

MOVCAC – Hardy County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Hardy County ranks thirty-seventh in the state with 14,251 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.

Hardy County is very small and thus the death numbers can be very volatile. However, even in this very small county, the 2020 death total set the record for deaths, when compared to the previous 10 years, with 207 deaths. The 2021 total decreased to 201 but still represented an increase of 18.24% over the previous high of 170 set in 2016 and 2018.

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%

Total Hardy		
Year	County Death	Percent Change
2011	144	
2012	129	-10.42%
2013	128	-0.78%
2014	158	23.44%
2015	169	6.96%
2016	170	0.59%
2017	137	-19.41%
2018	170	24.09%
2019	147	-13.53%
2020	207	40.82%
2021	201	36.73%

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 40.82% increase in 2020 may be a little deceiving since 2019 experienced a double-digit decrease. However, even when comparing to the largest death total prior to 2020 (170 deaths in both 2016 and 2018), the 207 deaths recorded represents a 21.76% increase over the historical high.

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 age-ranged tables show the most alarming growth for Hardy County.

(*)Note – For the table 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 55-64			Age Range 65-74		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	19		2011	25	
2012	15	-21.05%	2012	31	24.00%
2013	15	0.00%	2013	26	-16.13%
2014	18	20.00%	2014	42	61.54%
2015	20	11.11%	2015	30	-28.57%
2016	19	-5.00%	2016	28	-6.67%
2017	21	10.53%	2017	28	0.00%
2018	19	-9.52%	2018	34	21.43%
2019	8	-57.89%	2019	40	17.65%
2020	25	212.50%	2020	44	10.00%
2021 *	32	28.00%	2021 *	51	15.91%

It is very difficult to come to any conclusions with a population so small. The detailed age-range data provided by DHHR omits any death counts in an age range if the total is less than five deaths. For this reason, many of the age ranges could not be properly analyzed. However, the 55-64 and 65-74 age ranges shown above set the record for death in Hardy County in 2020 and then saw another double-digit percentage increase in 2021.

If you are concerned about this alarming rise in Hardy 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>