

MOVAC – Barbour County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Barbour County is the thirty-sixth largest county in the state with 15,378 total residents. MOVAC 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.

As you can see from the two tables below, Barbour County’s experience with excess death in 2021 mirrors that of the state as a whole:

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 Barbour County Death	Percent Change
2011	178	
2012	208	16.85%
2013	197	-5.29%
2014	203	3.05%
2015	198	-2.46%
2016	192	-3.03%
2017	182	-5.21%
2018	199	9.34%
2019	200	0.50%
2020	252	26.00%
2021	266	33.00%

Data source - https://dhr.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.

The first thing one should notice from this table is that Barbour County was greatly impacted by the pandemic in 2020. The increase in death for 2020 skyrocketed by 26%. Easily the largest increase in the 2011-2020 ten-year span.

The 266 deaths experienced in 2021 represent a 33% increase over the pre-pandemic year of 2019. As you can see, 2020 and 2021 ravaged Barbour County.

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, 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 45-54		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	1		2011	13	
2012	7	600.00%	2012	12	-7.69%
2013	5	-28.57%	2013	16	33.33%
2014	2	-60.00%	2014	15	-6.25%
2015	4	100.00%	2015	12	-20.00%
2016	6	50.00%	2016	16	33.33%
2017	8	33.33%	2017	15	-6.25%
2018	8	0.00%	2018	10	-33.33%
2019	3	-62.50%	2019	11	10.00%
2020	4	33.33%	2020	21	90.91%
2021 *	14	75.00%	2021 *	20	-4.76%

For the 35-44 age range, 2020 did not see any increase over historical trends. However, 2021 experienced a catastrophic rise in death (75%) when compared to 2017 which had the next highest total.

For the 45-54 age range, 2021 actually saw a decrease in death when compared to the next highest year (2020). However, it must be noted that 2020 saw death in Barbour County for 45–54-year-olds nearly double (90.91%) when compared to 2019, and 2020 is 31.25% higher than the next highest prior year (2016).

Age Range 55-64			Age Range 65-74		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	17		2011	33	
2012	29	70.59%	2012	45	36.36%
2013	25	-13.79%	2013	40	-11.11%
2014	34	36.00%	2014	42	5.00%
2015	30	-11.76%	2015	43	2.38%
2016	21	-30.00%	2016	49	13.95%
2017	31	47.62%	2017	29	-40.82%
2018	29	-6.45%	2018	41	41.38%
2019	26	-10.34%	2019	48	17.07%
2020	36	38.46%	2020	59	22.92%
2021 *	42	16.67%	2021 *	61	3.39%

The death total for 2020 in the 55-64 range does not look terrible when looking at historical levels. However, like the vast majority of counties in WV, Barbour County saw its two highest years of death in this range occur in 2020 & 2021.

For the 65–74-year-old range, 2020 experienced a significant increase over historical trends and again increased to its highest level in 2021.

Is it just a coincidence that each of these working-age categories experienced their highest levels of death in 2021?

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

Delegates –

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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>