

MOVAC – Monongalia County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Monongalia County ranks third in the state with 107,718 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, Monongalia County’s experience with excess death closely mirrored the experience statewide. In the 11-year span under analysis, Monongalia County never saw total death reach 800 until 2020 where the record was set with 818 deaths. That record was then surpassed in 2021 when death increased by 16.12% over the pre-pandemic record set in 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 Monongalia County		
Year	Death	Percent Change
2011	649	
2012	652	0.46%
2013	663	1.69%
2014	656	-1.06%
2015	709	8.08%
2016	729	2.82%
2017	723	-0.82%
2018	732	1.24%
2019	706	-3.55%
2020	818	15.86%
2021	850	20.40%

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.

Much like the rest of the state, Monongalia County set records for total death in 2020 and 2021. The 2021 rise in death over the pre-pandemic total in 2019 of 20.4% is more than twice any other increase in the 11-year analysis. Shouldn't we be analyzing the details of all this excess death? As you will see in the age-range analysis below, Monongalia County's younger population was unusually impacted.

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 25-34		
Year	Total Death	Percent
2011	9	
2012	13	44.44%
2013	11	-15.38%
2014	21	90.91%
2015	13	-38.10%
2016	16	23.08%
2017	23	43.75%
2018	15	-34.78%
2019	26	73.33%
2020	19	-26.92%
2021 *	33	26.92%

Age Range 35-44		
Year	Total Death	Percent
2011	18	
2012	9	-50.00%
2013	20	122.22%
2014	26	30.00%
2015	16	-38.46%
2016	24	50.00%
2017	27	12.50%
2018	19	-29.63%
2019	21	10.53%
2020	35	66.67%
2021 *	40	14.29%

Both the 25-34 and 35-44 age ranges set records for death in 2021. Did we get worse at treating Covid in the younger population in 2021? Did drug overdoses spike in 2021? These age-ranges are the backbone of our future workforce. Shouldn't we have a detailed understanding of this catastrophic rise in death within our younger population?

Age Range 55-64		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	79	
2012	77	-2.53%
2013	76	-1.30%
2014	75	-1.32%
2015	80	6.67%
2016	110	37.50%
2017	88	-20.00%
2018	88	0.00%
2019	96	9.09%
2020	119	23.96%
2021 *	112	-5.88%

Age Range 65-74		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	114	
2012	122	7.02%
2013	111	-9.02%
2014	127	14.41%
2015	139	9.45%
2016	118	-15.11%
2017	140	18.64%
2018	137	-2.14%
2019	120	-12.41%
2020	148	23.33%
2021 *	169	14.19%

Age Range 75-84		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	164	
2012	172	4.88%
2013	152	-11.63%
2014	151	-0.66%
2015	168	11.26%
2016	154	-8.33%
2017	167	8.44%
2018	172	2.99%
2019	168	-2.33%
2020	211	25.60%
2021 *	188	-10.90%

In all three of the age ranges above the two highest years of total death occurred in 2020 and 2021. Is anyone looking into the details of this excess death? Are we just going to normalize these higher levels of death?

Being the home of our most prestigious institution of higher learning, one would think that Monongalia County would be leading the state in educating its population in regards to these alarmingly elevated death totals?

If you are concerned about this rise in Monongalia 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>