

MOVAC – Summers County Excess Death Analysis

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Based on population numbers provided by [West Virginia Demographics](#), Summers County ranks forty-second in the state with 11,581 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.

Summers County definitely performed better than most counties in West Virginia in 2020. The 23.33% increase in 2020 is a little deceiving. The death total in 2020 was ten less than the record set in 2017. However, 2021 not only saw an increase in total death of 45% over the pre-pandemic total in 2019, the 261 deaths recorded surpassed the 2017 record by 12.5%:

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 Summers County Death	Percent Change
2011	207	
2012	171	-17.39%
2013	207	21.05%
2014	190	-8.21%
2015	207	8.95%
2016	185	-10.63%
2017	232	25.41%
2018	183	-21.12%
2019	180	-1.64%
2020	222	23.33%
2021	261	45.00%

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.

Like forty-seven out of fifty-five West Virginia counties, Summers County set the record for total death in 2021. Why, after surviving the pandemic year without setting a record in death, did total death take such an alarming jump in 2021?

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 Summers 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 45-54			Age Range 65-74		
Year	Total Death	Percent Change	Year	Total Death	Percent Change
2011	12		2011	44	
2012	11	-8.33%	2012	41	-6.82%
2013	12	9.09%	2013	48	17.07%
2014	14	16.67%	2014	40	-16.67%
2015	16	14.29%	2015	34	-15.00%
2016	15	-6.25%	2016	40	17.65%
2017	16	6.67%	2017	45	12.50%
2018	10	-37.50%	2018	46	2.22%
2019	11	10.00%	2019	45	-2.17%
2020	12	9.09%	2020	63	40.00%
2021 *	23	43.75%	2021 *	62	-1.59%

For the 45-54 age range, Summers County set a record for total death in 2021 that surpassed the previous record, tied in 2017, by 43.75%. Why are we setting death records in 2021 for this working age category?

The record for total death in the 65-74 age range was set in 2020 with a 40% increase over the pre-pandemic year. 2021 had the second highest death total in the 11-year span under analysis.

How can we have 40% growth in death for these working age Summers County residents? Where are the investigations?

If you are concerned about this alarming rise in total death in both Summers 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.

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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>