

MOVCAC – Upshur County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Upshur County ranks twenty-sixth in the state with 23,529 total residents. MOVCAC has performed numerous detailed analyses on Wood County excess death. Via that analysis, we confirmed that 2021 saw the highest levels of death experienced in recent history. Based on that analysis and the publication of the 2021 vital statistics by the WV DHHR, we are finally able to provide an analysis of this excess death phenomenon for each county in West Virginia.

Upshur County total death had been declining since the pre-pandemic record was set in 2016. And although the 2020 death total approached this previous record, 2020 ended up being the third highest death total in the 11-year span analyzed. However, 2021 not only soared passed the 2019 pre-pandemic total, it surpassed the record set in 2016 by 13.96%:

Year	Total WV Death	Percent Change
2011	21,870	
2012	21,651	-1.00%
2013	21,846	0.90%
2014	22,164	1.46%
2015	22,643	2.16%
2016	22,721	0.34%
2017	23,290	2.50%
2018	23,462	0.74%
2019	23,291	-0.73%
2020	26,108	12.09%
2021	29,402	26.24%

Year	Total Upshur County Death	Percent Change
2011	253	
2012	262	3.56%
2013	247	-5.73%
2014	275	11.34%
2015	256	-6.91%
2016	308	20.31%
2017	293	-4.87%
2018	254	-13.31%
2019	258	1.57%
2020	305	18.22%
2021	351	36.05%

Data source - https://dhhr.wv.gov/HSC/SS/Vital_Statistics/Pages/Vital_Statistics.aspx

Note – While each of the other years in the tables above are compared to the prior year, 2021 is compared to the pre-pandemic year of 2019. It makes no sense to compare 2021 to an already pandemic-effected elevated death total in 2020.

Although the pandemic year saw a rise in death in Upshur County, the real wave occurred in 2021. As happened with forty-seven of the fifty-five counties in West Virginia, Upshur County easily set the record for death in 2021. Why are we normalizing all of this excess death? Why is this not being investigated?

The age-ranged tables that follow were created by compiling each year’s age-ranged data provided on the “Age at Death by County of Residence” table in the appendix section of each year’s [Vital Statistics Report published by DHHR from 2011 to 2020](#). The 2021 report no longer contains these detailed schedules. We contacted the DHHR for the 2021 details and were provided a spreadsheet containing the county level detail.

Age Ranges of Concern

The following are the tables for age ranges with the most alarming trends culminating in 2021. Please note, many of these deaths are occurring in our working age citizens. Shouldn’t this be investigated by our elected officials?

(*)Note – For each of the age ranges below, the two highest years in regards to total death are identified by the bold boxes. The percent change column is comparing totals for each

year to the prior year for years 2011 through 2020. For the 2021 percent change calculation, the next highest death total is identified and used as the comparison year.

Age Range 35-44			Age Range 55-64		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	8		2011	27	
2012	3	-62.50%	2012	36	33.33%
2013	8	166.67%	2013	29	-19.44%
2014	5	-37.50%	2014	30	3.45%
2015	9	80.00%	2015	37	23.33%
2016	5	-44.44%	2016	41	10.81%
2017	6	20.00%	2017	40	-2.44%
2018	4	-33.33%	2018	27	-32.50%
2019	5	25.00%	2019	35	29.63%
2020	11	120.00%	2020	36	2.86%
2021 *	17	54.55%	2021 *	45	9.76%

Something definitely happened in Upshur County in both 2020 and 2021 to severely increase total death in the 35-44 age range. I know it is difficult to come to any conclusions with this small sample, but an increase of 120% followed by another increase of 54.55% is catastrophic and should be understood in detail.

The 55-64 age range is included above to show the record set in 2021.

Age Range 65-74			Age Range 75-84		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	53		2011	61	
2012	41	-22.64%	2012	79	29.51%
2013	51	24.39%	2013	58	-26.58%
2014	59	15.69%	2014	68	17.24%
2015	59	0.00%	2015	55	-19.12%
2016	70	18.64%	2016	84	52.73%
2017	64	-8.57%	2017	80	-4.76%
2018	62	-3.13%	2018	71	-11.25%
2019	59	-4.84%	2019	77	8.45%
2020	64	8.47%	2020	87	12.99%
2021 *	76	8.57%	2021 *	106	21.84%

Both the 65-74 and 75-84 age ranges set records in 2021. For the 75-84 age range, this record was preceded by record death in 2020.

Why is Upshur County seeing so many death records set in 2021?

If you are concerned about this catastrophic rise in Upshur County death (as documented by your state), please consider sharing this information with state leaders responsible for representing your population.

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Please note – After the election, your delegate or senator may change. After November 5, 2024, please refer to the new rosters as published on the legislature’s website –

House Roster - <https://www.wvlegislature.gov/house/roster.cfm>

Senate Roster - <https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Senate1/roster.cfm>