

## MOVAC – Preston County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Preston County ranks fifteenth in the state with 34,099 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.

Much like the rest of the state, Preston County saw their total death reach new highs in both 2020 and 2021. Preston County had never seen double-digit percentage growth or decline in total death prior to 2020 when death grew by 22.63%. Total death then skyrocketed by 37.15% (over 2019) in 2021 far outpacing the growth experienced at the statewide level:

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%
<b>2020</b>	<b>26,108</b>	<b>12.09%</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>29,402</b>	<b>26.24%</b>

Year	Total Preston County Death	Percent Change
2011	336	
2012	356	5.95%
2013	365	2.53%
2014	351	-3.84%
2015	381	8.55%
2016	367	-3.67%
2017	395	7.63%
2018	387	-2.03%
2019	358	-7.49%
<b>2020</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>22.63%</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>37.15%</b>

Data source - [https://dhhr.wv.gov/HSC/SS/Vital\\_Statistics/Pages/Vital\\_Statistics.aspx](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.**

Like forty-one out of fifty-five West Virginia counties, Preston County set records for total death in both 2020 and 2021. However, Preston County’s 2021 growth in death over the pre-pandemic year of 2019 far exceeded what most counties experienced. How are we not intensely investigating this skyrocketing death in Preston 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 age-ranged tables show the most alarming growth for Preston County.

**(\*)Note – For the tables 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**

Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	7	
2012	12	71.43%
2013	12	0.00%
2014	10	-16.67%
2015	7	-30.00%
2016	12	71.43%
2017	14	16.67%
2018	5	-64.29%
2019	10	100.00%
2020	15	50.00%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>33.33%</b>

**Age Range 55-64**

Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	46	
2012	54	17.39%
2013	42	-22.22%
2014	47	11.90%
2015	54	14.89%
2016	45	-16.67%
2017	53	17.78%
2018	47	-11.32%
2019	48	2.13%
2020	59	22.92%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>23.73%</b>

In both the 35-44 and 55-64 age ranges, a new record for death occurred in 2020 only to be surpassed in 2021. We know the pandemic affected the elderly and infirmed. Why are we setting death records in these working age categories?

**Age Range 65-74**

Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	66	
2012	75	13.64%
2013	74	-1.33%
2014	66	-10.81%
2015	90	36.36%
2016	86	-4.44%
2017	73	-15.12%
2018	87	19.18%
2019	85	-2.30%
2020	94	10.59%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>18.09%</b>

**Age Range 75-84**

Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	81	
2012	88	8.64%
2013	96	9.09%
2014	91	-5.21%
2015	106	16.48%
2016	78	-26.42%
2017	103	32.05%
2018	113	9.71%
2019	86	-23.89%
2020	113	31.40%
<b>2021 *</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>10.62%</b>

For both the 65-74 and 75-84 age ranges, records for total death were set in 2020 only to be broken with double-digit growth in 2021.

Why are we normalizing this excess death? Shouldn't we be investigating why we are experiencing double-digit growth two years in a row in Preston County?

If you are concerned about this alarming rise in total death in both Preston County and West Virginia as a whole (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>