

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

State of West Virginia

Profile of Drug Indicators

March 2008



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare states or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

West Virginia

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking and enforcement.

Demographics

- Population (2006 American Community Survey): 1,818,470¹
- Race/Ethnicity (2006 American Community Survey): 94.6% white; 3.2% black/African American; 0.2% American Indian/Alaska Native; 0.6% Asian; 0.1% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.2% other race; 1.1% two or more races; 0.8% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)²

Politics

- Governor: Joe Manchin III³
- Lt. Governor: Earl Ray Tomblin⁴
- Attorney General: Darrell V. McGraw, Jr.⁵
- Secretary of State: Betty Ireland⁶
- U.S. Senate Members: Robert Byrd (D); John Rockefeller (D)⁷
- U.S. House of Representatives: Alan B. Mollohan (D); Shelley Capito (R); Nick J. Rahall II (D)⁸
- Capital: Charleston⁹

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)¹⁰
Designated in 1998, the Appalachia HIDTA is responsible for counties in Kentucky, Tennessee, and the following counties in West Virginia: Boone, Braxton, Cabell, Gilmer, Kanawha, Lewis, Lincoln, Logan, Mason, McDowell, Mingo and Wayne.
- CREATE for a Drug-Free West Virginia¹¹
The mission of this program is to promote the health and well-being of the citizens of West Virginia. In addition, this program aims at eliminating the unhealthy or illicit use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs among youth and adults.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2007, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reported 113 arrests for drug violations in West Virginia.¹²

Number of DEA Drug Arrests, West Virginia, 2003-2007

Year	Number of Arrests
2003	70
2004	133
2005	121
2006	85
2007	113

- There were 4,100 state and local arrests for drug abuse violations in West Virginia during 2006.¹³

Number of Arrests, Select Offenses, West Virginia, 2006

Offense Type	Under 18	Total
Murder/non-negligent manslaughter	0	18
Forcible rape	3	35
Robbery	8	75
Aggravated assault	29	754
Burglary	52	496
Larceny-theft	160	1,636
Motor vehicle theft	29	203
Arson	2	42
Drug abuse violations	172	4,100
Driving under the influence	28	4,028
Liquor laws	161	1,274

Drugs

- Cocaine¹⁴
Cocaine hydrochloride and crack cocaine are widely available in most West Virginia cities. Crack cocaine abuse generally remains confined to lower income individuals, although its abuse crosses all ethnic lines. Rural communities have been drastically affected by crack distribution and its accompanying violence. Cocaine availability is limited to large-retail or small-wholesale quantities.
- Heroin¹⁵
Heroin demand and availability are limited throughout West Virginia. Small groups of long-term heroin addicts exist and rely on each other to obtain heroin from secondary sources in Philadelphia and Baltimore.
- Marijuana¹⁶
Marijuana consumption and cultivation is considered a serious drug threat throughout West Virginia. The state consistently ranks among the top ten states for marijuana eradication.
- Methamphetamine¹⁷
Methamphetamine is one of the most pronounced drug threats in West Virginia.
- Club Drugs¹⁸
Demand for MDMA in West Virginia has increased, although its abuse remains concentrated near Morgantown, which is the location of West Virginia University. The state's remote terrain also makes it suitable to host rave parties, although attendance at large-scale, publicized raves has been disappointing to promoters.
- Diverted Pharmaceuticals¹⁹
Pharmaceutical drug abuse is among the most serious drug threats in West Virginia. Current investigations indicate that diversion of hydrocodone products and diazepam continues to be a problem in the state.
- According to 2005-2006 data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), approximately 123,000 (8%) West Virginia citizens (ages 12 or older) reported past month use of an illicit drug.²⁰

Citizens (Ages 12 or Older) Reporting Drug Use, West Virginia, 2005-2006 Data

Drug Type and Use	Number*	Percent
Past month illicit drug use	123	7.95%
Past year marijuana use	141	9.12
Past month marijuana use	92	5.96
Past month use of illicit drug other than marijuana	65	4.21
Past year cocaine use	40	2.60
Past year non-medical pain reliever use	88	5.69

* The number of users is in thousands

- Approximately 691,000 (44.75%) West Virginia citizens reported that using marijuana occasionally (once a month) was a “great risk”.²¹
- Additional 2005-2006 NSDUH results indicate that 45,000 (2.90%) West Virginia citizens reported illicit drug dependence or abuse within the past year. Approximately 29,000 (1.87%) reported past year illicit drug dependence.²²

Juveniles

- Results of a 2005 survey of West Virginia high school students indicate that approximately 39% reported trying marijuana at least once in their lifetime.²³

Percent of High School Students Using Drugs, West Virginia, 2005

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana use	36.2%	41.0%	38.7%
Current marijuana use	16.4	22.7	19.6
Lifetime cocaine use	10.8	11.5	11.3
Current cocaine use	4.2	5.7	4.9
Lifetime inhalant use	17.5	14.5	16.0
Lifetime heroin use	2.4	4.8	3.6
Lifetime methamphetamine use	9.2	7.6	8.4
Lifetime ecstasy use	5.6	8.2	6.9
Lifetime illegal steroid use	4.0	7.3	5.6
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	2.1	3.3	2.7
Tried marijuana before age 13	6.8	12.8	9.9

- Approximately 44% of West Virginia 12th graders surveyed in 2005 reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetime.²⁴

Percent of High School Students Using Drugs, by Grade, West Virginia, 2005

Drug Type and Use	9th	10th	11th	12th
Lifetime marijuana use	32.2%	38.2%	45.0%	43.7%
Current marijuana use	19.1	21.1	21.5	18.1
Lifetime cocaine use	11.4	10.3	10.9	13.5
Current cocaine use	6.4	5.1	3.8	4.1
Lifetime inhalant use	21.1	16.5	14.6	10.8
Lifetime heroin use	3.8	4.2	2.6	4.2
Lifetime methamphetamine use	9.8	8.4	9.3	6.0

Lifetime ecstasy use	8.3	5.5	7.8	6.6
Lifetime illegal steroid use	8.6	4.6	4.1	4.4
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	4.4	3.8	0.4	1.8
Tried marijuana before age 13	12.6	11.2	8.0	7.1

- Approximately 4.9% of West Virginia students surveyed in 2005 reported using marijuana on school property at least once within the past month.²⁵
- According to 2005-2006 NSDUH data, approximately 10% of West Virginia 12-17 year olds reported past month use of an illicit drug.²⁶

Youth (12-17 Year Olds) Reporting Drug Use, West Virginia, 2005-2006 Data

Drug Type and Use	Number*	Percent
Past month illicit drug use	14	10.16%
Past year marijuana use	19	13.71
Past month marijuana use	9	6.82
Past month use of illicit drug other than marijuana	8	5.65
Past year cocaine use	3	2.06
Past year non-medical pain reliever use	12	8.93

* The number of users is in thousands

Enforcement

- As of October 31, 2006, there were 4,208 full-time law enforcement employees in West Virginia (3,333 officers and 875 civilians).²⁷
- Drug Identification Section²⁸
The Drug Identification Section of the West Virginia State Police analyzes and identifies any suspected controlled substances submitted to the crime lab.

Trafficking and Seizures

- Drug distributors in West Virginia are uniquely placed to take advantage of sources of supply from both nearby eastern cities, including Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Washington, DC, and large mid-western cities, such as Columbus and Detroit.²⁹
- Clandestine methamphetamine laboratory activity in West Virginia decreased because of state and Federal laws regulating the sale of precursor chemicals. In the past, methamphetamine manufacturing was believed to be primarily focused in the Panhandle region of the state, but has since expanded to include other areas of northern West Virginia as well as some southeastern sites.³⁰
- During 2007, there were 40 methamphetamine laboratory incidents in West Virginia reported by the DEA and state and local authorities, down from 213 incidents reported during 2005.³¹

Methamphetamine Laboratory Incidents, West Virginia, 2003-2007

Year	Laboratory Incidents
2003	73
2004	168
2005	213
2006	83
2007	40

- Approximately 5.7 kilograms of cocaine were seized by Federal agencies in West Virginia during 2007.³²

Amount of Federal Drug Seizures, West Virginia, 2007

Drug Type	Amount Seized
Cocaine	5.7 kilograms
Heroin	0.0 kilograms
Methamphetamine	0.1 kilograms
Marijuana	10.8 kilograms
MDMA	19 dosage units

- During 2006, more than 57,000 cultivated marijuana plants were eradicated in West Virginia under the DEA's Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program.³³

Number of Marijuana Plants Eradicated and Seized, West Virginia, 2006

<u>Outdoor Operations</u>		<u>Indoor Operations</u>		<u>Total</u>
<u>Eradicated</u>	<u>Cultivated</u>	<u>Grows</u>	<u>Plants</u>	<u>Cultivated</u>
<u>Plots</u>	<u>Plants</u>	<u>Seized</u>	<u>Eradicated</u>	<u>Plants</u>
<u>Eradicated</u>	<u>Eradicated</u>			<u>Eradicated</u>
629	55,388	60	2,194	57,582

Courts

- Drug Courts³⁴
As of April 16, 2007, there were 5 drug courts in existence or being planned in West Virginia. One drug court had been in existence for at least two years, 2 had been recently implemented and 2 were being planned.
- During FY 2006, 62.5% of the Federally-sentenced defendants in West Virginia committed a drug offense. More than half of the drug cases involved crack cocaine.³⁵

Federally-Sentenced Drug Offenders, by Drug Type, West Virginia, FY 2006

Drug Type	Number	Percent
Powder cocaine	60	15.0%
Crack cocaine	218	54.5
Heroin	18	4.5
Marijuana	44	11.0
Methamphetamine	33	8.3
Other	27	6.8

Corrections

- According to the West Virginia Division of Corrections (DOC), as of June 30, 2007, there were 4,647 prisoners incarcerated in West Virginia.³⁶
- As of June 30, 2007, there were 646 inmates incarcerated in West Virginia DOC facilities for drug-related crimes, representing approximately 11% of the DOC inmates.³⁷

DOC Inmates Incarcerated for Drug-Related Crimes, West Virginia, June 30, 2007

Drug Offenses	# of Inmates	% of Total
Distribution to persons under eighteen schedule 1 or 2	6	0.1%
Distribution to persons under eighteen schedule 1, 2, 3	4	0.1
Manu./Deliver counterfeit narcotic substance schedule 1 or 2	2	0.0
Manu./Deliver counterfeit narcotic substance schedule 1, 2, 3	6	0.1
Manu./Deliver counterfeit narcotic substance schedule 4	1	0.0
Manufacturing/delivery/possession with intent schedule 1 or 2	258	4.4
Manufacturing/delivery/possession with intent schedule 1, 2, 3	242	4.1
Manufacturing/delivery/possession with intent schedule 4	19	0.3
Obtain controlled substance by fraud	23	0.4
Operating/Attempting to operate clandestine drug laboratory	83	1.4
Transportation of narcotic substance schedule 1 or 2	1	0.0
Transportation of narcotic substance schedule 1, 2, 3	1	0.0
Total	646	11.0

- The West Virginia DOC Parole Services had 2,170 offenders under supervision on June 30, 2007. The DOC Parole Services population includes West Virginia parolees, out-of-state parolees, and out-of-state probationers. Approximately 25% of the DOC Parole Services clients were charged with drug offenses.³⁸

Consequences of Use

- According to the El Paso Intelligence Center, there were 9 children in West Virginia affected by methamphetamine laboratories during 2007.³⁹

Treatment

- During 2006, there were 7,642 admissions to drug/alcohol treatment in West Virginia.⁴⁰ There were 6,383 admissions to treatment in 2005.⁴¹

Admissions to Drug/Alcohol Treatment, by Primary Substance, WV, 2005-2006

Drug Type	2005		2006	
	#	%	#	%
Alcohol only	2,216	34.7%	2,715	35.5%
Alcohol with secondary drug	1,012	15.9	1,326	17.4
Cocaine (smoked)	287	4.5	420	5.5
Cocaine (other route)	291	4.6	334	4.4
Marijuana	855	13.4	944	12.4
Heroin	252	3.9	230	3.0
Other opiates	1,081	16.9	1,249	16.3
PCP	n/a	n/a	2	0.0
Hallucinogens	4	0.1	5	0.1
Amphetamines	167	2.6	183	2.4
Tranquilizers	134	2.1	125	1.6
Sedatives	43	0.7	55	0.7

Inhalants	10	0.2	15	0.2
Other/none specified	31	0.5	39	0.5
Total	6,383	100.0	7,642	100.0

- According to 2005-2006 NSDUH data, approximately 42,000 (2.69%) West Virginia citizens reported needing but not receiving treatment for illicit drug use within the past year.⁴²

Sources

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³ West Virginia Governor Web site: <http://www.wv.gov/>

⁴ West Virginia Lt. Governor Web site: <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Senate1/President/president.cfm>

⁵ West Virginia Attorney General Web site: <http://www.wvago.us/>

⁶ West Virginia Secretary of State Web site: <http://www.wvsos.com>

⁷ U.S. Senate Web site, West Virginia Senators:

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⁸ U.S. House of Representatives Web site: <http://clerk.house.gov/>

⁹ West Virginia Web site: <http://www.wv.gov/>

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²⁰ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *State Estimates of Substance Use from the 2005-2006 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health*, February 2008: <http://oas.samhsa.gov/statesList.cfm>

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³⁰ Ibid.

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- ³⁶ West Virginia Division of Corrections, *FY 2006-2007 Annual Report*, December 2007:
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- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
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