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations).

West Virginia has recorded a second dose administration rate of 85.5 percent.

To-date, West Virginia has administered 132,192 first doses and 24,181 second doses, totaling 156,373 doses administered overall statewide.

Every first dose of vaccine that has been delivered to the state has either already been administered or is assigned to a name to be administered in the next few days.

However, the Governor went on to explain that an allocation of 25,000 more vaccine doses from the federal government, expected to arrive in West Virginia today, has not yet been delivered.

"It's not acceptable," Gov. Justice said. "I know everybody is trampling all over the place trying to get vaccines, but West Virginia is one of the oldest states, it's one of the most critically ill states, and two-thirds of the nation's population is within a day's drive of us. We have to have more vaccines because we can save lives and we won't leave them on the shelf.

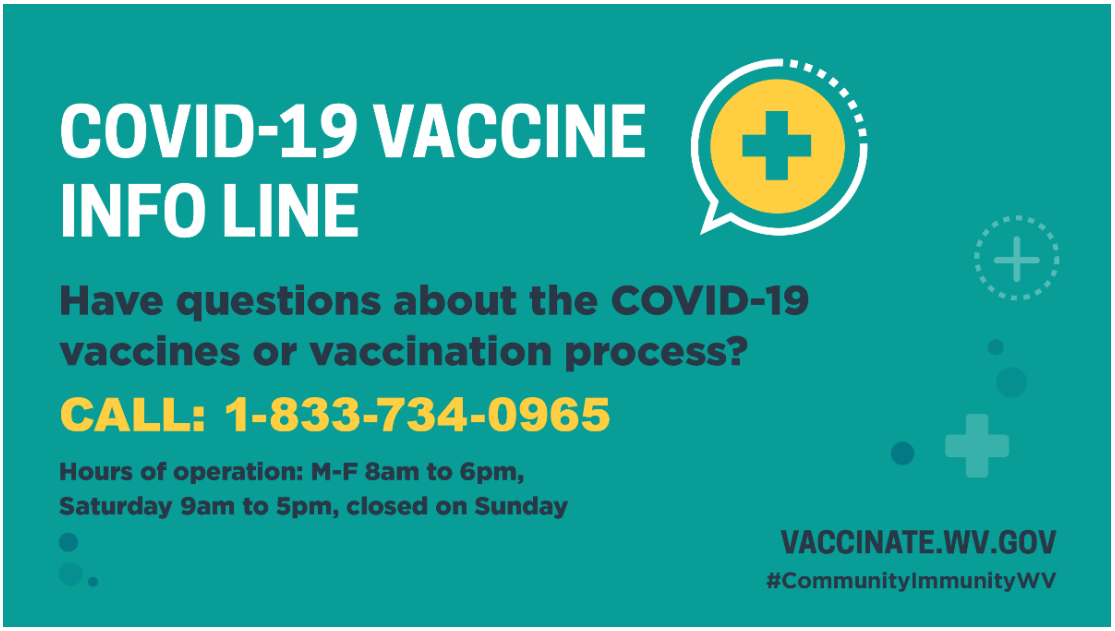
"We've done what we were supposed to do. We got them in people's arms. We've performed, and I think that performance ought to be rewarded," Gov. Justice continued. "You've got some states where vaccines are sitting around in some warehouse and they're piddling around, meanwhile, here we sit, ready to go. We've got to get more vaccines, that's all there is to it. We're pushing as hard as we can possibly push."

The Governor also once again provided a reminder that the State has launched a new COVID-19 Vaccine Info Line to help West Virginians get information on the distribution process and availability of COVID-19 vaccines.

VACCINE INFO LINE: 1-833-734-0965

The line operates Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit **vaccinate.wv.gov** (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Vaccine.aspx) for more information, including details on vaccine availability and other frequently asked questions.



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

GOV. JUSTICE PAYS TRIBUTE TO WVDVA SECRETARY DENNIS DAVIS AFTER HIS UNEXPECTED PASSING

Also on Tuesday, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks and announced that Dennis Davis, Cabinet Secretary for the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance, recently passed away.

"We have lost a great, great man in the State of West Virginia. As a Cabinet Secretary, he was all-in for our Veterans," Gov. Justice said. "We've lost a big man; a man that was towering in stature, but was absolutely a model in every way. He could be tough. But every time you saw him, you wanted to gravitate to him because of his smile and his warmth.

"This really, really hits home to me," Gov. Justice continued. "I thought the entire world of this man."

Davis was **named** (/News/press-releases/2017/Pages/Justice-Names-Dennis-Davis-Secretary-of-Veterans-Assistance.aspx) Cabinet Secretary of the WVDVA in January 2017. Prior to his appointment, Davis, a U.S. Army Veteran himself, served as a member of the Honor Guard at the Donald C. Kinnard Veterans Cemetery.

"Dennis lived a lifetime of service to the State of West Virginia and to his country, and he had a profound impact on the more than 137,000 brave Veterans who call West Virginia their home," Gov. Justice said. "Without question, he was an absolute patriot in every way, who cared deeply for the heroes across our state that served our nation.

"With Dennis leading the department over the last four years, more than $2 billion has been provided in support of West Virginia's Veterans, and we were able to open four new regional Veterans Assistance offices in the last year alone," Gov. Justice continued. "We also exempted military retirement income from the state income tax for our Veterans, we added dozens of brand-new Veteran transportation vans, dedicated multiple new monuments honoring our Veterans throughout West Virginia, and lots and lots more. All of these achievements, without question, would have never happened without Dennis Davis.

"What an honor it was for me to call Dennis Davis a great friend and a great Cabinet Secretary. This state and this nation will truly miss Dennis Davis. Cathy and I send our most heartfelt prayers and sympathies to Dennis' wife Margaret, and all his family and friends. We are profoundly sad, but I'm sure Dennis is in a better place. He's surely got that big smile going on right now and, without any question, he's getting something done."

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS REOPEN FOR SPRING SEMESTER

Additionally, Gov. Justice offered a reminder that today marked the first day back to school for Pre-K-12 students in West Virginia for the spring semester.

Forty-eight of the state's 55 counties were in school on Tuesday.

"Our West Virginia Board of Education has outlined the expectations for all of our counties to return to in-person instruction," Gov. Justice said. "Some counties are phasing-in through a blended model, while others are starting with four to five days of in-person instruction.

"Many families have reached out to the Department of Education, I know this because they're calling me too, saying we want our kids back in school because they know our schools are safe when mitigations are followed," Gov. Justice continued.

Masks are mandated for all students age 9 and above. All school teachers and employees will be wearing them as well.

Approximately 50,000 children will remain in the virtual learning option.

All counties in the Red category of the DHHR County Alert Map will not attend in-person instruction until those counties are out of Red status.

"This, along with the blended learning model, significantly reduces the number of students in the school building, allowing for even more safety precautions with increased social distancing," Gov. Justice said. "Many superintendents have reported today that the first day back is going smoothly and they are very excited to get our children back to school."

COVID-19 CASE NUMBERS UPDATE

Also on Tuesday, Gov. Justice reported that the **statewide rate of COVID-19 transmission** (https://rt.live/)– also known as Rt – has improved to 0.85; the best such rate of any state in the country.

The Governor added that the current number of active cases in the state is now 26,675, down from 27,016 active cases during the Governor's previous COVID-19 briefing Friday last week.

West Virginia has recorded 1,011 new positive cases over the past 24 hours.

The number of active hospitalizations is now 638 patients, down from 717 last Friday, with 162 of those patients currently in the ICU.

The cumulative percent of positive cases is now 5.50 percent.

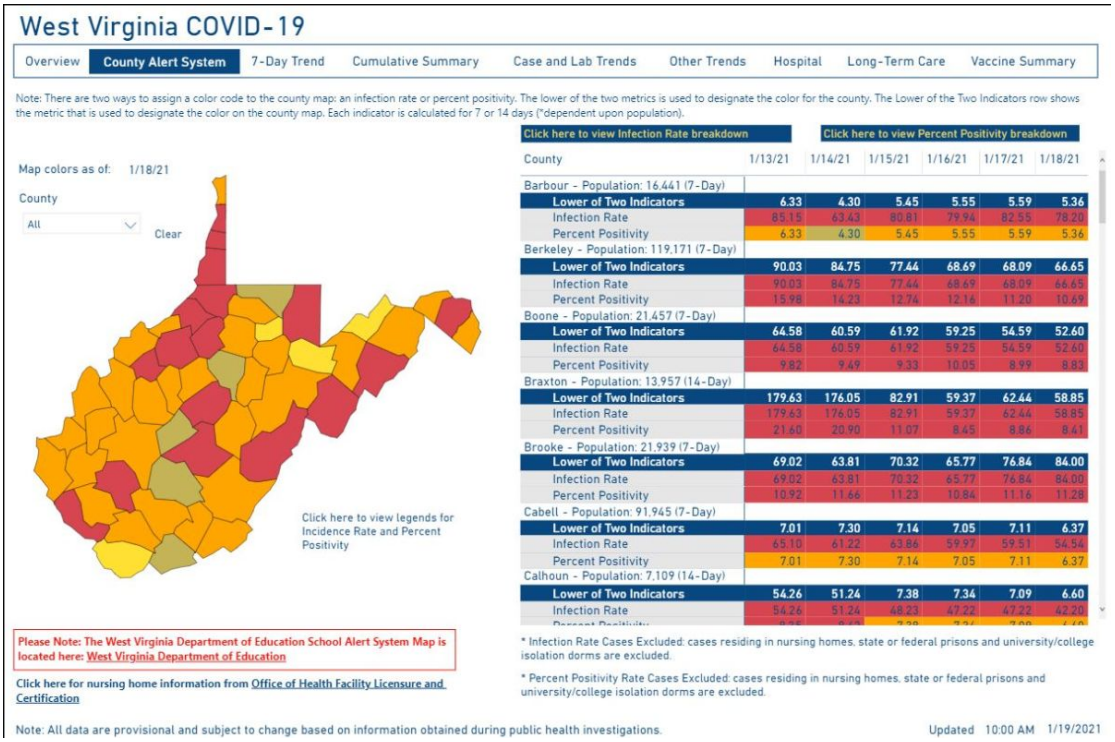
Click here to view the latest COVID-19 data (https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx)

TUESDAY MAP UPDATE

Additionally Tuesday, 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: **17** (Berkeley, Boone, Braxton, Brooke, Doddridge, Hardy, Marshall, Mingo, Nicholas, Ohio, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Preston, Ritchie, Tyler, Wetzel, Wirt)
Orange counties: **29** (Barbour, Cabell, Calhoun, Gilmer, Grant, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Marion, Mason, Monroe, Morgan, Pleasants, Putnam, Raleigh, Randolph, Roane, Summers, Upshur, Wayne, Webster, Wood, Wyoming)
Gold counties: **5** (Clay, Fayette, Lewis, Mercer, Monongalia)
Yellow counties: **4** (McDowell, Mineral, Taylor, Tucker)
Green counties: **0**



County	1/13/21	1/14/21	1/15/21	1/16/21	1/17/21	1/18/21
Barbour - Population: 16,441 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	6.33	4.30	5.45	5.55	5.59	5.36
Infection Rate	85.15	63.43	80.81	79.94	82.55	78.20
Percent Positivity	6.33	4.30	5.45	5.55	5.59	5.36
Berkeley - Population: 119,171 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	90.03	84.75	77.44	68.69	68.09	66.65
Infection Rate	90.03	84.75	77.44	68.69	68.09	66.65
Percent Positivity	15.98	14.23	12.74	12.16	11.20	10.69
Boone - Population: 21,457 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	64.58	60.59	61.92	59.25	54.59	52.60
Infection Rate	64.58	60.59	61.92	59.25	54.59	52.60
Percent Positivity	9.82	9.49	9.33	10.05	8.99	8.83
Braxton - Population: 13,957 (14-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	179.63	176.05	82.91	59.37	62.44	58.85
Infection Rate	179.63	176.05	82.91	59.37	62.44	58.85
Percent Positivity	21.60	20.90	11.07	8.45	8.86	8.41
Brooke - Population: 21,939 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	69.02	63.81	70.32	65.77	76.84	84.00
Infection Rate	69.02	63.81	70.32	65.77	76.84	84.00
Percent Positivity	10.92	11.66	11.23	10.84	11.16	11.28
Cabell - Population: 91,945 (7-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	7.01	7.30	7.14	7.05	7.11	6.37
Infection Rate	65.10	61.22	63.86	59.97	59.51	54.54
Percent Positivity	7.01	7.30	7.14	7.05	7.11	6.37
Calhoun - Population: 7,109 (14-Day)						
Lower of Two Indicators	54.26	51.24	7.38	7.34	7.09	6.60
Infection Rate	54.26	51.24	68.23	47.22	47.22	42.20

(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

Also on Tuesday, Gov. Justice reported that West Virginia has four active church-related outbreaks across three counties: Nicholas, Summers, and Wetzel counties. These outbreaks account for a total of 30 cases, down significantly from 114 cases as of Friday last week.

There are now 92 outbreaks in long-term care facilities across the state, down from 99 last Friday.

The Governor also reported that there are now 150 inmate cases across the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) system, up from 136 last Friday. Meanwhile, there are now 32 active staff cases across the DCR system, down from 39 last Friday.

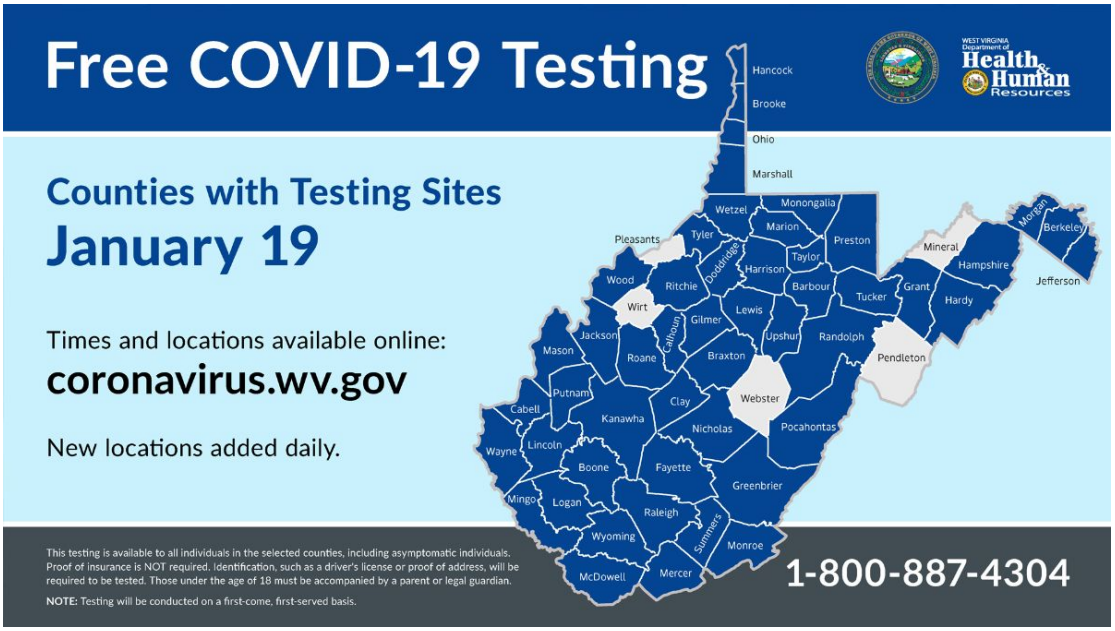
Click here to view the latest corrections facility update
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/Correctional-Facilities.aspx)

AGGRESSIVE TESTING CONTINUES ACROSS STATE

Additionally Tuesday, 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.

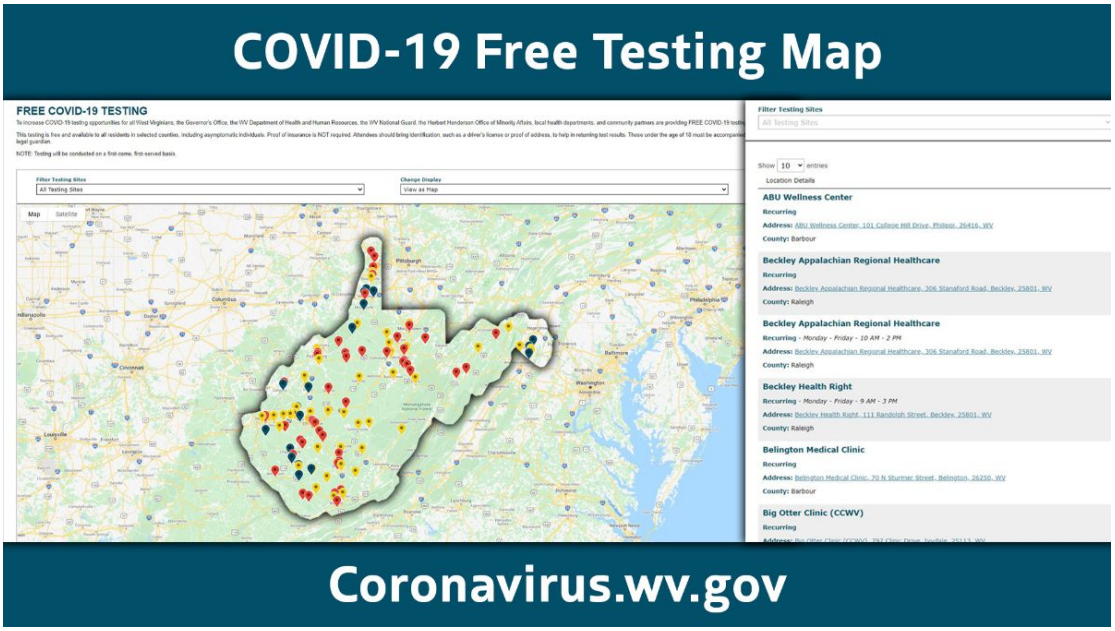
Click here to view all locations, dates, times, and more details
(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx)



(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

Also on Tuesday, 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

Additionally Tuesday, Gov. Justice offered a reminder that West Virginia plans to begin 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

Also on Tuesday, 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**.

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

FLU VACCINE REMINDER

Additionally Tuesday, 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)

GOVERNOR SWORN-IN FOR SECOND TERM; INAUGURATION CEREMONY SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY

Also, Gov. Justice took time out of his remarks to announce that he was formally sworn-in for his second term as Governor of the State of West Virginia at a small ceremony Monday.

"To me, it's been a real honor to serve you," Gov. Justice said. "I will give you every single thing that I have in my soul. I will do anything and everything I possibly can to try to help you, to try to help every single person across this great state and this nation."

The Governor went on to offer a reminder that the 2021 West Virginia Gubernatorial and Constitutional Officer Inauguration Ceremony will be held this Friday, Jan. 22, 2021, beginning at 1 p.m.

The ceremony will include the swearing in of the Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, State Auditor, Commissioner of Agriculture, and Supreme Court Justices.

After taking his oath of office, Gov. Justice will give his inaugural address.

Due to COVID-19 protocols and due to security protocols, attendance will be limited to dignitaries, families of those being sworn in, members of the media, and other invited guests.

The event will be live-streamed online. All West Virginians are encouraged to watch the ceremony at the following links:
YouTube (https://youtu.be/5e0Y17av8D8) | **Twitter** (https://twitter.com/WVGovernor) | **Facebook** (https://www.facebook.com/WVGovernor/)

The ceremony will also be broadcast live on the West Virginia Channel. To find your station, **click here** (https://www.wvpublic.org/find-wvpb-television) (use column labeled "WV Channel").

Click here for more information (/News/press-releases/2021/Pages/Inauguration-ceremony-scheduled-for-Friday%2c-Jan.-22%2c-2021.aspx)

(/News/press-releases/2021/Pages/Inauguration-ceremony-scheduled-for-Friday%2c-Jan.-22%2c-2021.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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