

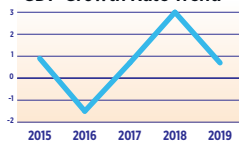
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"I am tickled teetotally to death because I think that this initiative will not only cover our state in broadband, but also be an incredible construction project that will employ hundreds if not thousands of people."

— Gov. Jim Justice, Sept. 3, 2020, on signing an executive order that will allow West Virginia to leverage \$766 million over the next 10 years to connect 121,000 West Virginia homes to broadband

Westvirginia.gov

West Virginia

Pop. (2020): 1,879,194**Median household income (2020): \$43,730****Credit Rating: AA-/Stable****Pop. growth 2020–2025: -0.05%****Median age (2020): 44****Right-to-work state: Yes****GDP****41st****GDP Growth Rate Trend**

2019 GDP
(in millions of current US\$)
\$78,864

Legislative Update

- In January, Gov. Justice announced that his administration had secured \$3.3 million to fund the establishment of a second Mountaineer Challenge Academy (MCA) and Mountaineer Job Challenge Program (MJCP), utilizing part of the former WVU Tech campus in Montgomery. The first one at Camp Dawson in Preston County has graduated 4,663 youth. The 22-week program is free and voluntary for at-risk youth ages 16-18, training and mentoring them in a quasi-military environment, with a one-year post-residential follow-up program.
- Gov. Justice in March signed into law a measure creating the West Virginia Impact Fund, a sovereign fund that will allow the state to serve as an official partner in investment deals. Finances would come from corporations, private investors or other sovereign investment funds. The bill also creates the Mountaineer Impact Office and an Investment Committee to find potential business ventures that would be interested in using the Impact Fund.
- In December a new, highly detailed West Virginia Broadband Availability map made its debut at broadband.wv.gov.

**22nd**

Business Tax Climate Rank Change 2020–2021: 0

**43rd**

Higher Ed. R&D Expenditure in \$000s: 200,660

**20th**

Number of NCRCs: 69,570 | Percent Improvement 2019–2020: 1.42%

**4th**

2020 Workers' Comp Index Rate: 1.01

**7th**

Industrial power cost per kWh: \$5.61

**12th**

Total Revenue as Share of Total Expenses, FY 2004-2019: 105.1%