

# WEST VIRGINIA

## Triennial Highway Safety Plan

2024-2026

**JIM JUSTICE**  
*Governor*  
State of West Virginia

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WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR'S HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM



*The “Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act” (known also as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, or BIL), amended the highway safety grant program (Section 402) and the National Priority Safety Program grants (Section 405).*

*The legislation significantly changed the application structure of the grant programs by replacing the annual Highway Safety Plan (HSP), which served as both a planning and application document, with a triennial (3-year) HSP and annual grant application.*

***This 2024–2026 Highway Safety Plan** documents West Virginia’s data-driven highway safety program and identifies the selected performance targets and countermeasure strategies for programming funds to meet those performance targets.*

# West Virginia Triennial Highway Safety Plan

*Federal Fiscal Year 2024–2026*

*prepared for*

**U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

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## Executive Summary

On behalf of Everett Frazier, Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety, we are pleased to present West Virginia's FFY2024–2026 Triennial Highway Safety Plan (3HSP), which will serve as a guide for reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries among all motorists on West Virginia's roadways.

The Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP), a section within DMV, developed this comprehensive three-year HSP to address the considerable traffic safety challenges facing the State. West Virginia's first 3HSP sets the priorities and performance targets for FFY2024–2026 to address these challenges.

For 10 years, the GHSP has focused on the basics with more direct involvement in the various activities and priorities, a practice that will continue again over the three years of West Virginia's first 3HSP. The priorities for FFY2024–2026 will be occupant protection, impaired driving, regional traffic safety programs, speed, distracted driving, motorcycle/all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safety, traffic records, and the coordination of law enforcement, State, community, and the private-sector. Programs for teen drivers will continue to be addressed within the first three priorities.

Our focus and collective efforts have paid off, as over the 10-year period from 2012 to 2021:

- Speeding fatalities have declined by 55.6 percent.
- Unbelted fatalities have fallen by 46 percent.
- Young drivers (ages 15 to 20) involved in fatal crashes have decreased by 43.8 percent.
- Alcohol-impaired fatalities have decreased by 30.9 percent.
- Traffic fatalities decreased by 17.4 percent and serious injuries have declined by 59.4 percent.

The GHSP, along with our highway safety partners and advocates, has worked tirelessly to raise the seat belt use rate from 49.5 percent in 2000 to historic high rates over 90 percent in 2018 and again in 2019 (90.5 and 90.2, respectively). No seat belt survey was conducted in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2021 survey conducted during the pandemic saw usage rates dip to 88.1 percent. However, West Virginia's seat belt use rate reached another historic high of 92.5 percent in 2022. This level of seat belt use and the decline in unbelted fatalities (53.9 percent from 2009 to 2018) is a direct result of the passage of a primary seat belt law that went into effect as of July 1, 2013, and the annual statewide Click It or Ticket campaign (CIOT) that emphasizes enforcement and media outreach. The GHSP will continue to review the seat belt programs and campaigns to determine the successful elements and use our public participation and engagement activities to identify other messages or programs which may result in increased seat belt use. In addition, the GHSP will continue to focus on appropriate solutions to address the male population that continues to have low usage rates.

Keeping children safe on West Virginia's roadways is a priority for the GHSP, and Child Passenger Safety (CPS) will continue to be an integral part of the GHSP Occupant Protection Program. West Virginia's CPS Program provides educational materials, training, and needed supplies to fulfill this mission. In addition, Regional Coordinators will continue to host local events, such as car seat checkup events, support existing fitting stations, and develop additional fitting stations, as well as implement earned media opportunities. Data

involving misuse and nonuse of CPS devices in West Virginia is not always easily accessible. To better track this data, the GHSP plans to encourage usage and implementation of the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCF) with Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) and fitting stations statewide, and to conduct statewide nonscientific CPS use rate surveys annually to adequately determine the needs of West Virginia's children. As of this submission, West Virginia has 45 permanent fitting stations and 240 CPSTs statewide, and 10 CPST Instructors (250 total), which is an overall increase of 74 from last year.

During the pandemic in 2020, alcohol-related fatalities at a blood alcohol content level (BAC) of 0.08 and above comprised 28.5 percent of all traffic fatalities versus 21.5 percent in 2019 and 19.4 percent in 2018. In 2021, the number of alcohol-related fatalities (BAC 0.08 or higher) dropped by 12 percent, accounting 23 percent of the total statewide fatalities. The vast majority of alcohol-related fatalities occur at night in single-vehicle, run-off-the-road crashes. The GHSP Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) Office will continue to reach out to law enforcement agencies about this problem. The statewide Driving Under the Influence (DUI) task force, formed to implement the Impaired Driving Strategic Plan, also focuses on this issue and includes the West Virginia State Police, local law enforcement agencies, GHSP, other State and community agencies, and advocacy groups. West Virginia's Evidence-Based Traffic Safety Enforcement Program, now referred to as the Traffic Safety Enforcement Program (TSEP) by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is detailed in Section 1.7 and in Section 3.0.

West Virginia became a Drug Evaluation Classification (DEC) State in 2013. Joey Koher of the Huntington, West Virginia Police Department was named as the State Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Coordinator the same year. Since this time, the number of DREs in the State has increased from 4 to 36 certified DREs as of May 2023. The GHSP oversees the DRE program with the goal to make a certified DRE available within one hour of every county seat of the State's 55 counties. As a result of increasing the number of DREs and an aggressive training program focused on Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) and Standard Field Sobriety Test (SFST) refresher training, drug-related impaired driving arrests have increased from 9 percent of all arrests in 2013 to 33.9 percent of all arrests in 2022.

Since the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act Federal transportation law, States are required to develop and implement the highway safety program using performance measures. State Highway Safety Offices (SHSO) and Departments of Transportation (DOT) must coordinate and have identical HSP and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) targets for the three common performance measures (i.e., fatalities, fatality rate, and serious injuries). This link is to harmonize performance measures that are common across programs of Department of Transportation (DOT) agencies to ensure the highway safety community is provided uniform measures of progress. The recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) continues this requirement, although it was waived for FFY2024. States were notified by NHTSA on May 31, 2023 that State DOTs have not had the opportunity to comment on proposed FHWA requirements that may be affected by NHTSA's regulation and therefore SHSOs and DOTs may submit non-identical targets for the common performance measures for the fiscal year 2024.

The BIL also continues the Section 405 National Priority Safety Program that includes occupant protection, State traffic safety information systems, impaired driving countermeasures, motorcyclist safety, distracted driving, nonmotorized safety, and adds two new grant programs on preventing roadside deaths, and driver and officer safety education.

The GHSP will continue to implement the 3HSP primarily through funding to the seven Regional Traffic Safety Programs and one Regional Law Enforcement Program that covers all 55 counties. While these regional programs must focus on the State's priority issues, they also are allowed some flexibility in funding

projects that are more specific to their particular location, such as the ATV crashes that are more common in the southern and southwestern parts of the State. The GHSP will continue to support and promote efforts to improve safety for all road users through a focus on occupant protection, impaired driving, and other laws that increase safety on roadways in West Virginia.





# West Virginia Governor’s Highway Safety Program Overview

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Governor’s Highway Safety Program (GHSP) is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities on West Virginia’s roadways by encouraging, promoting, and supporting highway safety throughout the State.

## GHSP Authority and Functions

The GHSP was created by Executive Order 6-A 67, issued on October 10, 1967. In January 1972, the program was transferred to the Office of Governor by Executive Order 2-72. On July 1, 1977, by Executive Order 4-77, the GHSP was transferred to the Governor’s Office of Economic and Community Development (GOECD) renamed Governor’s Office of Community and Industrial Development (GOCID) by Executive Order 1-85 issued on November 21, 1985, and again in 1992 to the West Virginia Development Office. On November 12, 1993, the GHSP was transferred to the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety by Executive Order 6-93. On February 1, 1998, Governor Cecil Underwood transferred the responsibility of the GHSP from the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety to its present location at the Division of Motor Vehicles of the West Virginia DOT.

The DMV Commissioner, Everett Frazier, is West Virginia’s Governor’s Highway Safety Representative. Commissioner Frazier keeps the Governor abreast of program activities' effectiveness and has the authority to ensure the GHSP has the appropriate staffing and is equipped to carry out the program, including managing Federal funds; fostering meaningful participation; coordinating within the State on highway safety-related activities; having access to highway safety information contained in other State data systems; and assisting other State agencies and local communities to develop and carry out highway safety strategies.



## GHSP Staff and Responsibilities

### *Division Director (Bob Tipton)*

The Division Director is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the programs and activities of the GHSP in accordance with Federal and State rules, regulations, and guidelines. Funding for the position is 50 percent State and 50 percent Federal.

### *Division Manager (Barbara Lobert)*

The Division Manager is responsible for administration of all Federal highway safety funding. The position also is responsible for the Triennial Highway Safety Plan and Annual Report content. Funding is 100 percent Federal.

### *Community Development Specialist Senior (Amy Boggs)*

This position supervises the two Community Development Specialist Program Manager positions. This position is responsible for the direct management of grants, plus currently serves as the statewide Occupant Protection Coordinator, Child Passenger Safety Coordinator, and Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator. Funding is 100 percent Federal.

### *Community Development Specialist (Heather Kessel)*

This Program Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of grants and serves as the statewide Distracted Driving Coordinator. She is also responsible for programming/activities addressing Speed and Young Drivers. Funding is 100 percent Federal.

### *Community Development Specialist (Steven Jarvis)*

This Program Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of grants and serves as the statewide Impaired Driving Coordinator. He is also responsible for programming/activities dealing with Older Drivers and Drowsy Drivers. Funding is 100 percent Federal.

### *Database Administrator (Tyler Thaxton)*

The Traffic Records Coordinator performs technical and analytical research to obtain statistics and conducts evaluation. The traffic safety data collected by the Coordinator is reported to the GHSP and other agencies. Oversees E-citation and ReportBeam projects. The Coordinator serves as Chair of the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee. Funding is 100 percent Federal.

### *Public Information Specialist (Aimee Cantrell)*

This position serves as the primary spokesperson for the GHSP and is responsible for all public relations and events planning. Coordinates, plans, and develops all types of paid and earned media, as well as graphic design and website development/maintenance. Funding is 100 percent Federal.

### *Business Operations Assistant Senior (Trish Anderson)*

This position is the Administrative Assistant to the Director and GHSP Office Manager. Funding is 50 percent Federal and 50 percent State.

### *Business Operations Assistant Senior (Donnie Hale)*

This position is the Program Coordinator of the statewide Motorcycle Safety Awareness Program and ATV Safety Program. Funding is 100 percent State.

### *Business Operations Assistant Senior (Mary Jarrell)*

This position is the Motorcycle Safety Training Coordinator for the State. Funding is 100 percent State.

### *Accountant/Auditor Senior (William King)*

This position serves as the Fiscal Officer for the GHSP. Funding is 50 percent Federal and 50 percent State.

### *Highway Accountant/Auditor II (Tonya Smith)*

This position is the Assistant to the Fiscal Officer for GHSP. Funding is 50 percent Federal and 50 percent State.

### *Law Enforcement Liaison (Dean Capehart)*

The position is responsible for the coordination of all law enforcement activities with GHSP projects and programs, including law enforcement training. The individual serves as the Project Director of the DTAS Program and provides assistance to law enforcement agencies as needed with enforcement events. This position is contractual through a grant with the City of Beckley.

### *DTAS Program Coordinator (Tiffany Hart)*

This position coordinates the statewide DTAS Program for West Virginia law enforcement officers. This position is contractual through a grant with the City of Beckley.

### *DRE Program Coordinator (Joey Koher)*

This position coordinates the statewide Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Program and is funded through the City of Huntington Regional Traffic Safety Program grant.

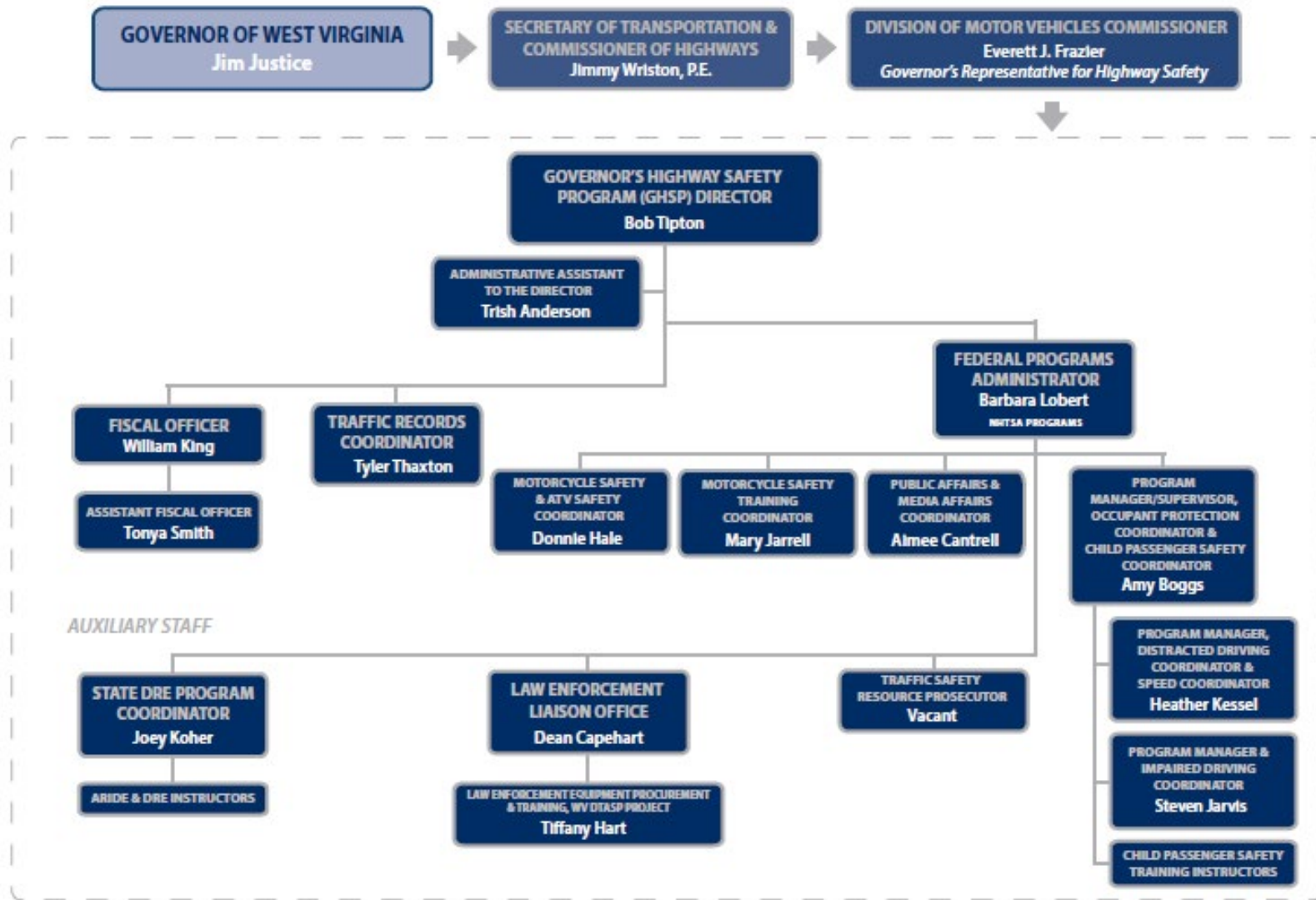
### *Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (Vacant)*

This position coordinates traffic safety training for prosecutors and other related highway safety professionals statewide and is funded through a Highway Safety grant with the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The DMV is currently seeking a person to fill this position.

Figure 1 shows a visual representation of the organization of the GHSP, and Figure 2 shows where the GHSP fits within the DMV.

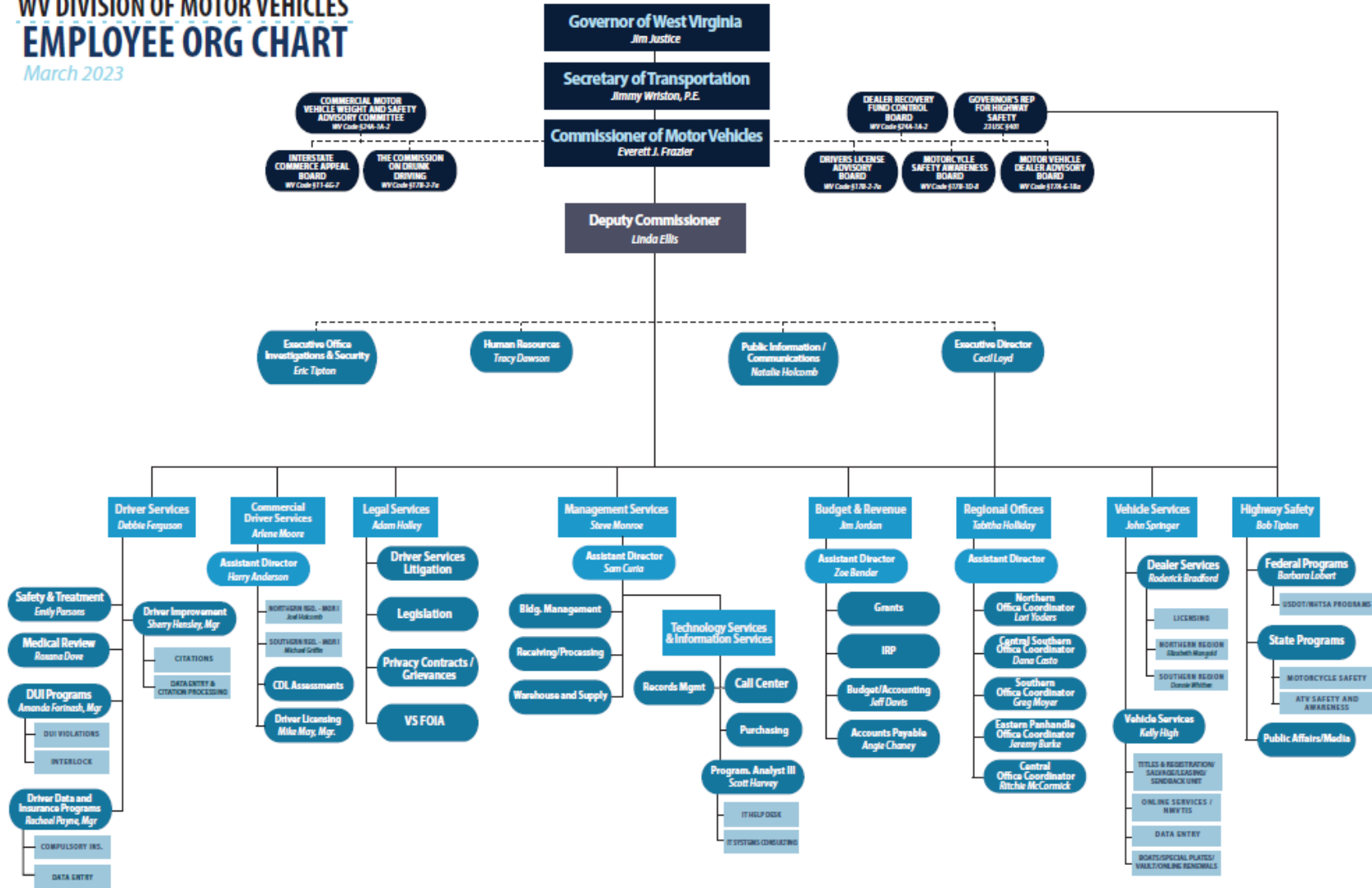
Figure 1 Governor's Highway Safety Program

*The Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP)  
Organizational Chart from the Governor to Program Employees*



**Figure 2** Division of Motor Vehicles  
Governor's Office and DMV Heads

**WV DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES  
EMPLOYEE ORG CHART**  
March 2023







# Highway Safety Planning Process & Problem Identification

## Planning Process

The FFY2024–2026 3HSP outlines the GHSP’s performance targets and measures and details the countermeasure strategies for which the State’s Sections 402, 405, and other highway safety funds may be used. Performance targets were established by reviewing five years of data to determine trends and establishing reasonable benchmarks the GHSP believes can be accomplished. Activities/performance measures are based on results of past activities, and developed collaboratively by GHSP staff, Regional Traffic Safety Coordinators (RTSC), Regional Law Enforcement Programs and other HSP partners. They also are based on the data-driven State Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), which was developed by the West Virginia Division of Highways in collaboration with several State safety partners. Recently conducted program area assessments conducted by NHTSA for traffic records and occupant protection provided the State with valuable insight into a variety of issues and were used in the development of this plan. Additionally, the GHSP is open to any new and creative ideas to reduce motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

RTSCs conduct a large number of specific activities throughout the year as directed by the GHSP and described in the Regional Traffic Safety Programs section of this Plan. They update the GHSP via a monthly activity report detailing their progress and accomplishments. Coordinators identify problems based on a review of data specific to their geographical region. While all regions of the State share similar problems (e.g., nonuse of safety belts and impaired driving), each Coordinator is required to pinpoint where those problems are most prevalent in their region, what factors contribute to it, and what measures can be taken to improve the problem. RTSCs also are expected to identify other highway safety issues in their region that may not rise to the level of a statewide concern (e.g., pedestrian injuries and fatalities, ATV crashes, etc.); and establish performance targets for those unique problems. The GHSP conducts two in-person roundtable meetings during the year with all the coordinators and all grantees as needed to keep everyone updated on current events, requirements, share new ideas, review, and assess the statewide and individual Regional Traffic Safety performance targets.

Applicants for highway safety funds (i.e., city, county, and State agencies) must clearly identify a highway safety problem and support it with evidence. The applicants also must identify and define measurable objectives and proven countermeasures that will address the problem and ensure their proposals are in line with the goals and objectives in the 3HSP.

The GHSP encourages all law enforcement agencies receiving highway safety funds to follow the guidelines established for vehicular pursuits issued by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). A survey of these law enforcement agencies will be conducted by the GHSP to determine which agencies have guidelines for vehicular pursuits, and if not, to encourage them to adopt the IACP model.

## Alignment With West Virginia’s 2022–2026 Strategic Highway Safety Plan

The West Virginia Department of Highway’s Traffic Engineering Division is responsible for, and oversees, the SHSP update and implementation process. A Safety Management Task Force (SMTF) comprised of 39 agencies has finalized the update of the State’s SHSP, which covers 2022–2026. The SMTF is now in the process of developing action plans to implement the strategies identified in it. Members of the SMTF represent the following agencies and organizations:

- AAA West Virginia
- Aeronautics Commission
- Bel-O-Mar Regional Council
- Department of Education
- Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health—Violence and Injury Prevention Program
- Division of Motor Vehicles
- Federal Highway Administration
- Governor’s Highway Safety Program
- Health Statistics Center, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
- Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Region 3
- Public Service Commission of West Virginia
- Regional Intergovernmental Council
- Sheriff’s Association
- State Rail Authority
- Students Against Destructive Decisions
- West Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards
- West Virginia Prosecuting Attorneys Institute
- West Virginia Truckers Association
- Wood-Washington-Wirt Interstate Planning Commission
- AARP West Virginia
- Alcohol Beverage Control Administration
- Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission
- Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health—Office of EMS
- Division of Highways
- Fayette/Raleigh Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
- Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Commission
- KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- Public Transit Division
- Rural Emergency Trauma Institute
- State Firemen’s Association
- State Police
- Towing and Recovery Association
- West Virginia Parkway Authority
- West Virginia Public Service Training
- West Virginia University—Local Technical Assistance Program

The objective of the 2022–2026 SHSP is to achieve zero fatalities by 2050 and ultimately zero serious injuries on the State’s roadways by reducing fatalities and injuries by 4 percent annually over the next 5 years. Based upon an analysis of crash data, the SHSP emphasis areas listed below, which represent 98 percent of all fatalities and 95 percent of all serious injuries, were selected for the newest plan update. Improving highway safety data also was included as an emphasis area because of the importance of various traffic records data sources in determining the emphasis areas strategies and action steps, as well as tracking and assessing their progress.



- Speeding and Aggressive Driving.
- Roadway Departure.
- Occupant Protection.
- Older Driver (65+) Involved.
- Alcohol- and Drug-Impaired Driving.
- Intersections—Regionally Focused.
- Pedestrians—Regionally Focused.
- Improving Highway Safety Data.

Since the Federally mandated safety performance measures requirement began in 2017, West Virginia officials have established safety performance measure targets (number of fatalities, number of serious injuries, fatalities per 100 million VMT, rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT, and combined number of nonmotorized fatalities and serious injuries) and coordinated the targets with to ensure consistency between the SHSP, HSP, and HSIP. As required, these annual targets were established for consistency with the 2022–2026 West Virginia SHSP. This process will continue with the adoption of this updated SHSP. The GHSP’s programs and activities influenced, and are reflected in, the alcohol- and drug-impaired driving, occupant protection, speeding/aggressive driving, and highway safety data emphasis areas’ strategies and action steps.

### *Evidence-Based Traffic Safety Enforcement Program*

A significant portion of West Virginia’s Highway Safety grant funds are awarded to law enforcement agencies each year through the Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators and the West Virginia State Police. The GHSP has developed policies and procedures to ensure enforcement resources are used efficiently and effectively to support the goals of the State’s highway safety program. West Virginia incorporates an evidence-based approach in its statewide TSEP through the following components:

## Data-Driven Problem Identification

In the statewide problem identification process used in the development of the 3HSP, data analyses are used to identify who is overinvolved in crashes and when, where, and why crashes are occurring. Key results from the problem identification are presented in the statewide and individual program area sections of the 3HSP.

All enforcement agencies receiving grant funding also must use a data-driven approach to identify the enforcement issues in their jurisdictions. Data documenting the identified highway safety issue(s) and proven strategies that will be implemented to address the problem must be included in the funding application submitted to the GHSP.

Each Regional Traffic Safety Coordinator and Regional Law Enforcement grantee will assign enforcement activities based upon measurable data provided to them by the GHSP, as well as any problem identification and data provided by the subgrantees. The RTSC and the Regional Law Enforcement grantees require subgrantees to submit funding requests, usually quarterly, and are then provided with award letters and additional instructions for the enforcement they are approved to work. All documentation is kept on file in the grantees' offices and reviewed periodically during file reviews conducted by the GHSP Program Managers. All subgrantees are required to complete an agency contract each grant year. The expected enforcement effort will be by written agreement (and included as part of their grant file), and the agency must address the problem detailed in the agreement. The enforcement effort and progress will be monitored by the GHSP Program Managers.

## Implementation of Evidence-Based Strategies

To ensure enforcement resources are deployed effectively, law enforcement agencies are directed to implement data-driven, evidence-based strategies. The 3HSP narrative outlines West Virginia's broad approach to address key problem enforcement areas and guides local jurisdictions to examine local data and develop appropriate countermeasures (using NHTSA's Countermeasures That Work and other proven resources) for their specific problem area(s). Examples of proven strategies include targeted enforcement focusing on specific violations, such as distracted driving and speeding, or on specific times of day when more violations occur, such as nighttime impaired driving road checks and seat belt enforcement. High-visibility enforcement, including participation in national seat belt and impaired driving mobilizations, also is required. Several State-mandated enforcement mobilizations also are included. The Data-Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) model and other strategies that use data to identify high-crash locations also are proven strategies. By implementing strategies that research has shown to be effective, more efficient use is made of the available resources, and the success of enforcement efforts is enhanced. Multijurisdictional enforcement efforts are encouraged and supported by the GHSP.



Details regarding West Virginia's occupant protection-related evidence-based enforcement strategies are on pages 54 through 57, and similar information for impaired driving enforcement strategies are on pages 72 through 73. Further details on other enforcement efforts can be found in other program areas.

## Continuous Monitoring

Continuous monitoring of the enforcement grants is another important element of West Virginia's evidence-based TSEP. Enforcement agencies' deployment strategies are continuously evaluated and adjusted to accommodate shifts and changes in their local highway safety problems. Several methods are used to follow up on programs funded by the GHSP. The agencies receiving grant funding are required to detail program

progress in their activity reports which include data on the activities conducted (e.g., areas and times worked, number of citations and arrests issued). Funding decisions for subsequent years are based on the effectiveness and performance of the enforcement project.

Enforcement grants also are monitored throughout the year by the six Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators for the GHSP. Enforcement activities and efforts are monitored continuously, not only from the GHSP Program Manager and the Regional Coordinators, but also by agency LELs and the State LELs. (The GHSP requires each law enforcement agency that is a recipient of Highway Safety funding to assign an officer to serve as the agency LEL.) Contact with enforcement agencies is maintained through meetings, conferences, grant monitoring sessions, phone calls, and press events. Enforcement deployment strategies are continuously evaluated for their impact and effectiveness, and modifications are made where warranted. A citation/arrest database is used to track and monitor enforcement efforts. Special projects are implemented as needed.

The GHSP is aware of the issue of unsecured loads raised in the FAST Act and will discuss the dangers of unsecured loads with all Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators and their law enforcement partners to remind them to enforce the laws regarding unsecured loads.

### Highway Safety Planning Timeline

Figure 3 shows the timeline followed by the GHSP in developing the HSP and Annual Report starting with the development of the problem identification report, the development of the 405 applications, and a staff review of submitted grant requests. Several roundtable discussions with highway safety partners are held to ensure the plan and activities are on track to improve traffic safety.

**Figure 3 HSP Planning Process**

January–February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct data and public participation<sup>1</sup> analysis</li> <li>Prior Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) Annual Report due on January 31</li> <li>Develop Problem Identification Report for next FFY</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin discussion with WVDOT about next FFY coordinated performance targets</li> <li>Conduct Grantee Roundtable (all grantees)</li> <li>Begin second FFY grantee monitoring visits (all grantees)</li> </ul>
April–June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop or update 2024–2026 Highway Safety Plan (3HSP)</li> <li>Develop Annual Grant Application and 405 Applications</li> <li>3HSP due to Governor’s Office for approval by June 1, 2023</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit 3HSP to NHTSA by July 1</li> <li>Annual Grant Application and Section 405 Grant Applications due to Governor’s Office for approval by July 1</li> <li>Second FFY grantee monitoring visits (all grantees) completed in July</li> </ul>
August–September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit Annual Grant Application and Section 405 Grant Applications to NHTSA by August 1</li> <li>Grantee application review period</li> <li>Grants awarded by September 15</li> </ul>

October–November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants begin on October 1</li> <li>• Conduct Grantee Roundtable in October (all grantees)</li> <li>• Grantee prior FFY Annual Reports due on November 1</li> <li>• Final prior FFY reimbursement requests due on November 15</li> <li>• First FFY grantee monitoring visits (all grantees) in October and November</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop prior FFY Annual Report</li> <li>• End of prior FFY Grantee Monitoring Report due</li> </ul>
Due to Program Manager on 20 <sup>th</sup> of each month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request for Reimbursement for previous month</li> <li>• Monthly Activities, CPS, and Media Reports</li> <li>• Calendar Information for upcoming month (also sent to Business Operations Assistant)</li> <li>• Regional Fatality and LE Activity Report</li> <li>• Equipment Log</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Public participation and engagement activities are identified and conducted throughout the year at the State and regional levels.

### Primary Data Sources

West Virginia relies on the NHTSA/Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) database; ReportBeam Crash data, housed in the West Virginia DOT Crash Database (reported by law enforcement agencies); and telephone and observational surveys as the primary HSP data sources. Other supplementary sources of data and information are described in the Supporting Data section.

### Supporting Data

Additional data sources used by the GHSP and safety stakeholders include the NHTSA FARS and STSI websites, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) VMT data, West Virginia Observational Survey of Seat Belt Use, U.S. Census data, American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates data, NHTSA assessments, research reports and Traffic Safety Facts, other State HSPs and Annual Reports, and various State of West Virginia agency databases and reports.

The majority of the traffic-related data (crashes, fatalities, and injuries) is collected by West Virginia’s 293 law enforcement agencies. The largest agency is the West Virginia State Police that has 656 sworn officers of which 459 are assigned to patrol duties housed in 7 troops and further divided into 60 detachments. Each of the 55 West Virginia counties has a sheriff’s department varying in size from 3 officers to 104 officers. There are 164 municipal police departments, with the largest having 173 officers and the smallest having 1 officer. All these agencies have the responsibility of enforcing traffic laws. Currently, West Virginia has 3,418 sworn police officers of which 2,731 are assigned to patrol functions.

Table 1 lists the data sources used to develop West Virginia’s HSP.



**Table 1 HSP Data Sources**

Federal	West Virginia	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)</li> <li>• State Traffic Safety Information (STSI)</li> <li>• FHWA VMT Data</li> <li>• U.S. Census Data</li> <li>• American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates</li> <li>• NHTSA Assessments Reports and MAP-21/FAST Act/BIL Guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crash and Injury</li> <li>• Licensing</li> <li>• Vehicle</li> <li>• Citation</li> <li>• Court System</li> <li>• Treatment</li> <li>• Trauma Registry</li> <li>• Division of Motor Vehicles Annual Report 2022</li> <li>• Alcohol Sales—Underage Buy Rate</li> <li>• Strategic Highway Safety Plan</li> <li>• State Legislation and Policy</li> <li>• Population</li> <li>• Observational Surveys of Seat Belt Use</li> <li>• Attitudinal Surveys</li> <li>• Sobriety Checkpoints, Directed/Saturation Patrols</li> <li>• Department of Economic Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publications and Studies (i.e., Countermeasures That Work)</li> <li>• Other States' HSPs and Annual Reports</li> </ul>

*Triennial Performance Measures*

Table 2 identifies the program areas with related core performance and behavioral measures, which will be emphasized in West Virginia’s FFY2024–2026 HSP, and how each will be measured. These performance measures mirror the 11 outcome and one behavior performance measures developed by NHTSA in collaboration with the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA). Additionally, West Virginia has chosen to report on urban and rural fatalities per 100 million VMT.

**Table 2 Performance Measures FFY2024–2026**

Program Area	Core Performance Measures	Measured By
Overall	C-1 • Decrease fatalities	• Number of traffic-related fatalities
	C-2 • Decrease serious injuries	• Number of traffic-related serious injuries
	C-3 • Decrease fatality rate per 100 million VMT	• Traffic fatalities per 100 million VMT
Occupant Protection	• Decrease rural fatalities/VMT	• Rural fatality rate per 100 million VMT
	• Decrease urban fatalities/VMT	• Urban fatality rate per 100 million VMT
Impaired Driving	C-4 • Decrease unrestrained fatalities	• Number of unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities, all seat positions
	• Increase observed belt use	• Observed belt use for passenger vehicles, front seat outboard occupants
Speeding	C-5 • Decrease fatalities with BAC at 0.08 or above	• Number of fatalities involving a driver or motorcycle operator with BAC at 0.08 and greater
	C-6 • Decrease speeding-related fatalities	• Number of speed-related fatalities
	C-7 • Decrease motorcyclist fatalities	• Number of motorcyclist fatalities

Program Area		Core Performance Measures	Measured By
Motorcycle Safety	C-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities</li> </ul>
Novice Drivers	C-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease drivers 20 or younger involved in fatal crashes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of drivers age 20 or younger involved in fatal crashes</li> </ul>
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety	C-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease pedestrian fatalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of pedestrian fatalities</li> </ul>
	C-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease bicyclist fatalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of bicyclist fatalities</li> </ul>
Older Road Users	WV-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease older road user (ages 65 and above) involved in fatal crashes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of older road ages 65 and above involved in fatal crashes</li> </ul>
Roadside Safety*	WV-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase knowledge of Move Over law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent increase in responses to Move Over attitudinal survey questions</li> </ul>

Note: A performance target to decrease roadside first responded related fatalities will be established for FFY2025 and 2026 after the GHSP and their partners identify and collect the required data in FFY2024.

### Countermeasure and Strategy Selection Process

At least two times throughout the year, GHSP staff conducts roundtable meetings with all Regional Traffic Safety Program staff, representatives of the Regional Law Enforcement Program in Region 6, the WVSP Project Director and Assistant, the State LEL, and other local stakeholders to review recent crash trends and emerging issues, gather input on safety problems, review grant activity, and discuss effective countermeasures. In addition to these focused discussions, GHSP also serves on the SHSP emphasis area teams that discuss countermeasure implementation and ways to solve the State’s most significant traffic safety issues as trends emerge or new issues arise. Information gained from these meetings, coupled with the staff’s knowledge of the data, literature, and the State’s cultural and political climate, all serve to inform the selection of countermeasures and strategies for the HSP.

### Application Process

#### Description of WV GHSP’s Grantee Application Process

West Virginia highway safety grants are initiated by completing a grant application for Federal highway safety funds. These applications are to be submitted annually to the GHSP. The GHSP will make an announcement as to the date the application is due. The grant application process runs from approximately May through October of each year.

The application consists of multiple sections. There are two different versions of the grant application—one for regional programs and one for all other projects.

#### 1. Regional Grant Application:

- a. Page 1: Cover sheet—includes contact information for the Authorized Official, Project Director, and Financial Officer.
- b. Page 2: Performance Goals.
- c. Page 3: Required Activities.
- d. Page 4: Fiscal Summary (Budget Sheets).
- e. Page 5–7: Conditions and Assurances.

f. Page 8: Special Conditions (when applicable)

**2. Other Grant Project Application (non-regional):**

- a. Page 1: Cover sheet, including contact information for the Authorized Official, Project Director, and Financial Officer
- b. Page 2: Problem Identification
- c. Page 3: Project Objectives and Activities
- d. Page 4: Fiscal Summary (Budget Sheets)
- e. Page 5–7: Conditions and Assurances
- f. Page 8: Special Conditions (when applicable)

Upon receiving the applications, the GHSP staff will:

- 1. Promptly acknowledge and review for completeness.
- 2. Assess the overall need and impact of the project.
- 3. Evaluate how the specific project will satisfy the goals and objectives established in the State's Highway Safety Plan (HSP).
- 4. Review all grant applications and make recommendations of projects to be funded to the GHSP Director.

Criteria used for the evaluation of these projects may include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Compliance of the proposed project with the priority programs delineated in the State Highway Safety Plan.
- 2. Probability that the project will achieve its goal(s) and objective(s).
- 3. The project provides for adequate fiscal responsibility.
- 4. The project conforms with all pertinent rules and regulations.

The GHSP Director will make one of the following recommendations in regards to each application:

- 1. Approve the project for recommendation to the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety.
- 2. Approve the project for recommendation to the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety with conditions and/or amendments to the application.
- 3. Return the project for revision. The required revision will be appended to the application.
- 4. Return the application as not conforming to the requirements of the Highway Safety Program or for lack of funds available.

The recommended grants will be forwarded to the Governor's Representative for his/her decision as to which projects will be funded. The authority to make grants is vested only by the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety (or the Governor).

## Grantee Risk Assessment

The GHSP, as a pass-through entity, will issue grants to its subrecipients using the following guidance found in 2 CFR 200.331 and Risk Assessment tool and procedures in the GHSP Administrative Manual. These procedures will apply to any subaward given by the initial subrecipient.

- All requirements imposed by the pass-through entity on the subrecipient so that the Federal award is used in accordance with Federal statutes, regulations and the terms and conditions of the Federal award and any additional requirements that the pass-through entity imposes on the subrecipient in order for the pass-through entity to meet its own responsibility to the Federal awarding agency, including identification of any required financial and performance reports.
- A requirement that the subrecipient permit the pass-through entity and auditors to have access to the subrecipient's records and financial statements as necessary for the pass-through entity to meet the requirements of this part; and appropriate terms and conditions concerning closeout of the subaward.

The GHSP will evaluate each subrecipient's risk of noncompliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward for purposes of determining the appropriate subrecipient monitoring described in paragraphs d) and e) of this section, which may include consideration of such factors as:

- The subrecipient's prior experience with the same or similar subawards.
  - The results of previous audits, including whether or not the subrecipient receives a Single Audit in accordance with Subpart F-Audit Requirements of this part, and the extent to which the same or similar subaward has been audited as a major program.
  - Whether the subrecipient has new personnel or new or substantially changed systems.
  - The extent and results of Federal awarding agency monitoring (e.g., if the subrecipient also receives Federal awards directly from a Federal awarding agency).
- Consider imposing specific subaward conditions upon a subrecipient if appropriate as described in §200.207-specific conditions.
  - Monitor the activities of the subrecipient as necessary to ensure that the subaward is used for authorized purposes, in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward; and that subaward performance goals are achieved. Pass-through entity monitoring of the subrecipient must include:
    - Reviewing financial and performance reports required by the pass-through entity.
    - Following-up and ensuring that the subrecipient takes timely and appropriate action on all deficiencies pertaining to the Federal award provided to the subrecipient from the pass-through entity detected through audits, onsite reviews, and other means.
    - Issuing a management decision for audit findings pertaining to the Federal award provided to the subrecipient from the pass-through entity as required by §200.521 Management decision.
  - Depending upon the pass-through entity's assessment of risk posed by the subrecipient (as described in paragraph b) of this section), the following monitoring tools may be useful for the pass-through entity to

ensure proper accountability and compliance with program requirements and achievement of performance goals:

- Providing subrecipients with training and technical assistance on program-related matters.
  - Performing onsite reviews of the subrecipient’s program operations.
  - Arranging for agreed-upon-procedures engagements as described in §200.425 Audit services.
- Verify that every subrecipient is audited as required by Subpart F-Audit Requirements of this part when it is expected that the subrecipient’s Federal awards expended during the respective fiscal year equaled or exceeded the threshold set forth in §200.501 Audit requirements.
  - Consider whether the results of the subrecipient’s audits, onsite reviews, or other monitoring indicate conditions that necessitate adjustments to the pass-through entity’s own records.
  - Consider taking enforcement action against noncompliant subrecipients as described in §200.338 Remedies for noncompliance of this part and in program regulations.

## Problem Identification

### Demographic Trends

West Virginia’s geographic area encompasses 24,041.15 square miles and ranks 41st in area. The largest county is Randolph with 1,039.70 square miles and the smallest is Hancock with 82.61 square miles.<sup>1</sup> The State has 38,879 miles of public highway with the vast majority being rural two-lane roadways.<sup>2</sup>

West Virginia’s mountainous terrain, narrow roadways, and small shoulder areas also create special highway safety challenges. West Virginia has 33 non-Federal, short-term, acute care hospitals, two of which are Level I Trauma Centers, two are Level II, three are Level III, 25 are Level IV Trauma Centers, and one hospital which is not certified.<sup>3,4</sup>

The U.S. Census estimates the State’s 2021 population is 1,801,049 (2017–2021, 5-year estimates), which represents a decrease of 2.5 percent from 1,846,372 reported in the 2011, 5-year estimates U.S. Census.

Table 3 shows West Virginia’s population having slightly more females than males which has been consistent over the last 10 years as illustrated in Figure 4. The population distribution by race in Figure 5 shows an overwhelming majority of the population in the state is white, although there has been a slight increase in the percent of Hispanic population in recent years. Table 4 shows the number of licensed drivers decreased by 2.7 percent while the number of registered motor vehicles increased by 1.2 percent, and the VMT per 100 million decreased by 16.4 percent from 2012 to 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/randolphcountywestvirginia,WV,hancockcountywestvirginia/LND110220>).

<sup>2</sup> Federal Highway Administration (<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics/2020/pdf/hm10.pdf>).

<sup>3</sup> American Hospital Directory ([https://www.ahd.com/state\\_statistics.html](https://www.ahd.com/state_statistics.html)).

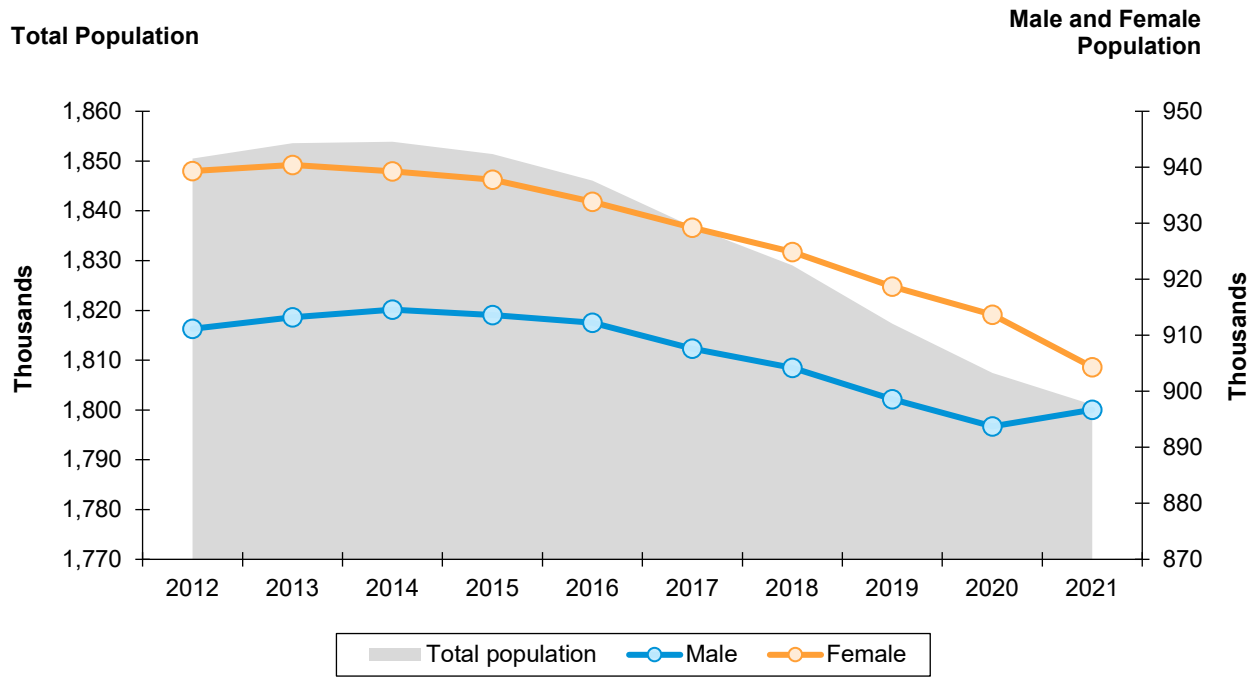
<sup>4</sup> Bureau of Public Health/Office of EMS website (<https://www.wvoems.org>).

**Table 3 Population**

Demographic Group	Population
Total population	1,801,049
Male	896,723
Female	904,326
Black alone	61,143
White alone	1,658,405
Hispanic (of any race)	30,196
Asian alone	13,882

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates Data Profiles.

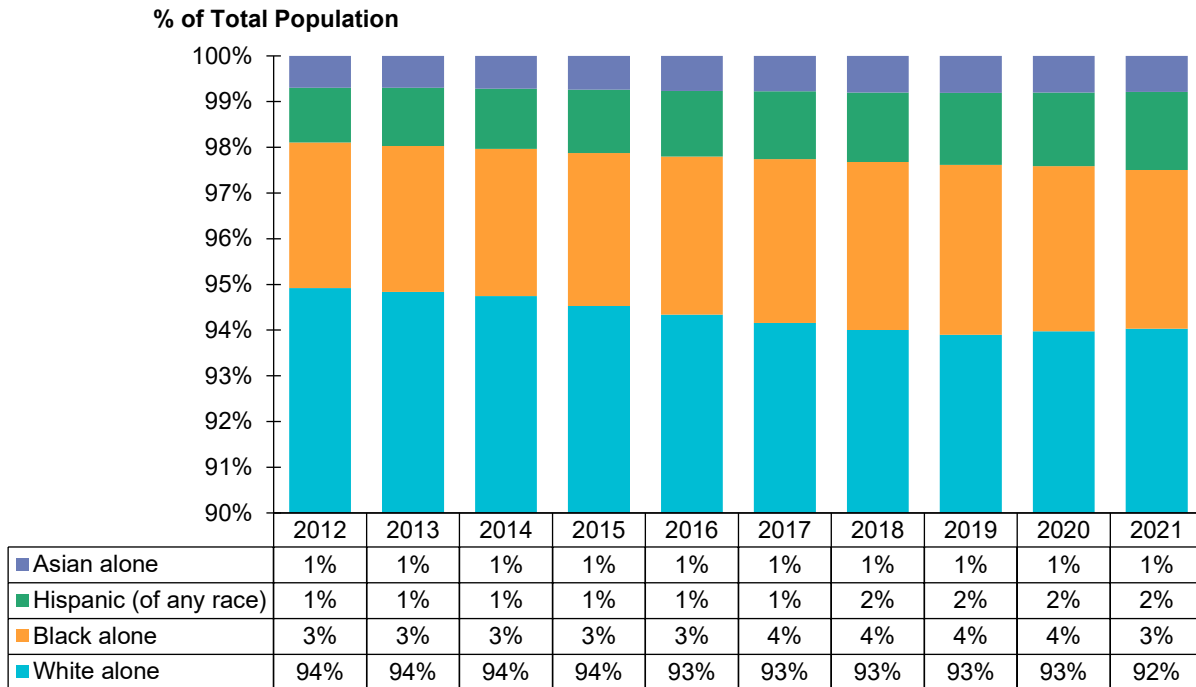
**Figure 4 Population Trend**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates Data Profiles.



**Figure 5 Race**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates Data Profiles.

**Table 4 Licensing and Motor Vehicles**

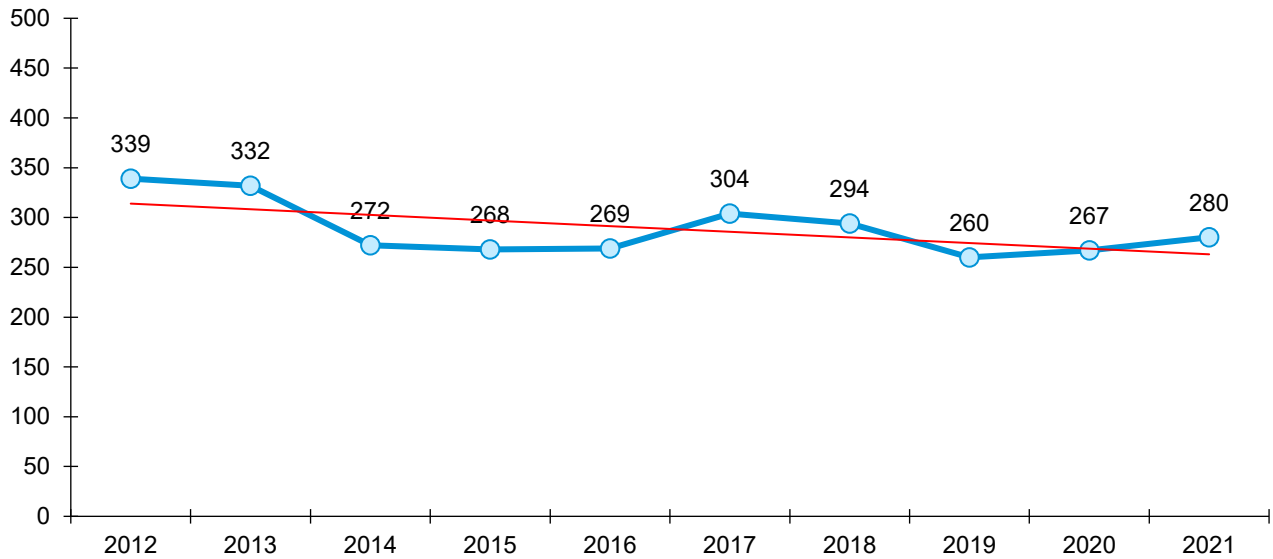
Year	Licensed Drivers	Registered Motor Vehicles	Vehicle Miles Traveled (in Millions)
2012	1,309,123	1,799,664	19,226
2013	1,309,384	1,827,964	19,232
2014	1,305,871	1,864,143	19,117
2015	1,304,464	1,733,889	19,827
2016	1,300,878	1,838,160	19,539
2017	1,291,271	1,867,478	19,072
2018	1,280,937	1,891,665	19,447
2019	1,277,566	1,812,503	19,077
2020	1,242,767	1,647,285	16,054
2021	1,273,268	1,820,830	16,079
2022	1,281,869	1,930,724	NA

Source: West Virginia DMV Annual Report 2022, FHWA Highway Statistics Series, Table VM-2.

### West Virginia's Traffic Safety Challenges

State data indicate 280 roadway users died on the State's roadways in 2021, representing a 4.9 percent increase from 267 fatalities in 2020 (Figure 6). As of 2021, West Virginia has experienced a 17.4 percent decline in the number of traffic-related fatalities since 2012.

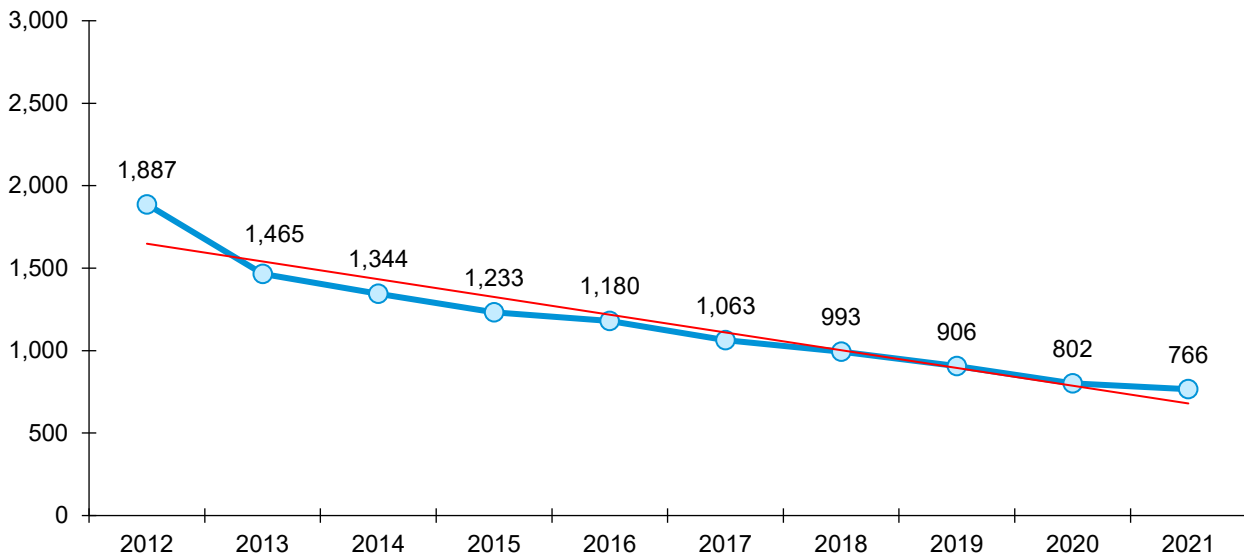
**Figure 6 Traffic Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA, State Traffic Safety Information (STSI), 2023.

Figure 7 shows serious injuries between 2012 and 2021. The trend has been downward since 2012, and serious injuries declined by 4.5 percent from 2020 to 2021. From 2012 to 2021, serious injuries have declined by 59.4 percent.

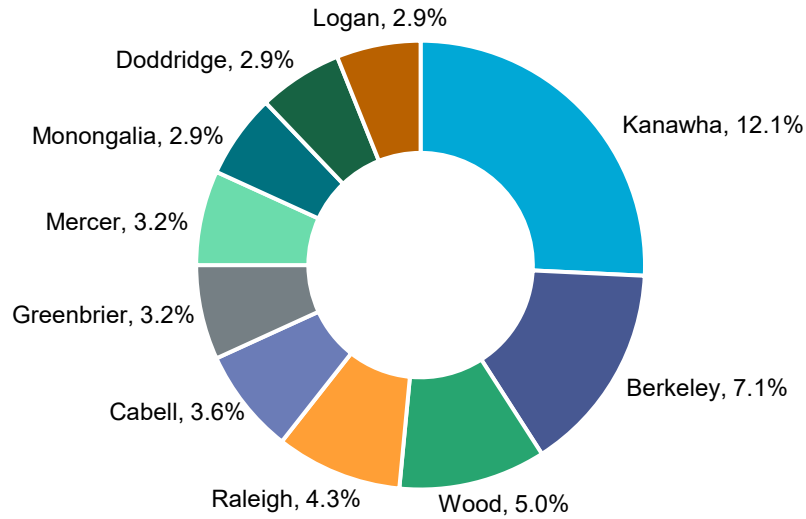
**Figure 7 Traffic Serious Injuries**



Source: West Virginia DOT, Division of Highways, 2022, GHSA Annual Report FFY2022.

Figure 8 shows the top 10 counties where fatalities occurred in 2021. Kanawha County, the most populous county in West Virginia, was the site of 12.1 percent (34) of the State's fatalities in 2021.

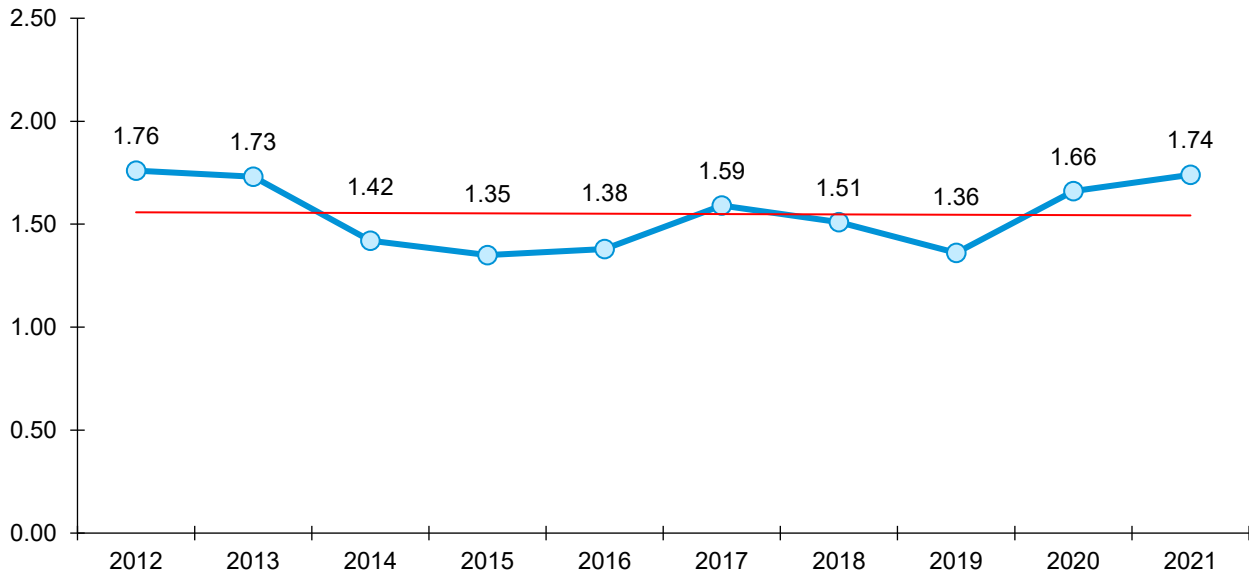
**Figure 8 Fatalities**  
*Top 10 Counties in 2021*



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

The State’s trend for fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has seen an overall decline since 2012, as shown in Figure 9. From 2020 to 2021, there was a 4.8 percent increase from 1.66 fatalities per 100 million VMT to 1.74.

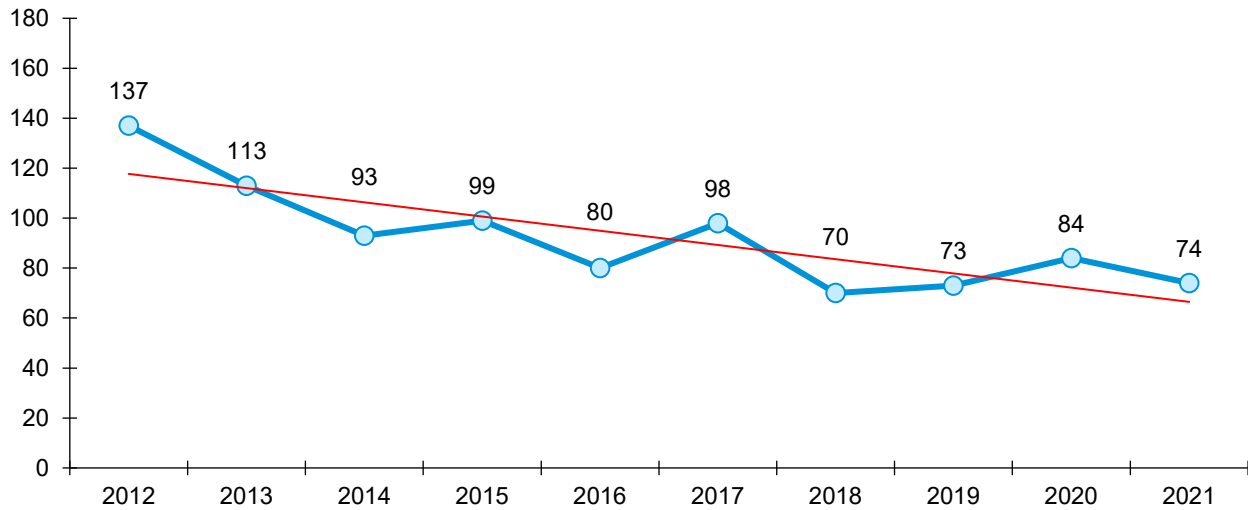
**Figure 9 Fatalities per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

The trend of unbelted fatalities fluctuated over the past ten years. Figure 10 shows that unbelted fatalities decreased by 11.9 percent from 2020 to 2021 and increased by 6 percent from 2018 to 2021. Overall, the number of unbelted fatalities has fallen by 46 percent from 2012 to 2021.

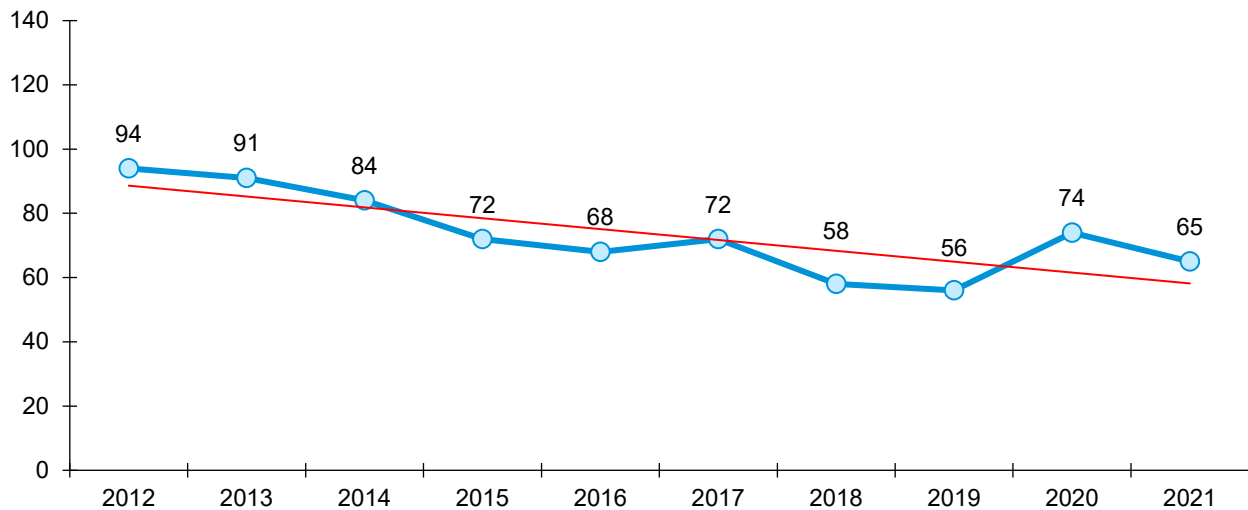
**Figure 10 Unbelted Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

Alcohol-impaired driving fatalities dropped from 74 to 65, indicating a 12.2 percent decrease from 2020 to 2021, as shown in Figure 11. From 2012 to 2016, alcohol-impaired fatalities decreased every year before increasing slightly in 2017 and 2020, and then going down to 65 in 2021. Alcohol-impaired fatalities with a BAC of 0.08 or higher saw an overall decline of 30.9 percent in the 10-year period from 2012 to 2021.

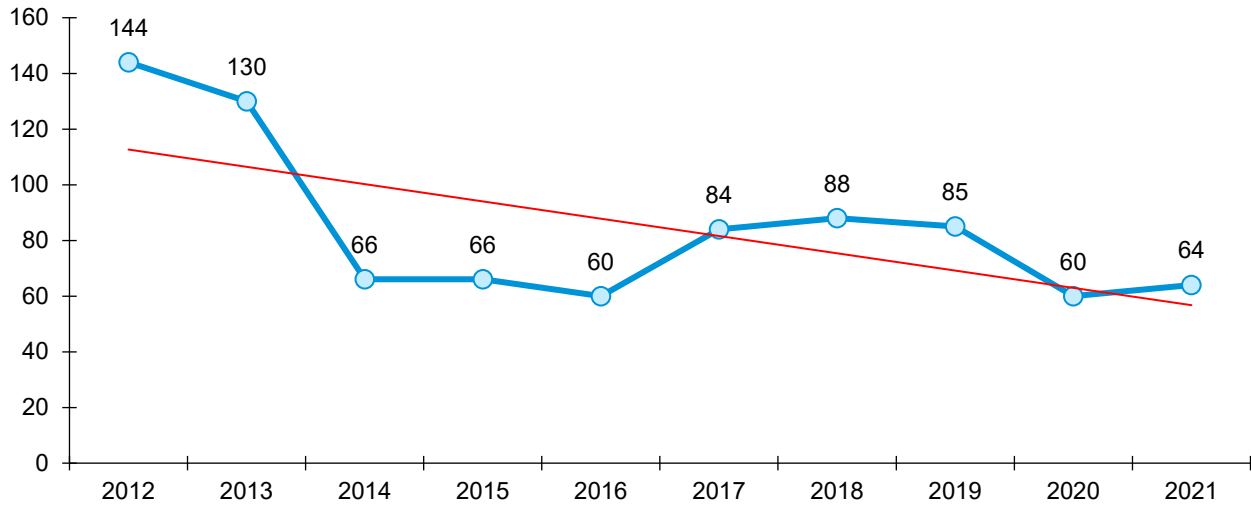
**Figure 11 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities  
0.08 BAC and Above**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

Speeding-related fatalities varied from 2012 to 2021, as shown in Figure 12. Since the peak of 144 fatalities in 2012, the fatalities dropped over half to as few as 60 in 2016, then rose again in 2017 and 2018. From 2019 to 2020, speeding-related fatalities dropped by 29.4 percent, but grew again by 7 percent from 2020 to 2021. However, there is an overall decline of 55.6 percent in speeding-related fatalities from 2012 to 2021.

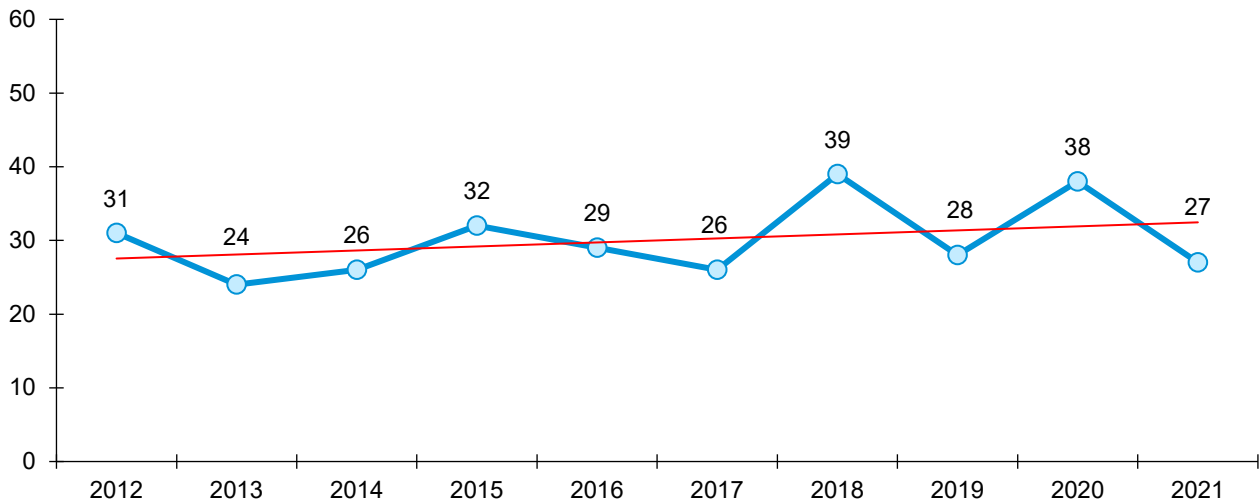
**Figure 12 Speeding-Related Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

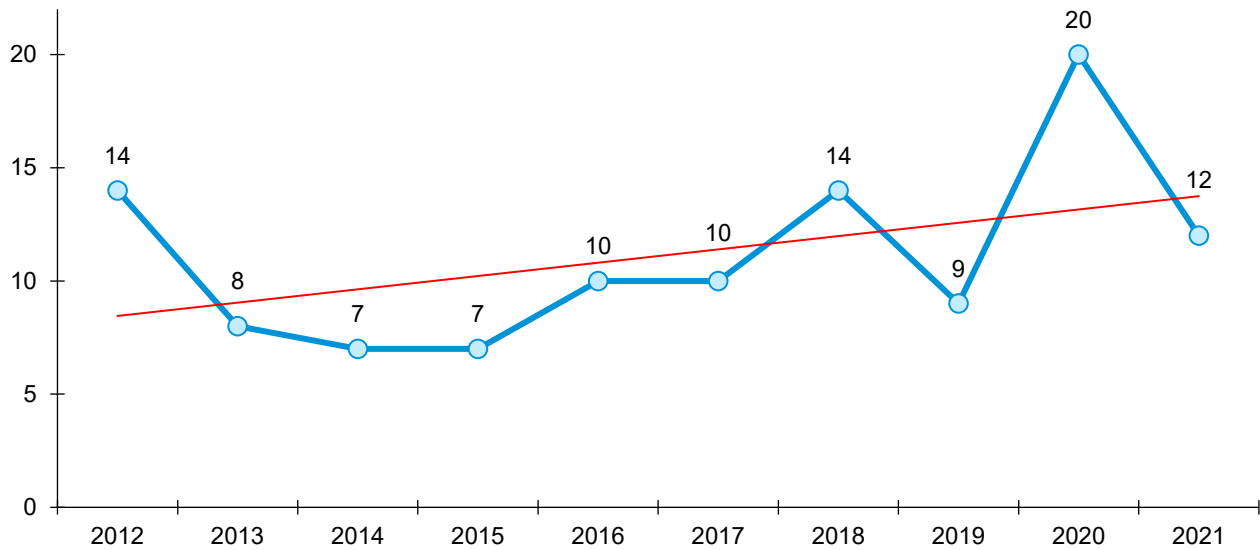
Although motorcyclist fatalities have fluctuated generally between 24 and 39 fatalities a year, the trend line in Figure 13 shows an overall steady increase from 2012 to 2021. Motorcyclist fatalities decreased by 28.9 percent from 38 in 2020 to 27 in 2021; and 44 percent of these fatalities included unhelmeted motorcyclist (Figure 14). The annual number of unhelmeted fatalities has been as high as 20 in 2020, which dropped to 12 in 2021, and in this 10-year period number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities declined by 14 percent.

**Figure 13 Motorcyclist Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

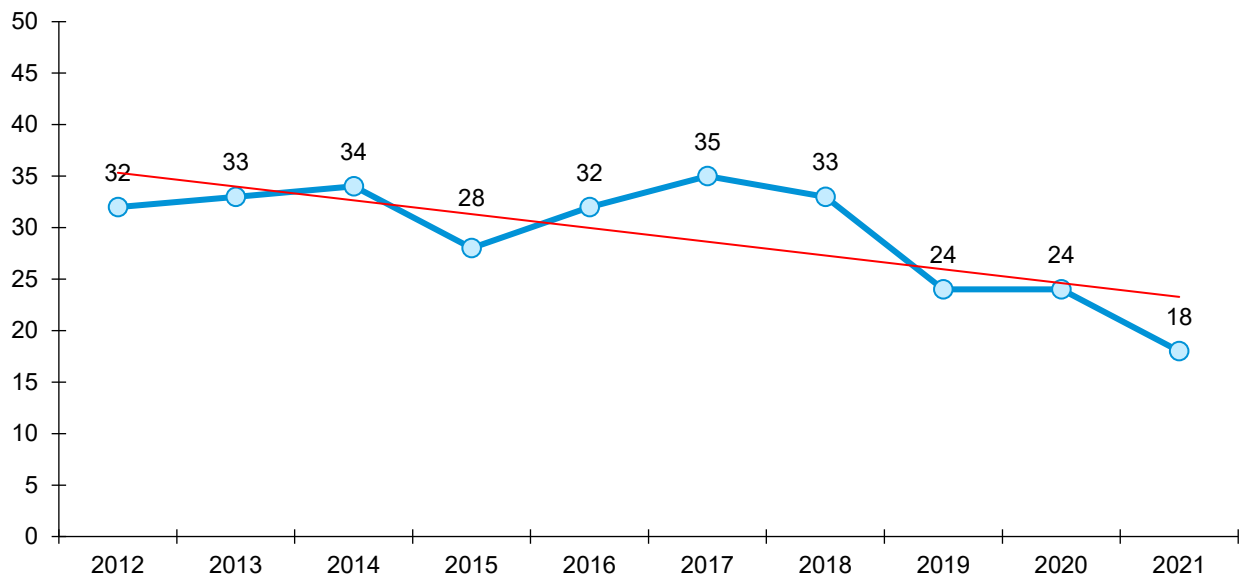
**Figure 14 Unhelmeted Motorcyclist Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

The number of young drivers under 21 years of age involved in fatal crashes has fluctuated frequently from 2012 to 2021. Figure 15 shows a general downward trend with a peak in 2014 and 2017, before a decline in the recent years. Fatalities rose slightly in 2013 and 2014, before falling again in 2015 and rising back up in 2016 and 2017. The number of young driver-involved fatalities remained unchanged (24) in 2019 and 2020, and dropped by 25 percent from 2020 to 2021, with an overall reduction of 43.8 percent in the past 10 years.

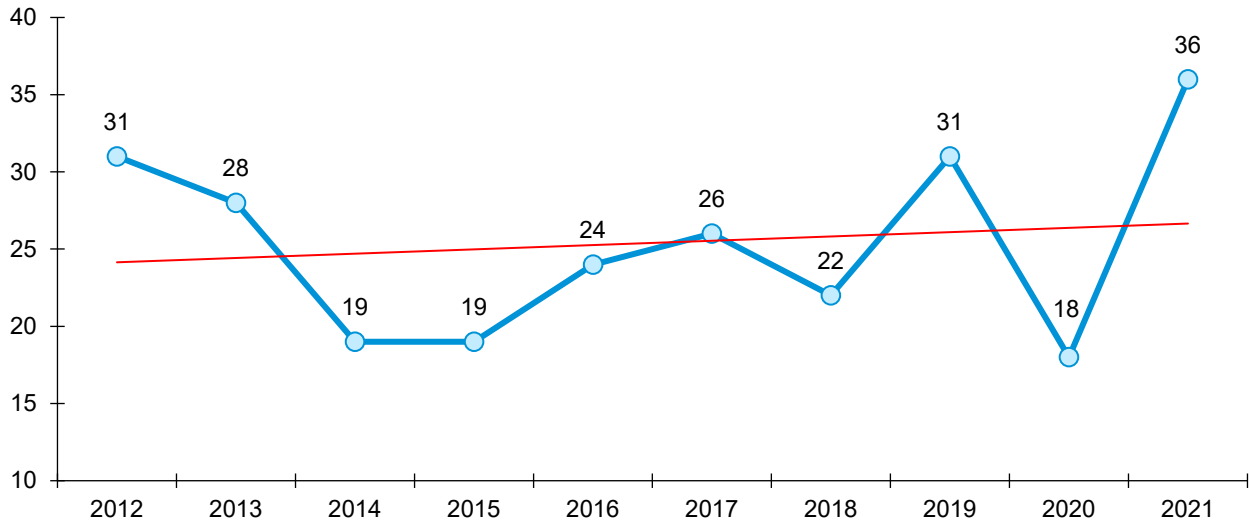
**Figure 15 Drivers Under 21 Involved in Fatal Crashes**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

From 2012 to 2021, pedestrian fatalities grew 16 percent overall but have fluctuated considerably over this 10-year period. After peaking at 31 in 2012, these fatalities declined to 19 in 2014 and 2015, before rising again to 31 by 2019. Pedestrian fatalities decreased sharply by 41.9 percent from 2019 to 2020 and grew by 100 percent from 18 in 2020 to 36 in 2021, marking the highest peak in the last 10-year span (Figure 16).

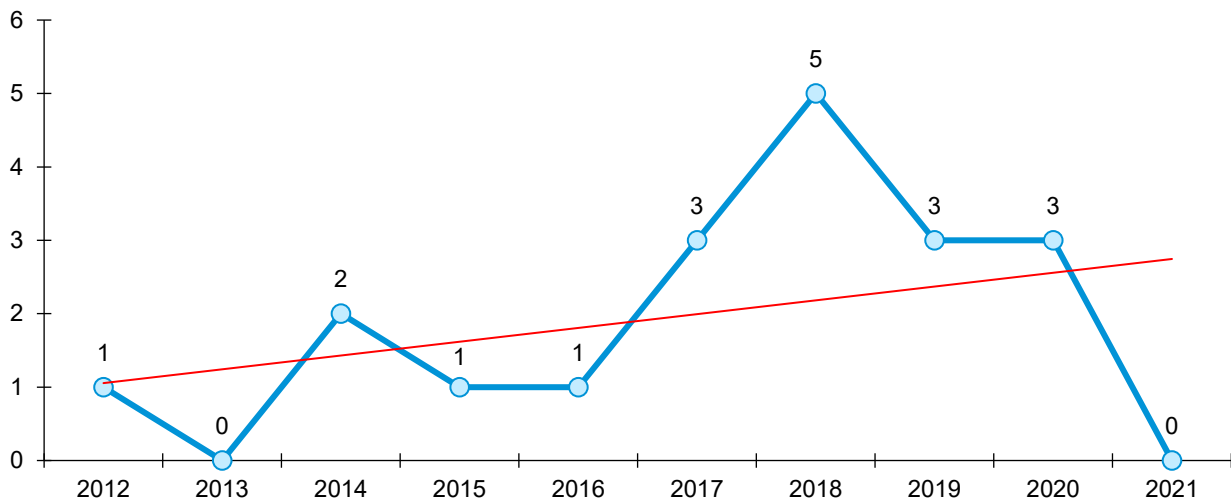
**Figure 16 Pedestrian Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

In the past 10 years, the highest number (5) of bicyclist fatalities occurred in 2018. Otherwise, bicyclist fatalities stayed in the range of 0 to 3 each year, as shown in Figure 17. The 3 bicyclist fatalities in 2019 were a 40 percent decrease from the 5 fatalities in 2018, and remained the same (3) in 2020. In 2021, bicycle related fatalities came down to 0, with a 100 percent reduction from the past year. However, the trend of bicyclist-related fatalities has followed a steady upward slope since 2012.

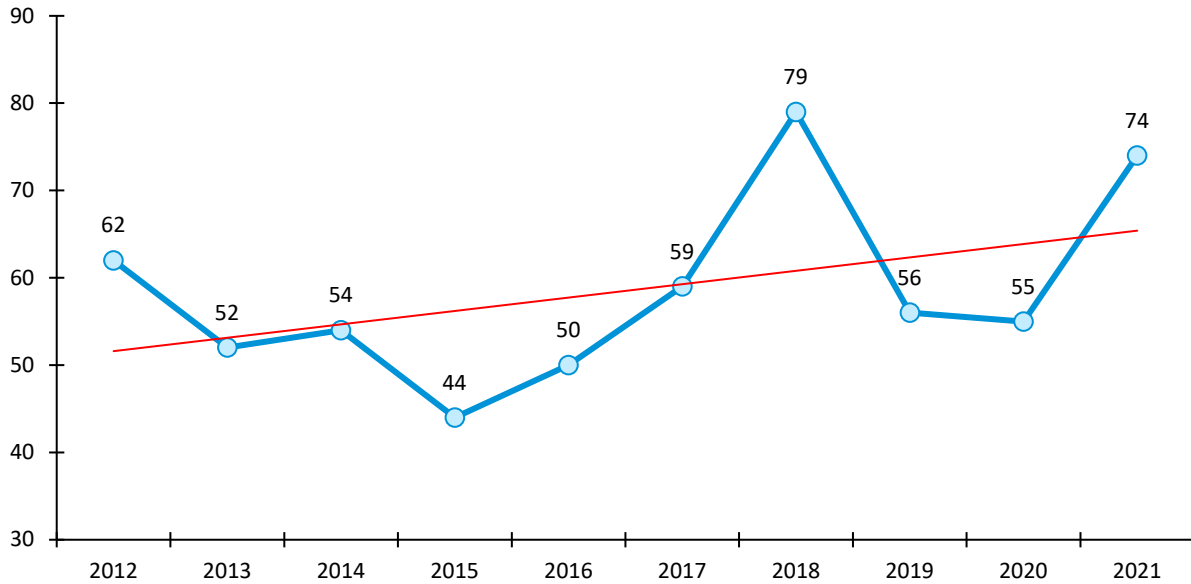
**Figure 17 Bicyclist Fatalities**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

Fatalities involving older road users (65 and above) followed an upward trend, resulting in a 19.4 percent increase in the last 10 years (2012-2021). Figure 18 shows older road user related fatalities from 2012 to 2021, capturing drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bicyclists killed in traffic crashes who were 65 and above. As shown in Figure 18, the fatalities dropped from 2012 to 2013, increased slightly in 2014 and dropped again in 2015. Since 2015, it gradually increased in the following three years, reaching the highest peak of 79 fatalities in 2018. From 2018 to 2020, older road user fatalities sharply decreased by 30 percent but then spiked again in 2021 by 35 percent from the past year.

**Figure 18 Older Road Users Related Fatalities**



Source: FARS using Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), April 2023.

Table 5 on the following page consolidates Figure 6 through Figure 18 to show trends for the required NHTSA core performance measures from 2012 through 2021 and West Virginia's performance measure for older drivers. For each measure, the percent change from 2020 to 2021 and the average annual change is shown. Most noteworthy from 2020 and 2021 is the 100 percent decline in bicycle fatalities, 40 percent decline in unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities, and 25 percent decline in younger driver related fatalities. There is cause for concern, however, regarding the 100 percent increase in pedestrian fatalities.



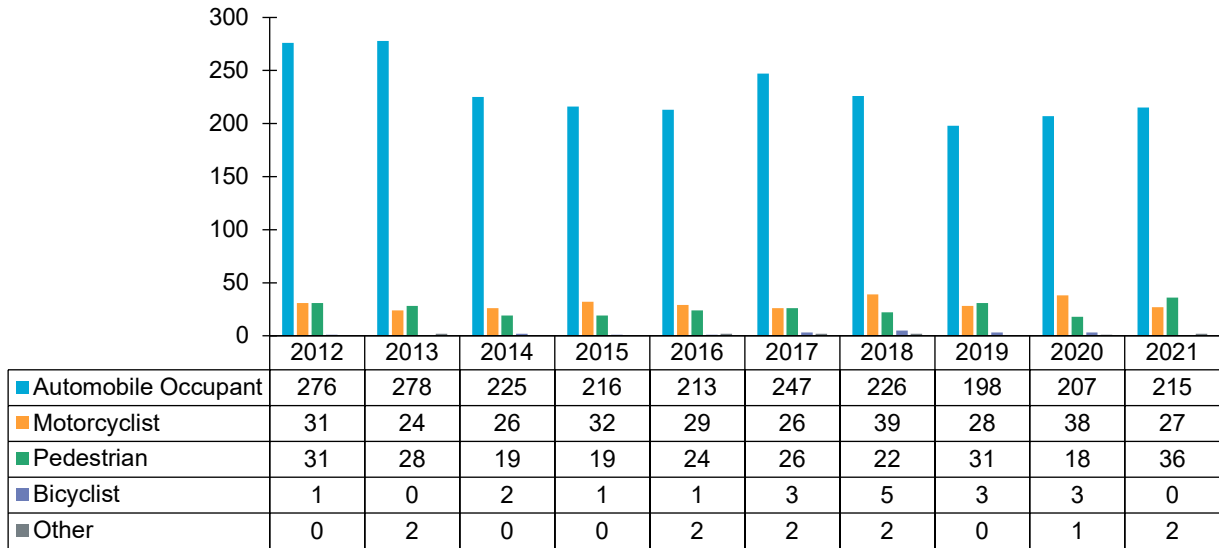
**Table 5 West Virginia Traffic Safety Trends**  
2012 to 2021

Core Performance Measure	Actual										Change		
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2020–2021 Percent Change	Average Annual Change (2012– 2021)	
C-1	Traffic Fatalities	339	332	272	268	269	304	294	260	267	280	4.9%	-2.1%
C-2	Serious Traffic Injuries	1,887	1,465	1,344	1,233	1,180	1,063	993	906	802	766	-4.5%	-9.5%
C-3	Fatalities/VMT	1.76	1.73	1.42	1.35	1.38	1.59	1.51	1.36	1.66	1.74	4.8%	-0.1%
C-4	Unrestrained Passenger Vehicle-Occupant Fatalities in all Seating Positions	137	113	93	99	80	98	70	73	84	74	-11.9%	-6.6%
C-5	Alcohol-Impaired Fatalities (drivers or motorcycle operators with a 0.08 BAC or greater)	94	91	84	72	68	72	58	56	74	65	-12.2%	-4.0%
C-6	Speeding-Related Fatalities	144	130	66	66	60	84	88	85	60	64	6.7%	-8.6%
C-7	Motorcyclist Fatalities	31	24	26	32	29	26	39	28	38	27	-28.9%	-1.5%
C-8	Unhelmeted Motorcyclist Fatalities	14	8	7	7	10	10	14	9	20	12	-40.0%	-1.7%
C-9	Drivers Age 20 or Younger Involved in Fatal Crashes	32	33	34	28	32	35	33	24	24	18	-25.0%	-6.2%
C-10	Pedestrian Fatalities	31	28	19	19	24	26	22	31	18	36	100.0%	1.7%
C-11	Bicycle Fatalities	1	0	2	1	1	3	5	3	3	0	-100.0%	-100.0%
B-1	Statewide Observed Seat Belt Use for Passenger Vehicles, Front Seat Outboard Occupants	84.0%	82.2%	87.8%	89.0%	86.8%	89.7%	90.5%	90.2%	90.2%	88.1%	-2.1%	0.5%

Source: NHTSA FARS FIRST, 2023, NHTSA STSI, 2023, West Virginia GHSP, and 2022 West Virginia Observational Survey of Seat Belt Use.

Automobile drivers and occupants (in West Virginia this includes passenger cars, light trucks, and large trucks only) continue to be the road user group that experienced the highest number of fatalities by a large margin, as shown in Figure 19. Fatalities involving this group, however, have declined by 22.1 percent from 2012 to 2021.

**Figure 19 Fatalities by Roadway User Group**



Source: U.S. DOT, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

# Public Participation and Engagement

## Triennial HSP Engagement Planning

### *Starting Goals for the Public Engagement Efforts*

The primary goal for the public engagement efforts is to better engage existing road users to assist the GHSP in identifying perceived highway safety problems and locations. The resultant perceived highway safety problems and locations will be reviewed and verified against available data prior to incorporation into the 3HSP. Additional action such as observational surveys and electronic survey devices, may be taken to verify the validity of the perceived highway problems and locations prior to their inclusion in the 3HSP.

### *Identification of Affected and Potentially Affected Communities*

#### Crash, Injury, and Fatality Data

The State attempted to identify affected and potentially affected communities in several ways. Unfortunately, the GHSP does not have access to demographic-type data, such as race, age, and gender for overall crash and injury data. Only fatal crash data includes this type of demographic data. While the accessible fatal crash data shows who is overrepresented in fatal crashes, identifying specific overrepresented communities in overall crash and injury data is not possible due to the lack of demographic information in these data sets. In order to direct planning in future years for the 3HSP, the GHSP will work closely with WVDOT, who controls and maintains the data systems, to have changes adopted to collect this information.

Based on the analysis of the available data, the following communities will be targeted for further engagement to garner insight into why these communities may be overrepresented in the data.

#### Affected Communities

- Older road users (65+).
- Men (18–64).
- Teen drivers and passengers (15–19).
- Motorcyclists.
- Non-motorized road users.
- Pedestrians.
- Rural communities—62 percent of crash fatalities in Calendar Year (CY) 2021 occurred in rural areas.

By identifying the above overrepresented communities, the State will be able to attempt to elicit the root causes of the overrepresentation and possibly adjust countermeasures and funding levels to better address the highway safety needs of each identified community.

## Observational Seat Belt, Distraction, and Child Safety Seat Surveys

Non-scientific observational surveys were conducted in nine major municipalities across the State. These nine locations were selected to get baseline data for seat belt usage (outside of the annual scientific seat belt survey), cell phone/distracted driving incidents, and child passenger safety. These locations were selected as they have higher populations; more diverse populations; and more crashes, injuries, and fatalities. The survey will likely be expanded to include additional locations identified in crash, injury, and fatality data, in order to create a more robust set of data overall.

Based on the analysis of this data, the following communities will be targeted for further engagement to learn community members' thoughts about the highway safety issues indicated below.

### Affected Communities

- **Princeton, Mercer County—seat belts (75.20 percent usage):**
  - 18.1 percent poverty rate (County, 2022 Census estimates).
  - 22.6 percent persons 65+ (2022 Census estimates).
  - 16.9 percent persons under 65 with a disability (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Rural designation (County).
- **Morgantown, Monongalia County—distracted driving (5.25 percent distracted):**
  - 18.3 percent poverty rate (County, 2022 Census estimates).
  - Urban designation (County).
  - Language other than English spoken at home, 7.3 percent (County, 2022 Census estimates).
- **Martinsburg, Berkeley County—distracted driving (4.95 percent distracted):**
  - Urban designation (County).
  - Language other than English spoken at home, 4.9 percent (County, 2022 Census estimates).
- **Princeton, Mercer County—child passenger safety (88.24 percent no/improper use).**
  - 18.1 percent poverty rate (County, 2022 Census estimates).
  - 22.6 percent persons 65+ (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Rural designation (County).
- **Beckley, Raleigh County—child passenger safety (57.14 percent no/improper use):**
  - 22.0 percent poverty rate (County, 2022 Census estimates).
  - 21.5 percent persons 65+ (County, 2022 Census estimates).
  - 8.1 percent Black or African American (County, 2022 Census estimates).
  - 19.4 percent persons under 65 with a disability (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Urban designation (County).

By identifying the above affected communities, the State will be able to attempt to elicit the root causes of the highway safety issues and possibly adjust countermeasures and funding levels to better address the safety needs of each identified community.

### *Citation and Crash Location Data*

The State also pulled citation data for CY 2022 to attempt to identify if any particular zip codes were overrepresented within the individuals receiving citations (home zip code, not the zip code where the citation occurred), as well as location zip code crash data for CY 2022. Unfortunately, the quality of the zip code data captured within ReportBeam is low, with many of the zip codes being invalid, then putting into question the validity of other seemingly valid zip codes.

### *Seat Belt Survey Data*

Seat belt survey data was used to determine which counties have significantly lower seat belt usage rates and any differences between usage among males and females.

### **Affected Communities**

- **Jackson County: 83.9 percent usage rate:**
  - 15.4 percent poverty rate (2022 Census estimates).
  - 21.0 percent persons 65+ (2022 Census estimates).
  - 15.5 percent persons under 65 with a disability (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Rural designation.
  
- **McDowell County: 84.0 percent usage rate:**
  - 31.7 percent poverty rate (2022 Census estimates).
  - 23.6 percent persons 65+ (2022 Census estimates).
  - 7.9 percent Black or African American.
  - 22.4 percent persons under 65 with a disability (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Rural designation.
  - Current seat belt survey sites.
  
- **Mingo County: 85.7% usage rate:**
  - 31.1 percent poverty rate (2022 Census estimates).
  - 20.6 percent persons 65+ (2022 Census estimates).
  - 27.7 percent persons under 65 with a disability (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Rural designation.

- **Boone County: 85.9% usage rate:**
  - 24.7 percent poverty rate (2022 Census estimates).
  - 21.7 percent persons 65+ (2022 Census estimates).
  - 18.8 percent persons under 65 with a disability (2017–2021, Census estimates).
  - Rural designation.

It is noted that the State considers all road users in West Virginia at large as a potentially affected community.

### *Communities Impacted by Crashes*

Affected communities were identified via the analysis of crash, injury, and fatality data. Fatality data was also used to determine if any race or ethnic groups were overrepresented in traffic fatalities. The most recently available FARS data with race or ethnic demographics is from the years 2016–2019. During this period, approximately 3 percent of all traffic fatalities in West Virginia were reported as Black or African American. Fatalities involving other nonwhite races or ethnic groups were even less.

There were noteworthy variations in the data for the Counties listed below which may be used in the future to conduct meaningful public engagement to elicit feedback that may help target media and education in the identified counties:

- Raleigh County—16 percent (8 of 50) of fatalities were Black or African American, with 8.1 percent of the County’s population identifying as Black or African American (2021 Census):
  - 22 percent (8 of 36) of Black or African American fatalities occurred in Raleigh County.
- Putnam County—8.6 percent (3 of 35) of fatalities were Hispanic, with 1.4 percent of the County’s population identifying as Hispanic or Latino (2021 Census):
  - 33.33 percent (3 of 9) of Hispanic fatalities were in Putnam County.
- Marion County—15 percent (3 of 20) of fatalities were Black or African American, with 3.4 percent of the County’s population identifying as Black or African American.
- Braxton County (2016–2020)—58 percent (14 of 24) of fatalities were 55+ and 33.33 percent (8 of 24) were 65+, with 24.0 percent of the population identifying as 65 or older (2021 Census).
- Greenbrier County (2016–2020)—52 percent of fatalities were 55+.
- Reported crash fatalities in West Virginia are majority male (72.2 percent male fatalities 2016–2020), except in the following counties:
  - Harrison County—52.6 percent (20 of 38) of fatalities were female.
  - Pocahontas County—50 percent (4 of 8) of fatalities were female.
  - Monroe County—46 percent (6 of 13) of fatalities were female.

The data in Table 6 is from the USDOT “Our Nation’s Roadway Safety Crisis” equity tool. This data will be shared with the RTSCs, GHSP staff, and grantees in the impacted areas so that they are aware of identified

communities impacted and can develop programs and outreach strategies to better help address crashes in these communities.

**Table 6 Fatalities in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts (2016-2020)**

County	Census Tract	Fatal Crashes 2016-2020		
		Total Fatal Crashes	Total Fatalities	Pedestrian Fatalities
<b>Berkeley</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>
	9713	11	12	2
	9715	2	2	0
	9716	4	5	0
	9717	1	1	0
<b>Cabell</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>
	2	2	2	0
	16	1	1	1
	18	1	1	0
	104	4	4	0
	109	2	2	0
<b>Grant</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	9696	2	2	0
<b>Greenbrier</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>
	9501	6	6	2
<b>Hardy</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>
	9702	4	4	0
	9703	4	5	1
<b>Kanawha</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>
	8	2	2	1
	106	1	1	0
	111	9	10	1
	131	2	2	2
	132	2	2	0
	134	1	1	0
	138	1	1	0
<b>Logan</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>
	9564	2	3	0
	9566	7	7	1
	9567	3	3	0
<b>McDowell</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>
	9538	8	8	1

County	Census Tract	Fatal Crashes 2016-2020		
		Total Fatal Crashes	Total Fatalities	Pedestrian Fatalities
	9545.01	2	2	0
	9545.03	2	2	0
	9545.04	6	6	0
<b>Mercer</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>
	17	7	8	1
<b>Ohio</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
	7	1	1	0
	14	1	1	1
	26	1	1	0
<b>Pleasants</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
	9266	2	2	0
<b>Raleigh</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
	2	2	2	1
	12	2	2	0
<b>Roane</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
	9629	3	4	0
<b>Wayne</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>
	201	1	1	0
	203	1	1	0
	204	10	11	2
<b>Webster</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	9701	1	1	0
<b>Wood</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	109.2	1	1	0

Source: U.S. DOT, Office of the Secretary for Transportation Policy, National Roadway Safety Strategy, “Our Nation’s Roadway Safety Crisis,” accessed June 2023 at: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/9e0e6b7397734c1387172bbc0001f29b>.

### Traffic Safety Community Needs Assessment

The GHSP began conducting a statewide traffic safety community needs assessment in May 2023, with the intent to continue the survey until August 31, 2023, if not later. The purpose of the survey is to garner feedback from communities across West Virginia regarding traffic safety issues. The survey will help create a baseline for what local communities believe are traffic safety issues in the neighborhoods where they work and/or live.



The survey was set up electronically and has been disseminated to all GHSP partners, including the following:

- Community agencies.
- DMV employees statewide.
- EMS for Children Committee.
- GHSP staff and grantees.
- MADD WV.
- Morgantown Pedestrian Safety Board.
- Occupant Protection Committee.
- Traffic Records Coordinating Committee.
- WV Child Passenger Safety Technicians and Instructors.
- WV Collegiate Initiative to Advance Healthy Campus Communities.
- WV Motorcycle Safety Board.
- WV State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup.

Other agencies and potential partners have been identified and will be contacted in efforts to further disseminate the survey. Additional partners identified include: WV Safety Management Task Force – identified as a safety-related group who can reach MPOs, law enforcement, transportation agencies and advocacy groups, etc.; AARP – identified as an organization who can reach older road users, who are an overrepresented community in crash, injury, and fatality data; WV SADD – identified as an organization who can reach high school and middle school students; and WV MADD – identified as an organization who can reach impaired driving advocates. We are also working to identify religious organizations, disability-related organizations, and other groups, to reach more diverse populations throughout the state.

All partners were asked to disseminate the survey via social media accounts and email to all contacts, including friends, family, community agencies, committees, etc. A paper copy of the survey will be used by Regional Coordinators and others to take to in-person events and activities. All completed paper surveys will be manually entered into the electronic survey. The survey was also picked up by a local media outlet in the southern part of WV, who aired a short segment on the survey.

Once the survey is complete, the responses will be reviewed and analyzed, as well as compared to citation and crash data, to determine if any specific communities stand out as being in need of further investigation and discussion with local community members about the identified traffic safety issues, including but not limited to focus group-style discussions with the communities in general but also with targeted communities, such as older drivers, younger drivers, and male drivers aged 18–35. The community discussions and meetings will be planned for late FFY2024, with additional community engagement in FFY2025 and FFY2026. Any responses outside of the purview of the GHSP will be forwarded to the appropriate agencies, such as engineering responses being sent to the Division of Highways.

## Triennial HSP Engagement Outcomes

### *Steps Taken to Produce Meaningful Engagement with Affected Communities*

While significant community outreach is conducted statewide, meaningful public engagement is lacking. This lack of meaningful public engagement will shape the 3HSP as the State realized the necessity of these efforts and will work to increase public engagement in a meaningful way, starting with the identification and analysis of the existing community engagement efforts to determine how best to reshape existing efforts to extract meaningful feedback.

### Driver Attitudes and Awareness Survey

In September and October 2022, the State conducted a Driver Attitude and Awareness Survey at nine regional DMV offices throughout the State. All licensed drivers were the targeted community, and this survey was conducted to get baseline data to begin analysis for public engagement efforts. In addition to highway safety-related questions, the survey included demographic-based questions, such as gender, race, zip code, and age group; as well as education level, vehicle type driven most often, and frequency of alcoholic beverage consumption.

The State required that 1,600 people be asked across the nine locations. However, the response for the surveys was minimal overall and at some locations, almost non-existent, with a total of 418 surveys collected. The survey results were nonetheless analyzed to determine if any meaningful insight was captured.

Overall, 80 percent of respondents reported wearing their seat belts all the time. Most of the individual sites were small samples, so the data may not accurately capture a true picture of seat belt use in each area. The individual site breakdowns for seat belt usage are below:

- Beckley DMV Regional Office:
  - 40 respondents.
  - 67.5 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 5.0 percent never wear seat belts.
- Clarksburg DMV Regional Office:
  - 109 respondents.
  - 78.9 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 3.7 percent never or rarely wear seat belts.
- Elkins DMV Regional Office:
  - 3 respondents.
  - 100.0 percent wear seat belts all the time.

- Huntington DMV Regional Office:
  - 89 respondents.
  - 87.6 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 3.3 percent never or rarely wear seat belts.
  
- Kanawha City (Charleston) DMV Regional Office:
  - 9 respondents.
  - 66.7 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 11.1 percent never wear seat belts.
  
- Martinsburg DMV Regional Office:
  - 14 respondents.
  - 92.9 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 7.1 percent rarely wear seat belts.
  
- Moundsville DMV Regional Office:
  - 46 respondents.
  - 60.9 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 10.9 percent never or rarely wear seat belts.
  
- Parkersburg DMV Regional Office:
  - 22 respondents.
  - 86.4 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 4.5 percent rarely wear seat belts.
  
- Princeton DMV Regional Office:
  - 79 respondents.
  - 87.3 percent wear seat belts all the time.
  - 0.0 percent never or rarely wear seat belts.

Based on the data above, Beckley, Kanawha City (Charleston), and Moundsville will be the initial targets of focus group-style highway safety discussions regarding seat belt usage, including how best to reach non-users and occasional users. These discussions will be scheduled in year one of the 3HSP (FFY2024) and will be used to better target enforcement, education, and/or media during the national CIOT mobilization in May 2024.

During year one of the 3HSP (FFY2024), the GHSP will continue to analyze the data from this survey to further delve into seat belt use and non-use, as well as other program areas included in the survey, such as speeding, alcohol consumption, drunk driving, and cell phone use. Data will be used to pinpoint which

municipalities and counties we will host highway safety discussions in during years two and three of the 3HSP (FFY2025 and FFY2026).

## Social Media Feedback

The State has long strived to engage various communities via social media but acknowledges that this feedback is generally negative and not meaningful or constructive.

## Results of the Engagement Opportunities Conducted

A small focus group-type event was conducted on May 22, 2023, at an ongoing meeting of the HOPE Coalition (Healthy Opportunities for Positive Education), at the Jack Caffrey Arts and Cultural Center in Welch, WV. This location is handicap accessible, with the main entrance also being on street level. Welch is in McDowell County, which was selected due to consistent low seat belt use during the annual scientific seat belt surveys. This County is also very rural and has the highest poverty rate in the State. Lt. Adam Ballard, Region 8 Highway Safety Coordinator, was included on the agenda to discuss occupant protection and other highway safety issues. The 30-minute presentation included a discussion on occupant protection, whether the attendees wore their seat belts, and how best to reach individuals who do not wear their seat belts.

With several faith-based organizations present, Lt. Ballard used an analogy of church attendees not wearing a seat belt because they did not want to wrinkle their Sunday's best attire. Ironically, this was confirmed by all the faith-based leaders, as well as a few additional attendees, admitting to not wearing a seat belt on Sunday just for this reason. One individual stated that he wears his but will occasionally hold the shoulder strap out from his attire to keep the wrinkles off his shirt. Other explanations included that they did not wear them on a short trip across town as they did not feel at risk (low speed, short distance)—but they did wear them on trips out of town. One female stated it was not comfortable and the shoulder belt rode on her neck—she was shorter in stature, somewhere near 5 feet and elderly. One male also mentioned that it was occasionally hard to use because of his stature; he was described as being very large based on estimated weight.

Lt. Ballard posed the misuse and nonuse as possibly being an educational issue—such as misunderstanding, not knowing the benefits, and possibly stories that may not be completely true regarding injuries from other crashes (cars exploding, drowning, etc.). When asking what they recommended in reaching fellow community members, the Methodist Clergy first spoke up and posed the idea of a guest speaking to the church and also putting it on the bulletin for the organization. The additional faith-based leaders also agreed. We discussed the lack of billboard, print newspapers, and such, that traditionally help spread the message. Lt. Ballard mentioned the few radio stations his program uses for paid advertising, and no additional radio stations were mentioned. A few of the individuals mentioned they and their organization have social media accounts which they do use. There was a question posed about not knowing until recently that child seats had expiration dates, as well as concern for children's safety traveling in a vehicle. Lt. Ballard mentioned that the Welch—Parents as Teachers organization was a dedicated fitting station with at least one CPS-trained technician, and the attendees did not know this information. As most people assume a large number of children are killed in crashes, they were surprised to learn the number in West Virginia is very low annually.

Lt. Ballard did not dive deep into enforcement, but everyone agreed they had corrective behaviors when they see a police vehicle on patrol, regardless of if the officer had a vehicle stopped or not. One individual admitted to receiving a seat belt citation. Lt. Ballard mentioned the period through the end of the month involved increased patrols for the Click It or Ticket (CIOT) campaign, and there was a checkpoint scheduled in the early evening on this same day at the county line.

There were nine attendees, not including Lt. Ballard, with demographics as follows:

Age	Sex	Race
• 30–39: 1	• Male: 4	• Black: 2
• 40–49: 4	• Female: 5	• White: 7
• 50–59: 2		
• 60–69: 2		

Based on the in depth-feedback, and from such a small group, the GHSP plans to schedule other similar discussion sessions with overrepresented and/or underserved communities throughout the State, focusing first on occupant protection and then on other program areas. Due to the feedback received, the GHSP will look into the possibility of the Buckle Up Religiously program to reach populations who attend church or other worship service. A thorough review of this education program will occur in year one of the 3HSP (FFY2024), with possible implementation in year two (FFY2025) and possible expansion in year three (FFY2026). The GHSP also plans to conduct more occupant protection and child passenger safety education in every county with an observed seat belt usage rate lower than 86 percent through all three years of the 3HSP. Based on the 2022 observational seat belt survey those counties include Boone (85.9 percent), Mingo (85.7 percent), McDowell (84 percent), and Jackson (83.9 percent).

## Ongoing Engagement Planning

### *State's Goals for the Public Engagement Efforts*

The State intends to continuously collect input from the public for consideration in identifying perceived highway safety problems and locations through ongoing public engagement efforts.

### *Identification of the Affected and Potentially Affected Communities*

Underserved and overrepresented communities are identified through continuous review of FARS fatality and serious injury data, as it becomes available. Variations in data are noted to identify additional affected communities to be targeted in future engagement efforts.

The GHSP will further engage WVDOT to access additional crash and injury data aspects such as age and gender to determine if any age or gender-specific communities are overrepresented in the crash and injury data.

### *Plan to Reach and Engage Identified Communities*

The State will continue to identify existing community engagement efforts in order to determine if any reach affected and potentially affected communities. If so, the State will work to develop existing efforts into more meaningful engagement that elicits constructive feedback. Multiple engagement strategies will be used depending on the communities targeted, including in-person and virtual opportunities to participate and provide feedback as well as paper and electronic forms and surveys.

### *Incorporation of Affected Community Comments and Views into Decision-Making*

The GHSP will review comments and feedback obtained from the affected communities via the engagement process and determine which elements may be incorporated into the decision-making process. The nature of

the feedback will determine the most applicable strategy for its incorporation, such as enforcement, media, or education; or if feedback needs to be forwarded to a separate department, such as engineering and lighting issues.

# Performance Plan

## Highway Safety Performance Targets for FFY2024–2026

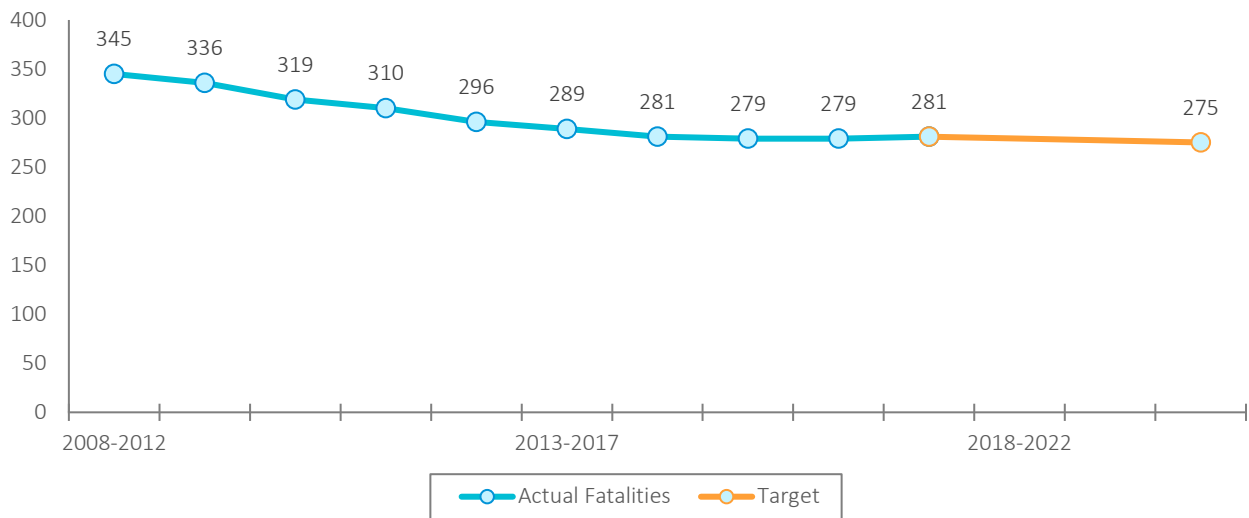
The GHSP adopted Zero Fatalities as a long-term goal with an interim goal of reducing fatalities by one half by 2030. This is consistent with the long-term and interim goal established by the West Virginia Safety Management Task Force (SMTF) for the first Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) in 2007 and reconfirmed during the 2021 SHSP update process. The GHSP is a member of the SMTF and participated in the discussions to establish the SHSP goal.

For the purposes of the FFY2024-2026 HSP the interim goals for fatalities and fatality rate were set more modestly based on the upward trend of fatalities by VMT. However, the five-year average for serious injuries has been trending downward for some time so the target is to continue this downward trend.

In addition to coordination with the SHSP goals, the GHSP consulted with staff at the Division of Highways (DOH) who oversees the Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP) on the performance targets for fatalities, serious injuries, and fatality rate. The zero fatalities long-term goal remains a target as adopted by the American Association of State Transportation Officials and supported by the FHWA.

Figure 20 show the effects of decreasing traffic fatalities 2.1 percent from 281 (2017-2021 rolling average) to 275 (2020-2024 rolling average) by 2024. The performance targets for the three core performance measures (total fatalities, serious injuries, and fatality rate), can be found in Table 7.

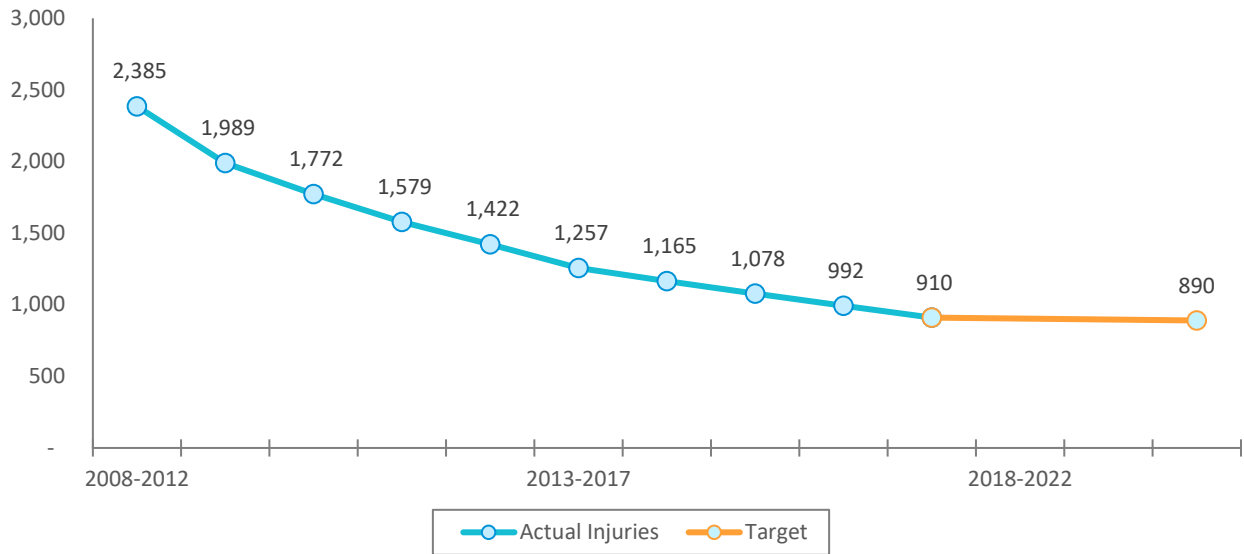
**Figure 20 Total Fatalities Performance Target Through 2026**



Source: West Virginia DOT, Division of Highways, NHTSA STSI, 2023.

Figure 21 shows the serious injury performance target through 2024, which equates to a 2.2 percent reduction in serious injuries from 2017–2021 from 910 to 890 by 2024.

**Figure 21 Serious Injuries Performance Target Through 2023**



Source: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, 2023.

### Selected Performance Targets and Justification

NHTSA encourages States to consider and adjust trend lines and performance targets if necessary when major legislation is passed or major changes in the number of fatalities and serious injuries occur. Each year the GHSP strives to reduce or at least not exceed the previous year’s level of motor vehicle-related fatalities and serious injuries. Our goal is always to move the State towards zero fatalities. Fatalities have been trending downward, so West Virginia chose a 2.1 percent reduction from 281 (2017-2021 rolling average) to 275 (2020-2024 rolling average) by 2024 to continue this trend. Serious injuries in the State have also been trending downward so the state selected a modest target of decreasing serious traffic injuries 2.2 percent from 910 (2017-2021 rolling average) to 890 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024. Fatalities by VMT is another matter and the State has seen this rate trending upwards for the last few years. The State believes that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted this area and expects it to for some time still when using data from the five-year rolling average. Because of this, West Virginia set a more modest target of reducing fatalities/100 MVMT 1.3 percent from 1.570 (2017-2021 rolling average) to 1.550 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024. Table 7 shows the performance targets for the FFY2024–2026 HSP. Except for core behavior measure B-1, all figures reflect the most recent FARS figures as shown on the [NHTSA STSI website](#).

**Table 7 FFY2024–2026 Performance Measures and Targets**

		Base Years (Historical Data)					
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 <sup>1</sup>
C-1	Traffic Fatalities	FARS Annual	304	294	260	267	280
		Rolling Average	289	281	279	279	281
		Reduce total fatalities to 275 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 281 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 2.1%.					
C-2	Serious Injuries in Traffic Crashes	State Annual	1,063	993	906	802	766



		Base Years (Historical Data)					
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 <sup>1</sup>
	Rolling Average	1,257	1,165	1,078	992	910	
	Reduce serious traffic injuries to 890 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 910 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 2.2%.						
C-3	Fatalities/100M VMT	FARS Annual	1.59	1.51	1.36	1.66	1.74
		Rolling Average	1.49	1.45	1.44	1.50	1.57
	Reduce fatality rate to 1.55 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 1.57 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 1.3%.						
C-4	Unrestrained Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, All Seat Positions	FARS Annual	98	70	73	84	74
		Rolling Average	97	88	84	81	80
	Reduce unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities, all seat positions to 76 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 80 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 5% by December 31, 2026.						
C-5	Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities	FARS Annual	72	58	56	74	65
		Rolling Average	77	71	65	66	65
	Reduce alcohol-impaired driving fatalities to 62 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 65 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 4.6% by December 31, 2026.						
C-6	Speeding-Related Fatalities	FARS Annual	84	88	85	60	64
		Rolling Average	81	73	77	75	76
	Reduce speeding-related fatalities to 73 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 76 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 4% by December 31, 2026.						
C-7	Motorcyclist Fatalities	FARS Annual	26	39	28	38	27
		Rolling Average	27	30	31	32	32
	Reduce motorcyclist fatalities to 30 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 32 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 6.25% by December 31, 2026.						
C-8	Unhelmeted Motorcyclist Fatalities (FARS)	FARS Annual	10	14	9	20	12
		Rolling Average	8	10	10	13	13
	Reduce unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities to 11 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 13 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 15.4% by December 31, 2026.						
C-9	Drivers Age 20 or Younger Involved in Fatal Crashes	FARS Annual	35	33	24	24	18
		Rolling Average	32	32	30	30	27
	Reduce drivers age 20 and younger involved in fatal crashes to 25 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 27 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 7.4% by December 31, 2026.						
C-10	Pedestrian Fatalities	FARS Annual	26	22	31	18	36
		Rolling Average	23	22	24	24	27
	Reduce pedestrian fatalities to 25 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 27 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 7.4% by December 31, 2026.						
C-11	Bicyclist Fatalities	FARS Annual	3	5	3	3	0
		Rolling Average	1	2	3	3	3

		Base Years (Historical Data)					
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 <sup>1</sup>

Reduce bicyclist fatalities to 2 (2020–2024 rolling average) from a current safety level of 3 (2017–2021 rolling average) by 33.3% by December 31, 2026.

**Core Behavior Measure**

			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
B-1	Observed Seat Belt Use for Passenger Vehicles, Front Seat Outboard Occupants (State Survey)	State Annual	90.5%	90.2%	NA	88.1%	92.5%

Increase observed seat belt use for passenger vehicles to 92.8% from a current safety level of 92.5% by December 31, 2024.

**State Performance Measures**

			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
WV-1	Older Road User Fatalities	FARS Annual	59	79	56	55	74
		5-Year Rolling Average	52	57	58	60	65
Decrease older road user fatalities 4.6 percent from 65 (2017–2021 rolling average) to 62 (2020–2024 rolling average) by December 31, 2024							
WV-2	Roadside Fatalities Program—Move Over Law	State Attitudinal Survey	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Increase knowledge of West Virginia’s move over law to 60 percent or more based on planned attitudinal survey results by 2024.

Note: A second Roadside Fatalities Program performance target to decrease roadside first responded related fatalities will be established for FFY2025 and FFY2026 after the GHSP and their partners identify and collect the required data in FFY2024.

## Countermeasure Strategy for Programming Funds

Based on data analysis, behavioral survey findings, and discussions with key partners and stakeholder groups, West Virginia’s 3HSP addresses the following program areas: regional traffic safety programs impaired driving, occupant protection, speeding, motorcycle safety, novice drivers (ages 20 and younger), traffic records, distracted driving, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, older road users (ages 65+), and work zone safety. These 3HSP program areas support six of the eight emphasis areas in West Virginia’s 2022–2026 SHSP, which calls upon the West Virginia GHSP and its partners to address driver behavior (speeding and aggressive driving; seat belt, child passenger restraint and helmet use; and alcohol and drug impaired driving), special users (pedestrians and older drivers 65+), and improving highway safety data (traffic records). Additionally, the 3HSP identifies how the GHSP will use enforcement, education, and data to achieve the identified performance measures and targets.

The following sections provide details on the countermeasure strategies West Virginia will utilize for each program area including: the identified problem that the countermeasure addresses, the associated performance targets and measures, estimated funding levels and sources. In addition, West Virginia used the *Countermeasures That Work (CTW): A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices*, Tenth Edition, 2020 as a reference to aid in selection of effective, evidence-based countermeasure strategies for the program areas presented in this Section. This edition of [Countermeasures That Work](#) can be viewed on the NHTSA website.

These programs are the focus and foundation of West Virginia’s 3HSP and are separated into the following categories:

### Regional Traffic Safety Programs

#### *Problem ID the Strategy Addresses*

The GHSP embraced the present community/regional approach to traffic safety in the 1990s. We continue to believe it is the most efficient approach to address the State’s traffic safety problems and issues.

The State is divided into eight regions based on geography and demographics. Table 8 identifies each region by number and subgrantee and details the population and square miles serviced by each program. The population for each region is based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-year estimates data profile. Table 9 shows the distribution of fatalities each year from 2017 to 2021 among the eight regions.

**Table 8 Population and Area by Region**

Region	Population	Percent of State	Area (Square Miles)	Percent of State
1	232,134	12.89%	3,029	12.60%
2	265,647	14.75%	2,465	10.25%
3	84,678	4.70%	366	1.52%
4	155,731	8.65%	1,328	5.52%
5	378,598	21.02%	4,765	19.82%
6	276,986	15.38%	3,484	14.49%
7	258,030	14.33%	5,893	24.52%
8	149,245	8.29%	2,708	11.27%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,801,049</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>24,038</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates Data Profiles.

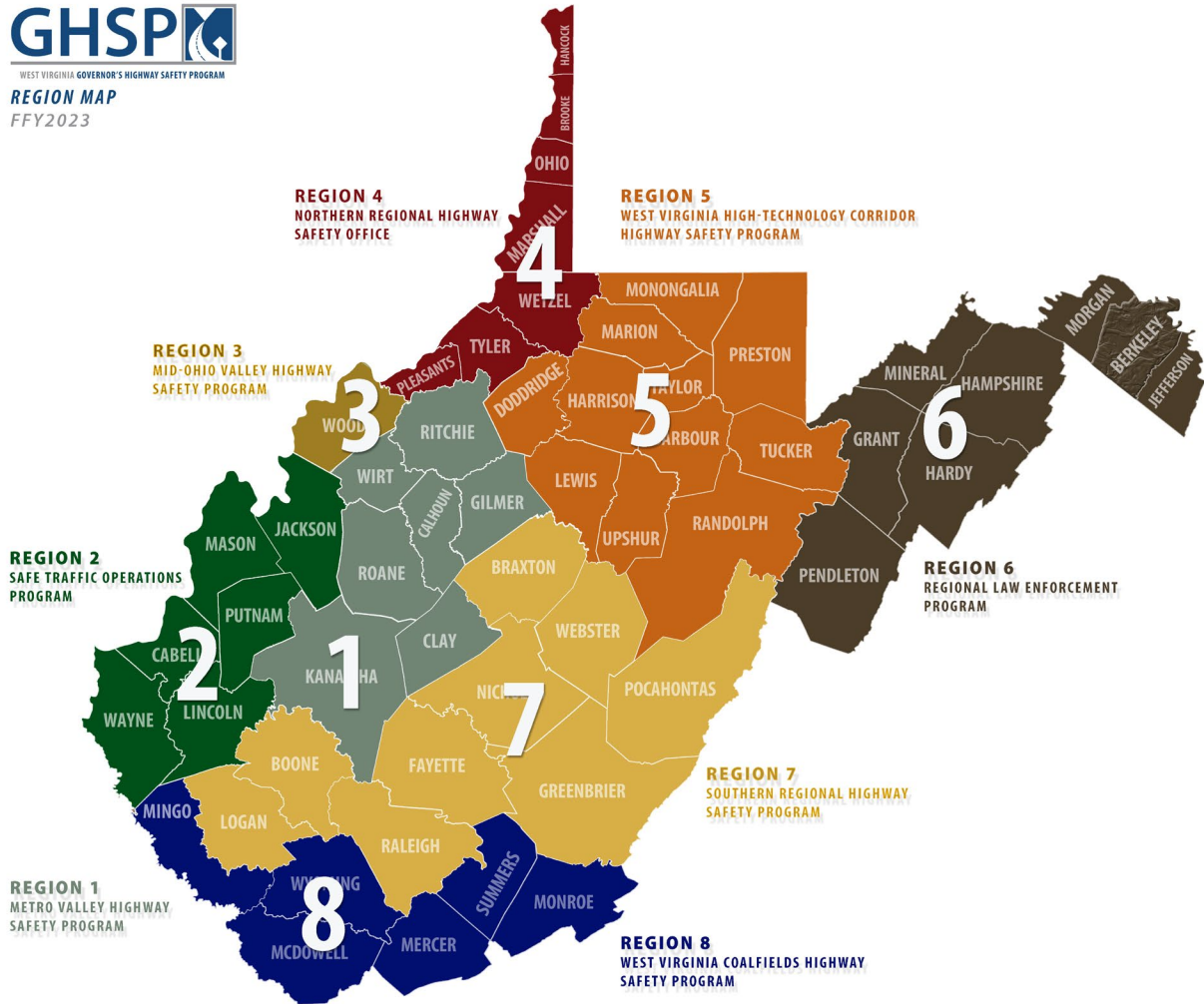
**Table 9 Fatalities by Region**

Region	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total	Average
1	47	51	27	29	45	198	39.6
2	55	45	46	38	36	221	44.2
3	10	7	6	16	14	53	10.6
4	18	13	17	16	14	78	15.6
5	52	47	53	47	50	251	50.2
6	30	44	40	60	46	220	44.0
7	59	59	44	40	51	251	50.2
8	33	28	27	21	24	133	26.6
<b>WV Totals</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>1,405</b>	<b>281</b>

Source: West Virginia Division of Highways, 2023.

In FFY2024–2026, the GHSP will continue to fund traffic safety initiatives through seven Regional Traffic Safety Programs and one Regional Law Enforcement Program throughout West Virginia covering all 55 counties as shown in Figure 22.

Figure 22 FFY2024–2026 Regional Traffic Safety Program Locations



Source: West Virginia GHSP, 2023.

Based on data analysis, West Virginia’s primary target audience in driving behavior programming and media messaging continues to be the young male population. The priority areas outlined in this plan are in accordance with NHTSA Priorities (impairment, occupant protection, and speed) and supported by FARS data. These issues are consistent throughout each of the State’s seven Regional Traffic Safety Programs and one Regional Law Enforcement Program and therefore have priority status within each of these programs.

While the seven regional programs must focus on the State’s priority issues, they are allowed some flexibility in funding projects that address issues which may be more prevalent in one area over another (i.e., ATV crashes are more common in the southern/southwestern part of the State). The GHSP will continue to work diligently to support and promote efforts to upgrade occupant protection, impaired driving, and other laws that promote safer highways in West Virginia. In addition, the GHSP is aware of the issue of unsecured loads raised in the FAST Act and will discuss the dangers of unsecured loads with all Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators and their law enforcement partners to remind them to enforce the laws regarding unsecured loads.

A description of the Regional Traffic Safety Program Project Coordinator's responsibilities details how each program works with and distributes grant funds to grantees. The grantees' projects selected for funding must address the identified problem(s), and support the overall State goals and performance measures. Each Project Coordinator is responsible for overseeing evidence-based law enforcement programs within their region. These data-driven traffic safety enforcement programs prevent traffic violations, crashes, and crash fatalities and injuries in areas most at risk for such incidents.

The Regional Traffic Safety Program goals, objectives, problem identification, and community applications, along with instructions on completing the application, are provided to the regional programs by the GHSP. Each Regional Traffic Safety project has goals and objectives tailored to their area based on the problems specific to their region. The following data sources are used to identify traffic safety problems in each region: West Virginia DOT Crash Database, FARS, DMV, Alcohol Beverage Control Administration, and the GHSP Traffic Safety Programs

Each Regional Traffic Safety Program supported with GHSP funds is required to conduct the countermeasure activities detailed in this section within their assigned region. All Regional Traffic Safety Projects include funding to support a Project Coordinator who is responsible for coordination of the regional program and the GHSP required activities. The Project Coordinators are required to conduct the following activities within their assigned region.

### Coordination/Project Coordinator

1. The Project Director must successfully complete a NHTSA Project Management Class (Managing Highway Safety Programs).
2. Establish and maintain a Task Force of Highway Safety advocates and hold a minimum of three meetings per year. A list of members must be maintained on file in the Coordinator's office.
3. Establish and conduct a Regional Highway Safety Award/Recognition program.
4. Make face-to-face contact with **ALL** law enforcement agencies (Executive or designee) in the region's service area, and secure Letters of Support and Cooperation. Documentation must be kept on file.
5. Develop and support one LEL within **each** law enforcement agency.
6. Maintain a relationship with DMV Regional Offices and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the assigned regional program area. Provide public information and education (PI&E), face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, etc.
7. Conduct or facilitate meaningful public engagement with underserved and/or overrepresented communities within the region, to elicit constructive feedback regarding highway safety programming.
8. Assist the GHSP with the following surveys:
  - a. Statewide Seat Belt Use Survey (June—every year)
  - b. Other surveys as needed/required

9. Obtain a signed Conditions and Assurances/Sub-Grantee Contract from all grant fund recipients.
10. Provide the GHSP with the following reports by the 20th of each month. *All listed reports are to cover the previous month (i.e., the report for June is due July 20), **except** for the calendar, which should be for the upcoming month (i.e., July calendar of events is due June 20).*
  - a. Monthly Activity Report
  - b. Data Report
  - c. CPS Installations
  - d. Media Report
  - e. Equipment Listing
  - f. Request for Reimbursement
  - g. Calendar of **Upcoming** Events
11. Complete a Subgrantee Risk Assessment Report on all subgrantees by August 31.
12. Prepare and submit to the GHSP a detailed year-end Annual Report by the close of business no later than November 1.

### Countermeasure Strategy

#### Alcohol and Other Drugs Activities

1. In August and December, participate in the National Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over (DSOGPO) mobilizations, through enforcement and media/public awareness.
2. Participate in the state mobilization periods – Thanksgiving, Christmas/New Year’s, West Virginia Day, Fourth of July weekend, and Labor Day, through enforcement and media/public awareness. Each participating law enforcement agency shall conduct a minimum of four enforcement events during mobilizations.
3. Conduct at least one media activity per month. Each Coordinator shall attach a dollar value to earned media and track that value and the number of people reached.
4. Conduct two age group activities per year.
5. Work with the GHSP LEL Office and the DRE Coordinator to facilitate training opportunities for impaired driving.
6. Ensure underage enforcement efforts are conducted at least once per quarter.
7. Develop and support a minimum of one college PI&E activity per year.

8. Assist local law enforcement agencies in obtaining funding from the Commission on Drunk Driving Prevention (CDDP).
9. Complete and submit all DUI Information Sheets (i.e., DMV Form 314) and follow up at the request of GHSP to ensure 100 percent submission.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Sections 2, 5, and 6**

### Occupant Protection Activities

1. Participate in the May Click It or Ticket (CIOT) mobilization through enforcement and media/public awareness.
2. Participate in each of the three additional Occupant Protection (OP) enforcement mobilizations (October, March, and August). Each participating law enforcement agency shall conduct a minimum of four enforcement events during mobilizations.
3. Conduct at least one media activity per month related to OP/seat belt use/seat belt enforcement activities. Each Coordinator shall attach a dollar value to earned media and track that value, as well as the number of people reached.
4. Conduct “spot check” nonscientific pre- and post-seat belt surveys for each mobilization to assess results of enforcement.
5. Obtain written seat belt use policies by all law enforcement agencies receiving Federal Highway Safety funds and maintain on file in the Coordinator’s office. These policies must be written and outline sanctions for non-compliance.
6. Conduct a minimum of four OP Informational Checkpoints (preferably one per each of the four CIOT mobilizations) per year.
7. Complete the 32-hour Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technician course and remain current with certification.
8. Establish and maintain a minimum of three CPS fitting stations in the region, with a goal of at least one per county.
9. Maintain a list of current CPS Technicians in the region and increase the number of certified technicians in the region.
10. Conduct a minimum of four CPS clinics/events per year.
11. Conduct two age group-specific activities (i.e., visit Driver Education classes, High Schools, Middle Schools, Grade Schools).
12. Conduct two child safety seat classes or demonstrations (i.e., one to eight hours) to a captive audience (i.e., hospital, daycare, church, civic, etc.) per year.
13. Conduct PI&E and media events during Child Passenger Safety Week in September, including direct participation on Seat Check Saturday.



14. Conduct nighttime seat belt enforcement at least twice during each of the four CIOT mobilizations. Nighttime is considered 6:00 p.m. or after.
15. Encourage enforcement of seat belt laws during all enforcement efforts (DUI, speed, etc.).

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 2: Sections 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7**

### Media Activities

1. Facilitate earned media for local, regional, and national highway safety activities.
2. Cooperate with the GHSP Public Information staff in statewide media campaigns.
3. Maintain a media file with all the activity generated by the Regional Program and report the activities to the GHSP Public Information Officer and GHSP Program Manager on a monthly basis. Share photographs and other media coverage of events with the GHSP for inclusion on social media pages/ Highway Safety publications.
4. Conduct media buys in accordance with the GHSP Media Planning Guide.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Sections 2 and 5; Chapter 2: Section 3**

### Traffic Records Activities

1. Support efforts to convert law enforcement agencies to electronic reporting.
2. Ensure the Region's section of the CDDP/Highway Safety database is maintained in a timely and accurate manner. All information is to be entered within one week after an activity has occurred and double checked for accuracy.
3. Upon request by the GHSP Director and/or staff, Coordinators are to facilitate the submission of fatality reports that have not been submitted or need corrected.

**Citation: Supports Uniform Guideline 10 and Traffic Records Program Assessment recommendation**

### Other Traffic Safety Initiatives

1. Conduct or facilitate at least one PI&E activity annually that incorporates topics on each of the following: ATV safety, roadside safety (Move Over law), older driver safety, pedestrian safety, bicycle safety, and commercial vehicle safety.
2. Participate in the August Target Red (red lights and stop signs) Campaign through enforcement and media activities. Pre- and post-enforcement surveys are required.
3. Conduct at least one PI&E/enforcement activity during each of the following: Back to School in August/September and School Bus Safety Week in October.
4. Conduct at least one Distracted Driving (cell phone/texting) enforcement activity per month.

5. Conduct or facilitate at least one activity/media event on distracted driving (cell phone/texting) per month. If the Region owns or has access to a distracted driving simulator, it is to be incorporated in at least one activity per month on average, with additional activities encouraged during Distracted Driving month (April). If the Coordinator does not have access to a simulator, then another activity must be planned (i.e., work in conjunction with another Coordinator that does have a simulator).
6. Conduct a minimum of two speed/aggressive driving enforcement activities per month.

**Citations: CTW, Chapter 3, Section 2; Chapter 4: Sections 2, Chapter 8: Section 4**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

- Decrease alcohol-impaired driving fatalities 4.6 percent from 65 (2017–2021 rolling average) to 62 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- Decrease unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in all seating positions 5 percent from 80 (2017–2021 rolling average) to 76 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- Decrease pedestrian fatalities 7.4 percent from 27 (2017–2021 rolling average) to 25 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- Decrease bicyclist fatalities 33.3 percent from 3 (2017–2021 rolling average) to 2 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024.

### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 402

**Estimated Allocation:** \$ 2.6 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, and input received from our public engagement efforts.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines*

The GHSP provides leadership, training, and technical assistance, as well as centralized planning, implementation, and coordination efforts to achieve and sustain an effective and successful community/regional approach to traffic enforcement services in West Virginia. The GHSP has designed a program in which all Regional Traffic Safety Programs coordinate and implement traffic safety programs within their region in collaboration with the West Virginia State Police, GHSP LEL, local law enforcement agencies, CPS technicians, schools, and safety stakeholders. These countermeasure strategies are guided by Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 15 – Traffic Enforcement Services.

In addition, the Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators support implementation of the State’s *Strategic Impaired Driving Plan*, *Strategic Occupant Protection Plan*, *Evidence-Based Enforcement Program Plan for DUI*, *Target Red*, and other traffic safety initiatives, coordinate and provide training, facilitate earned media activities, and create innovative ideas and activities to aid their region in meeting the State’s traffic safety performance targets. In addition, each region has a distracted driving simulator. The Coordinators will

coordinate the use of their simulator at various schools, fairs, and other public events to increase awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

West Virginia's *Strategic Impaired Driving Plan* and *Strategic Occupant Protection Plan* were developed following input from NHTSA facilitated assessments. In addition, the Regional Traffic Safety Programs activities are informed by and support the following Highway Safety Program Guidelines:

- No. 8—Impaired Driving.
- No. 10—Traffic Records.
- No. 13—Older Driver Safety.
- No. 14—Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety.
- No. 15—Traffic Enforcement Service.
- No. 19—Speed Management.
- No. 20—Occupant Protection.

## Occupant Protection

### *Problem ID the Strategy Addresses*

#### Seat Belt Use

West Virginia's unrestrained fatality 5-year average has decreased for every 5-year period since 1998–2002. In 2018, West Virginia reached 90.5 percent observed seat belt usage rate, the State's highest rate ever until 2022. Seat belt usage above 90 percent was maintained in 2019, with a 90.2 percent observed usage rate. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, West Virginia opted to take advantage of the CARES Act waiver, and a scientific observational seat belt survey was not conducted in 2020. The survey resumed in June 2021, and saw the seat belt use rate fall to 88.1 percent. The 2022 seat belt usage rate climbed to 92.5 percent, a new high. The GHSP and its many partners remain committed to increasing belt use again and have set a short-term goal of achieving our previous seat belt usage rate of 90.2 percent by September 30, 2023, with our long-term goal of attaining a 100 percent seat belt usage rate.

In the 2022 report titled "[2022 West Virginia Observational Seat Belt Survey Report](#)," prepared by Cambridge Systematics, Inc., and based on West Virginia's annual scientific seat belt survey conducted on weekdays and weekends from May 31 through June 12, 2022, it was reported that:

- When passengers were not in a vehicle, male drivers were significantly less likely to be using seat belts compared to female drivers (89.09 versus 96.91 percent), although belt use increased when passengers were in the vehicle (93.87 percent for male drivers versus 98.85 percent for female drivers).
- Both drivers and passengers in pick-up trucks were the least likely to be observed wearing a seat belt compared to occupants in other types of vehicles.

- Primary roadways showed the highest observed seat belt usage rate (95.4 percent) while secondary roadways had the lowest observed seat belt usage rate (91.6 percent).

From 2017 to 2021, an average of 281 motor vehicle fatalities occurred on the State’s roadways. During the same 5-year period, the yearly average number of passenger fatalities that were unrestrained was 80 (28 percent), many of whom would have likely survived had they been belted. The State’s unrestrained fatality 5-year average has consistently decreased for every 5-year period since 1998–2002. Males between the ages of 16–35 are overrepresented in motor vehicle fatalities and crashes in West Virginia. Most of the fatal crashes are single vehicles departing two-lane rural roadways, with pick-up trucks being overrepresented. Most of these crashes occur on weekend nights. While most of these crashes are due to failure to maintain control, speed, impairment, and failure to obey traffic control devices, the nonuse of seat belts contributes to the fatalities and serious injuries that occur because of these crashes, as evidenced by lower use rates in rural areas by young males, mostly in pick-up trucks. Occupant protection-related data are available in Table 10.

**Table 10 Occupant Protection Fatalities and Seat Belt Usage**

Core Performance Measure	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unrestrained Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities in All Seating Positions	137	113	93	99	80	98	70	73	84	74	NA
Statewide Observed Seat Belt Use (Front Seat Outboard Occupants)	84.0%	82.2%	87.8%	89.0%	86.8%	89.7%	90.5%	90.2%	NA <sup>2</sup>	88.1%	92.5%
Seat Belt Citations Issued <sup>1</sup>	5,190	9,099	15,862	15,002	13,196	11,783	10,094	9,563	7,911	7,783	7,703
Child Safety Seat Citations Issued	317	411	420	285	289	234	152	149	102	75	91

Source: GHSP 2023.

<sup>1</sup> These totals are for all grant-funded activity, not just activity during seat belt enforcement.

<sup>2</sup> No Seat Belt Survey was conducted in 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### Child Passenger Safety (CPS)

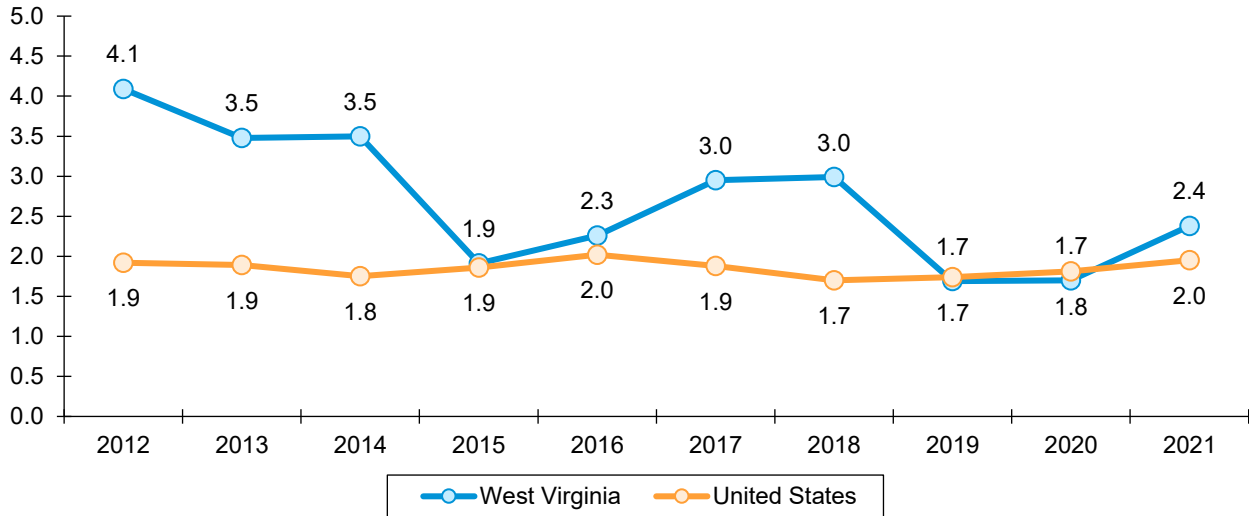
Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the West Virginia CPS Program was greatly affected. The program lost a significant number of certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) in the last few years. The biggest focus of this program will be to provide Certification and Renewal Courses across the State to certify new CPSTs as well as recertify former CPSTs, especially those whose certifications expired during calendar years 2020 and 2021.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children, teens, and young adults in the Nation, and third-highest leading cause of death for all ages. In West Virginia alone, total crash-related death costs are \$417.3 million (\$3.7 million in medical costs and \$413.6 million in work loss costs), based on 2018 data. Children represent four percent, or \$16 million, and teens represent 9 percent, or \$37 million of these costs.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, according to FARS

<sup>5</sup> [State-Specific Costs of Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths | Motor Vehicle Safety | CDC Injury Center](#) (select WV), May 2022.

data found in NHTSA’s Traffic Safety Facts—Children (DOT HS 813 456), revised May 2023, West Virginia’s fatality rate in traffic crashes in 2021 for children aged 0 through 14 is higher than the national average (2.4 versus 2.0) as shown in Figure 23. Also of note in the report, based on known restraint use, 67 percent of the children riding with unrestrained passenger vehicle drivers also were unrestrained.

**Figure 23 Motor Vehicle Crash Death Rates, Children Age 0 through 14, West Virginia and U.S. 2012 to 2021**



Source: NHTSA Traffic Safety Fact Sheet, 2023<sup>6</sup>.

### Countermeasure Strategy

#### Seat Belt Use

Proper and consistent use of seat belts and child safety seats is known to be the single most effective protection against death and a mitigating factor in the severity of traffic crashes. The GHSP has revised the comprehensive FFY2023 Strategic Occupant Protection Plan (described in this section) to reduce injuries and fatalities by increasing seat belt and child passenger restraint use. This multiyear plan is evaluated on an annual basis, with changes made as needed. This comprehensive approach utilizes city, county, and State law enforcement agencies, six Regional Traffic Safety Coordinators, community partners, and the media, and will be coordinated statewide by the GHSP Occupant Protection Coordinator with assistance from the GHSP Lead LEL Dean Capehart.

#### Evidence-Based High-Visibility Enforcement Activities

Annually, each RTSC will arrange at least one seat belt enforcement activity in each of their areas no less frequently than every two weeks. The seven West Virginia State Police (WVSP) coordinators will arrange a minimum of one seat belt enforcement activity within each of their troop areas every two weeks. Nighttime enforcement is emphasized; however, some enforcement activities will occur during daylight hours. Some

<sup>6</sup> [NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts. Children. Report No. DOT HS 813 456. May 2023.](#)

daylight hours during the warmer months fall within the designated nighttime timeframe. Enforcement activities will focus on roadways that produced low seat belt use rates, as determined by the annual scientific seat belt survey. The GHSP Occupant Protection Coordinator will coordinate the efforts of the RTSCs, law enforcement projects, and West Virginia State Police troops. These three groups cover 100 percent of the State. The GHSP is divided into eight highway safety regions (regional programs and law enforcement projects), and the WVSP is divided into seven troops. The regions are divided as shown in Table 11.

**Table 11 Regional Traffic Safety Programs**

Region	Name	Counties	2021 Population
1	Metro Valley Highway Safety Program	Calhoun, Clay, Gilmer, Kanawha, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt	232,134
2	Safe Traffic Operations Program	Cabell, Jackson, Lincoln, Mason, Putnam, Wayne	265,647
3	Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Highway Safety Program	Wood	84,678
4	Northern Regional Highway Safety Program	Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio, Pleasants, Tyler, Wetzel	155,731
5	High-Technology Corridor Highway Safety Program	Barbour, Doddridge, Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph, Taylor, Tucker, Upshur	378,598
6	Regional Law Enforcement Program	Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, Pendleton	276,986
7	Southern Regional Highway Safety Program	Boone, Braxton, Fayette, Greenbrier, Logan, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Webster	258,030
8	West Virginia Coalfields Highway Safety Program	McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Monroe, Summers, Wyoming	149,245
<b>Total State Population</b>			<b>1,801,049</b>

Source: GHSP 2023, U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates Data Profiles.



Each Regional Traffic Safety Program provides seat belt enforcement funding to police and sheriff's departments in their jurisdiction. Short-term, high-visibility enforcement campaigns have been observed to increase belt use more among traditionally lower-belt-use groups, including young drivers. West Virginia uses a variety of high-visibility seat belt enforcement efforts to reach nonusers. Approved examples of high-visibility enforcement activities are:

- **Saturation Patrols.** Officers will patrol areas identified as high motor vehicle crash areas. Crash data will provide this information and will help pinpoint locations that are overrepresented crash sites involving teenagers, males 16 to 35, pick-up trucks, and rural areas. Seventy-eight percent of the State's counties are classified as rural, so by using all West Virginia State Police troops in conjunction with multiple municipal and county law enforcement agencies, there will be significant enforcement in rural areas.
- **Directed Patrols.** Officers will patrol areas identified as low seat belt use rate areas as determined by the annual scientific seat belt survey. Since many of the low-use rate areas have historically been in rural parts of the State, agencies will target many rural areas. Patrol sites also will include areas near high schools and at locations near movie theaters, malls, and other areas where teenagers typically congregate, and during times they would most likely be enroute to and from these locations.
- **Informational Checkpoints.** Officers conduct informational checkpoints to remind citizens of the need for adults and children to use seat belts/child safety seats and provide information on the occupant protection laws of the State. Not only will checkpoints be established on roadways that are heavily traveled to reach as many individuals as possible, but they also will be established in rural areas and near high schools. Checkpoints generally occur during the nighttime timeframe, and by doing so, the checkpoints will target unrestrained nighttime drivers.
- **Participation in the CIOT National Mobilizations.** West Virginia will conduct CIOT enforcement in conjunction with the FFY2024–2026 National CIOT campaigns. Funds provided to the regional coordinators will be granted to law enforcement agencies based on a previously developed enforcement plan designed by the coordinator, law enforcement agencies, and local law enforcement liaisons in each region, as well as the GHSP Occupant Protection Coordinator. Enforcement activities will occur daily in each region, during day and nighttime hours, with nighttime enforcement emphasized. Funds will be provided directly to the WVSP to be divided among the seven troop areas. The WVSP will be primarily responsible for patrolling roadways outside of the city and county jurisdictions and in rural areas where city and county law enforcement agencies are unable to participate due to low-manpower departments. By using WVSP in conjunction with municipal and county law enforcement agencies, enforcement and education will serve all geographic areas within the State, including the locations with at least 70 percent of the State's unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities and serious injuries.
- **Participation in a Minimum of Three Additional Enforcement Mobilizations.** At minimum, law enforcement agencies will participate in the following three mandatory two-week mobilizations in October (to coincide with NHTSA Region 3 Operation Crash Reduction mobilization), March, and August each year.

Within the timeframes established for each wave, law enforcement agencies will select at least four enforcement days (which may be continual days or separated). All procedures will be conducted using the same methodology as outlined in the CIOT Mobilization. The results of the annual scientific seat belt surveys will be used to pinpoint low-seat belt use areas, and special emphasis will be placed on, but not limited to, enforcement in those areas. Each of the regional coordinators will conduct "spot



check,” nonscientific seat belt surveys following each mobilization to assess results of enforcement. It will be recommended that pre-enforcement surveys also are conducted to compare data before and after enforcement.

- **Conduct Seat Belt Enforcement during all Routine Enforcement Efforts.** Routine enforcement efforts include normal traffic patrols, DUI patrols, etc. By requiring seat belt enforcement during all enforcement efforts, especially DUI enforcement, there will be additional enforcement efforts involving unrestrained nighttime drivers.
- **State-Mandated Mobilizations.** The GHSP has designated the following periods as State-mandated DUI mobilization periods: Thanksgiving, Christmas (national DSOGPO), New Year’s (national DSOGPO), West Virginia Day, and the Fourth of July. During these designated DUI mobilization periods, the regional coordinators, county and city law enforcement agencies, and the WVSP also utilize the opportunity to enforce the seat belt law.

In addition, the following three activities support West Virginia’s occupant protection enforcement efforts:

- **Seat Belt Policy.** Written seat belt use policies are required for all law enforcement agencies receiving Federal Highway Safety funds. These policies must be written and outline sanctions for noncompliance.
- **Letters Of Support.** The GHSP will obtain letters from the West Virginia Chiefs of Police Association, the West Virginia Sheriffs Association, and the West Virginia Fraternal Order of Police.
- **Data Tracking and Support Program.** The Data Tracking and Agency Support Program (DTASP) consists of motivated law enforcement agencies across the State of West Virginia who provide data in their efforts in highway safety enforcement. The reported data consists of all highway safety enforcement, not just those efforts conducted on highway safety overtime. This collected data is utilized to identify and target highway safety issues through the State, and to justify grant expenditures. The program also supports these agencies by providing highway safety-related equipment and training that might not normally be available to them. The GHSP will continue to support this successful program in FFY2023, and efforts to increase individual participation are ongoing by the Coordinator of this program.

## Public Information and Education Activities

Each Regional Coordinator will conduct public education and information activities in their program area. The Coordinator will be required to conduct at least one event each month (unless otherwise noted) and the WVSP Coordinator will conduct one activity each month (unless otherwise noted) within their troop area. Approved examples of PI&E activities include:

- Presenting seat belt, child safety seat, and safe driving information to a group such as school classes, employers, civic groups, and church groups, in a face-to-face setting or in a public forum.
- Presenting seat belt, child safety seat, and safe driving information through a media outlet such as television, radio, newspaper, magazine article, or at a local fair or festival.
- CPS Clinics/Events—RTSCs will set up a minimum of one CPS clinic/event quarterly in which parents/ caregivers can have their child safety seats checked or installed. These events should be set up as a community event with publicity/media coverage.



## Public Participation and Engagement

The GHSP plans to focus on seat belt usage in year one of the 3HSP (FFY2024). Using feedback identified during a focus group-style discussion in McDowell County in May 2023, the GHSP plans to conduct more discussions like this one in other counties with historically low seat belt usage rates. Although the sample size was small, data from the 2022 Attitudes and Awareness Survey will also be used to target counties with lower self-reporting of seat belt use. Non-scientific observational surveys conducted in FFY2023 have also been used to identify areas where seat belt usage and child safety device usage is lacking. Focus group-style discussions and possibly additional targeted surveys will be used to reach a more targeted audience in each identified county and municipality. The feedback from these initial efforts will be analyzed and reviewed to make determinations on next steps in years two and three of the 3HSP (FFY2025 and FFY2026).

## Media Plan—CIOT Mobilization and Enforcement Waves

All forms of media will be utilized during the May CIOT Mobilization, and the three State enforcement mobilizations, which will run concurrently with the enforcement campaigns. Funds will be used for statewide television (network, cable, and streaming) and radio airtime, as well as billboards. Digital advertising will also be utilized to reach targeted audiences, through social media and other digital venues. West Virginia will use a portion of its Section 402 to educate the public regarding the risks of leaving a child or unattended passenger in a vehicle after the vehicle motor is deactivated by the operator.

The regional coordinators also will implement earned media activities in their respective areas. Earned media includes radio and television public service announcements, media talk shows, and newspaper articles/promotions. Seat belt use/nonuse in local motor vehicle crashes will be stressed with media representatives. Each Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinator and WVSP Coordinator will be required to conduct at least one media activity per month during the year, with emphasis on target groups (rural residents and high-risk drivers) and advertise enforcement activities before, during, and after each enforcement event within their area or troop. A media activity involves the coverage of an ongoing event or dissemination of information through a media outlet.

These media events are more than simple advisories of an upcoming enforcement event. The GHSP receives a report of each media event that includes the coverage area or circulation of the media used and the amount of money it would have cost to purchase the media time/space.

## Target Audience

The primary target audience is:

1. High-risk drivers (males 16 to 35, pick-up truck drivers, nighttime drivers, teenaged drivers and passengers).
2. Rural drivers.

The GHSP Public Information Specialist will work very closely with the media vendors to ensure that the media is reaching the target audiences, will coordinate the media program, and is responsible for arranging the media purchases and reporting.

Targeted highway safety discussions will be conducted within communities identified with low seat belt usage rates. The feedback from these discussions will be reviewed and analyzed and compared to data from the

2022 Attitudes and Awareness Surveys as well as observational seat belt and child passenger safety surveys to determine if there are any targeted audiences we are missing, including communities overrepresented in fatality data and communities underrepresented in education and media efforts.

## Strategies and Countermeasures for Rural Residents/Road Users

The majority of West Virginia’s counties are designated as rural, although only 30 percent of the total population lives in the rural counties. The largest city in West Virginia, Charleston, has 47,129 residents, and Kanawha County, the largest county in the State and home of Charleston, has 175,515 residents. The second-largest city in West Virginia is Huntington, with 45,746 residents, per 2022 Census estimates.

The GHSP has divided the State into eight regions, with a coordinator assigned to seven of the eight regions (see Section 3.1 for a description of Regional Traffic Safety Coordinator responsibilities assigned to each region). Each of these regions encompasses one “major” city/town, as well as a large rural area. All activities conducted reach a large portion of the rural communities in each region. Some of these activities include:

- **Law Enforcement Patrols/Checkpoints.** Crash data can pinpoint rural areas where crashes are occurring, and the appropriate law enforcement (city, county, or State) agency will target those areas. Officers also will patrol in areas with low seat belt use rates, as identified in the annual scientific seat belt survey, which is very common in rural areas. At least half of the sites for the annual scientific seat belt survey are in rural areas, and law enforcement focuses on these areas. Emphasis also will be placed on these areas during the May CIOT mobilization and three State seat belt enforcement mobilizations.
- **Data Tracking and Agency Support Program.** The Data Tracking and Agency Support Program (DTASP) consists of motivated law enforcement agencies across the State of West Virginia who provide data on their efforts in highway safety enforcement. This collected data is utilized to identify and target highway safety issues throughout the State, and to justify grant expenditures. The program also supports these agencies by providing highway safety-related equipment and training that might not normally be available to them.
- **Public Information and Education.** In rural areas, most residents receive medical treatment through county/community health centers. The Regional Coordinators will provide public information and education to these centers through brochures and pamphlets and through the numerous health fairs hosted by these centers. In addition, coordinators will conduct child safety seat clinics at these facilities or in conjunction with other local agencies, in which the participants not only learn about safe child safety seat practices, but also receive information on seat belt use by adults. Coordinators also set up booths to promote all aspects of highway safety at town/county fairs that are held in rural communities. The coordinators also will provide educational classes/programs/assemblies to schools in their areas regarding seat belt safety. In West Virginia, many counties only have one high school in the entire county. Educational programs will be provided through this avenue via driver’s education programs, SADD, and other special programs such as *Battle of the Belts* seat belt challenges.
- **Media.** A statewide media campaign will be conducted every May for the CIOT mobilization. A paid television and radio campaign reaching every part of the State will be conducted each year. A statewide billboard campaign will also run concurrently, with many of these located in rural areas of the State. The coordinators also will conduct earned media activities in their respective areas, which will include television and radio public service announcements, media talk shows, and newspaper articles. Again, all the coordinators provide services to rural areas in their region.

The media plan also includes a digital media aspect, including social media. Five regions ( 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8) and the GHSP have Facebook pages; the State office, as well as Region 4, also actively manage Twitter accounts. All social media pages cross-promote the CIOT message, as well as share related messages from NHTSA and other organizations across the country. In addition to regular social media posts, the GHSP will pay for boosted posts on Facebook and Twitter that can be specifically targeted to the key demographics. By boosting posts on Facebook, GHSP has greatly increased page likes, reach, and public interaction.

## Training Activities

- The GHSP Occupant Protection Coordinator, all GHSP Program Managers, the GHSP LELs, and the Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators will attend the NHTSA Occupant Protection Course.
- The GHSP Lead LEL will coordinate annual presentations of the NHTSA Traffic Occupant Protection and Strategies (TOPS) Course for each law enforcement agency LEL receiving Federal Highway Safety grant funds.
- The GHSP will strive to provide basic Child Passenger Safety (CPS) training to law enforcement agencies receiving Federal Highway Safety grant funds.
- The GHSP will continue to annually sponsor, through its Regional Coordinators, the NHTSA 32-Hour CPS Technician Course and 8-Hour Renewal Course to certify and recertify technicians in every county, as well as assist them in maintaining certification by offering CPS Technician (CPST) Technical Updates for the continuing education (CEU) requirements.

## Age Group Activities

Regional Coordinators will conduct two age group-specific activities per year in their area. Age group-specific activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **High School Driver Education Classes/General Assemblies**—Visits to driver education classes or high school assemblies to educate students regarding the dangers of non-seat belt use. Information regarding West Virginia’s Graduated Driver Licensing law also will be a focus (non-seat belt use is against the law).
- **Grade School and Middle School Programs**—Visit schools to educate students regarding the dangers of non-seat belt use.
- **High School Seat Belt Challenge**—An annual event conducted by Regional Coordinators to encourage competition among each region’s high schools and to promote seat belt use by students, as well as staff and parents.
- **High School Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Groups**—Regional Coordinators shall work with the SADD groups in their regions along with the State SADD Program, to assist them in their occupant protection-related and other highway safety activities.

The Coordinators are encouraged to place emphasis on projects and activities that address the primary target audiences (high-risk drivers and rural residents) as much as possible. High-risk drivers will be

reached primarily through high school programs, and rural residents will be reached through school programs, as well as through community activities such as local fairs and various community events.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 2: Sections 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7**

### Child Passenger Safety (CPS)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the West Virginia CPS Program was greatly affected. The program lost a significant number of certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) during the pandemic due to not recertifying. Many of our CPSTs are first responders and were on the frontlines during the height of the pandemic and were not able to take the time to complete certification requirements. The continued focus of this program will be to provide Certification and Renewal Courses across the State to certify new CPSTs as well as recertify former CPSTs, especially those whose certifications expired during calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Keeping children safe on West Virginia’s roadways is a priority for the GHSP, and CPS will continue to be an integral part of the GHSP Occupant Protection Program. West Virginia’s CPS Program provides educational materials, training, and supplies needed to fulfill this mission. In addition, Regional Coordinators will continue to host local events, such as car seat checkup events, support existing fitting stations, and develop additional fitting stations, as well as implement earned media opportunities. The GHSP will place special emphasis on national events, such as National CPS Week in September, and paid media. West Virginia currently has 240 certified CPSTs and 10 CPST Instructors (250 total), which is an overall increase of 74 from last year.

One of the greatest issues facing CPS programs across West Virginia—and across the United States—is the misuse or nonuse of child passenger safety devices. In West Virginia, not securing a child properly while operating a vehicle is a primary offense. Data involving misuse and nonuse of CPS devices in WV is not always easily accessible. To better track misuse and nonuse data, the GHSP will continue to encourage usage and implementation of the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCF) with CPSTs and fitting stations statewide.

The GHSP, with assistance from the LEL Office, conducted a small statewide nonscientific CPS use rate survey in FFY2023 to more adequately determine the needs of West Virginia’s children. Observational surveys were conducted by a CPST Instructor twice in each of the following locations: Beckley, Charleston, Clarksburg, Huntington, Martinsburg, Morgantown, Parkersburg, Princeton, and Wheeling. Correct usage of child safety seats across the nine locations was 66.67 percent. The single largest issue was children riding in the front seat who did not appear to be old enough to be in the front nor old enough to be restrained with a seat belt only. The usage rates are as follows:

<b>Beckley</b>	<b>42.86%</b>	<b>Morgantown</b>	89.47%
<b>Charleston</b>	<b>53.33%</b>	<b>Parkersburg</b>	75.00%
<b>Clarksburg</b>	<b>69.23%</b>	<b>Princeton</b>	<b>11.76%</b>
<b>Huntington</b>	71.43%	<b>Wheeling</b>	88.00%
<b>Martinsburg</b>	73.91%		

West Virginia currently has 45 permanent fitting stations in 30 counties that are monitored and supplied by the six Regional Coordinators and the GHSP CPS Coordinator. This is an increase of three fitting stations from last year. Each fitting station is staffed by one or more current nationally certified CPS Technicians.

Each Regional Coordinator (and most regional assistants) routinely install and inspect cars seats in their regions. The listing of fitting stations can be found on the GHSP website at <https://highwaysafety.wv.gov>, as well as on the NHTSA website ([www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)).

The GHSP's goal is to maintain at least one fitting station in each of the State's 55 counties. By continuing to train new technicians and recertify current technicians, the GHSP will be able to meet that goal. The CPS Program will continue to train and educate on CPS topics even after the goal of one fitting station in each county is attained. By establishing fitting stations in all counties, all rural and urban residents will be served, including all residents who fall below the Federal poverty guidelines. The CPS Program also will strive to host informational sessions or booths and seat check events in every county with a fitting station, and until fitting stations are established in all counties, the program also will attempt to host informational booths at community events in counties NOT served directly by a fitting station.

Currently, there is at least one certified technician or fitting station in 40 of the 55 counties, directly serving 89.4 percent of the State's population. When factoring in the 15 counties which have access to a fitting station in a bordering county, 100 percent of the State's population is served. Many residents in rural counties regularly receive services and goods from bordering counties, so it would not be uncommon for them to also receive CPS services in a neighboring county. It is estimated that 78 percent of the State's counties are rural, and 53 percent of the State's counties have poverty rates higher than the State poverty rate. Compared to the national poverty level of 11.6 percent, 52 of 55 counties have higher poverty rates. With the current number of fitting stations and technicians, the CPS program is directly serving 66 percent of all counties above the State poverty level, and 100 percent of the counties above the State poverty level are served indirectly. The CPS program also is serving 65 percent of all rural counties directly, and 100 percent of rural counties are directly or indirectly served.

In trying to reach at-risk populations—those less likely to use proper child restraint devices correctly, or at all—the GHSP believes that in reaching rural counties and counties with higher poverty levels, these at-risk populations also will be reached. Populations at risk for no child restraint use or inaccurate child restraint use tend to live in rural areas, be less educated, from a minority population, or even speak English as a second language. According to 2022 U.S. Census estimates, West Virginia's minority population is approximately 8.5 percent of the overall State population. Minority populations tend to live in more urban areas, and every West Virginia county with the urban designation has at least one fitting station, with the exception of Marshall County. Those less likely to wear a seat belt also are less likely to use child restraint devices. The State's CIOT campaign targets drivers who do not wear seat belts, especially in rural areas. During education and enforcement of the State's seat belt laws, education and enforcement of child restraint use also is highly encouraged.

The Regional Coordinators work to increase the number of certified technicians in their region, as well as encourage current technicians to maintain their certification past the first 2-year certification cycle. The overall goal is to obtain a 100 percent recertification rate, but due to changes in employment and lack of interest, a 100 percent recertification rate may not be attainable. A more realistic goal is to maintain a recertification rate higher than the national rate. In FFY2022, West Virginia's recertification rate was 30.8 percent, well below the national recertification rate of 52.0 percent. So far in FFY2023, West Virginia has a recertification rate of 60.0 percent (through December 2022), the most current rate received, slightly lower than the national rate of 62.7 percent during the same timeframe. Although there is always a need for new technicians, by encouraging current technicians to maintain their certification and recertify every two years, the availability of certified technicians in every community will become more prevalent and the children

of West Virginia will be better served. Due to losing so many CPSTs in 2020 and 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, a continued focus to get former CPSTs recertified and to train new CPSTs will remain.

Each fiscal year, in conjunction with Safe Kids Worldwide, the GHSP offers a variety of opportunities to certify new CPSTs, recertify former CPSTs who have let their certification lapse, and meet education requirements for current CPSTs to renew and maintain their certification. The GHSP offers:

- **Thirty-Two-Hour CPS Technician Certification Courses (at least four courses per fiscal year).** This course combines classroom instruction, hands-on work with car seats and vehicles, and a community safety seat check event, where students demonstrate proper use and installation of child restraints and seatbelts and then teach these skills to parents and caregivers. Successful completion of this course certifies the individual as a CPS Technician for two years.
- **Eight-Hour CPS Technician Renewal Courses (one to three courses per fiscal year, depending on need).** This is not an update/refresher class. This course is meant for expired CPS Technicians who have maintained their CPS knowledge and their hands-on skills. It is expected that students attempting to renew their certifications stayed involved in CPS programs and activities and have kept up with changes in the field by reading technical updates, attending other CPS classes, and working with nonexpired technicians to keep their installation skills current, but who, for one reason or another, allowed their certifications to expire.
- **Six-Hour CPST Technical Updates (three to five per fiscal year).** Upon completion of this course, the technician earns all six CEUs needed to meet the education requirement to renew their CPST certification with Safe Kids. Due to the pandemic, the GHSP has not hosted any CPST Technical Updates, but with the assistance of the CPS Committee, the GHSP plans to get back to creating continuing education opportunities for WV CPSTs.
- **Seat Check Events (dozens throughout the fiscal year).** CPSTs are required to install/check a minimum number of seats throughout their two-year certification period. Hosting seat check events across the State not only provides community members with the opportunity to ensure that their child's safety seats are properly installed, but it also allows CPSTs to continue to develop their skills and meet their certification requirements.

Seat check events are another venue the GHSP will be able to use to reach a major community overrepresented in crash fatalities: older road users. West Virginia has a high proportion of grandparents raising grandchildren, partially due to the ongoing, opioid epidemic that hit the State several years ago that has yet to ease up. The GHSP plans to look into the CarFit program and get some staff and regional staff trained in FFY2024. Once trained, these individuals will be able to better engage grandparents during the seat check events, not just for their grandchildren's safety, but for their own. Depending on the feedback from this program in year one (FFY2024), it may be expanded in years two and three (FFY2025 and FFY2026). The GHSP will make efforts to reach out and possibly partner with AARP West Virginia to better target this overrepresented demographic during year one. Results from this partnership will determine next steps in years two and three (FFY2025 and FFY2026).





Each of the six Regional Coordinators is responsible for recruiting students for any CPS courses offered in their region, as well as in neighboring regions. Coordinators send out emails and flyers to potential technicians and even expired technicians. They communicate with their law enforcement contacts as well as community agencies in their region. The statewide coordinator also provides notification of upcoming CPST courses on a statewide level via email, phone, and in-person visits. Social media also is used on both the regional and statewide levels in order to promote the importance of being a certified CPST, as well as to promote the courses and increase the number of CPSTs across the State.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter: 2 Sections 4, 5 and 7**

### Occupant Protection Task Force

The GHSP continues to expand its Occupant Protection Task Force. The task force was formed in 2010 as part of a West Virginia SHSP subcommittee, which is a cooperative effort between various safety agencies and organizations to update and implement the SHSP. Meetings occur three to four times per year to discuss ways to work together to more effectively address occupant protection issues in the State. It is comprised of the following members:

- **Lt. Adam Ballard**, Region 8 Traffic Safety Coordinator, Mercer CSO
- **Ian Barrett**, Senior Health and Safety Specialist, WV American Water
- **Amy Boggs**, Occupant Protection and Child Passenger Safety Coordinator, WV Governors Highway Safety Program (GHSP); Task Force Co-Chair
- **Aimee Cantrell**, Public Information Specialist II, WV GHSP
- **Dean Capehart**, Lead Law Enforcement Liaison, WV GHSP; CPST Lead Instructor

- **Jeb Corey**, CEO, C&H Taxi
- **Frank Enko**, Regional Program Manager, NHTSA Region 3
- **Beau Evans**, Region 2 Traffic Safety Coordinator, City of Huntington
- **Vacant**, EMS-C Coordinator, WV Department of Health and Human Resources
- **Jim Garrity**, Public and Legislative Affairs Manager, AAA East Coast
- **Major. John Garten**, Region 1&3 Traffic Safety Coordinator, Charleston PD
- **Joshua Grant**, Driver Education Coordinator, WV Department of Education
- **Donna Hardy**, Highway Engineer, WV Division of Highways
- **Mary Jarrell**, Motorcycle Safety Training Coordinator, WV GHSP
- **Steven Jarvis**, Impaired Driving Coordinator, WV GHSP
- **Thomas Judy**, Safety and Loss Control Manager, Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- **Heather Kessel**, Distracted Driving Coordinator, WV GHSP
- **Robin Lassak**, Grant Coordinator, WV Public Service Commission
- **Barbara Lobert**, Division Manager, WV GHSP
- **Pat McCarty**, Region 5 Traffic Safety Coordinator, City of Clarksburg
- **Bill Naff**, Occupant Protection and Child Passenger Safety Coordinator, NHTSA Region 3
- **Theresa Podguski**, Director of Legislative Affairs, AAA East Coast
- **Sean Snyder**, Region 4 Traffic Safety Coordinator and CPST Lead Instructor, City of Wheeling
- **Peggy Stone**, Director of Transportation Services, Lincoln County Schools
- **Erin Timbrook**, EMS-C Coordinator, WV Department of Health and Human Resources
- **Bob Tipton**, Division Director, WV GHSP, CPST Instructor
- **Sgt. Jamie Wilhite**, Region 7 Traffic Safety Coordinator, Beckley PD
- **Kenny Yoakum**, Director, WV Fleet Management Office

## CPS Committee

The GHSP continues to revitalize and build its Child Passenger Safety Committee. The committee was formed in 2019 to assist the State CPS Coordinator with various aspects of the program, including training,



continuing education, and guidelines. Meetings occur two to three times per year. The Committee is comprised of the State CPS Coordinator, all CPST Instructors, all regional coordinators and assistants, GHSP staff, NHTSA Regional staff, and some non-instructor CPSTs.

## Legislation

During the 2013 legislative session, West Virginia lawmakers passed a primary seat belt law that went into effect July 9, 2013. The law carries a \$25 fine, but no points or court fees. Back seat passengers over the age of 18 are not required to wear seat belts.

West Virginia’s CPS law requires children up to the age of eight and less than 4’9” must be secured in a child safety device. There currently is not any legislation pending to modify this law. The GHSP is considering updating the CPS law to include more detailed safety information.

## Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses

1. Decrease unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in all seating positions 5 percent from 80 (2017–2021 rolling average) to 76 (2020–2024 rolling average) by 2024.
2. Increase observed seat belt use for passenger vehicles to 92.8 percent by December 31, 2024.

## Unrestrained Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, All Seat Positions

**Maintain or reduce unrestrained passenger vehicle occupant fatalities, all seat positions from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 80 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	76
2025	76
2026	74

**Rationale:** West Virginia has seen its unrestrained fatalities trend downwards over the last ten years (2012-2021) 6.6 percent a year on average. Additionally, West Virginia’s observed seat belt usage rate has leveled off in the low 90 percent range and it becomes increasingly harder to improve this rate. West Virginia believes with its planned programming a five percent reduction to 76 in 2024 and maintaining that for 2025 is reasonable. By 2026 West Virginia projects a target of 74 or fewer unrestrained fatalities, a reduction of 7.5 percent from the current five-year rolling average of 80.

## Observed Seat Belt Use for Passenger Vehicles, Front Seat Outboard Occupants

**Increase observed seat belt use for passenger vehicles, front seat outboard occupants from the 2022 rate of 92.5 percent to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	92.8
2025	93
2026	93.2

**Rationale:** Seat belt use has significantly increased in West Virginia over the past several years rising from 84 percent in 2012 to an all-time high of 92.5 percent in 2022. As such, an increasing goal of 92.8, 93, and 93.2 percent for 2024-2026 respectively is considered a reasonable goal to achieve over multiple years while maintaining a relatively high observable seat belt rate.

## *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 402 and 405b

**Estimated Allocation:** \$2.05 million, \$1.75 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines*

The last NHTSA Occupant Protection Assessment was conducted March 28–April 1, 2022. Recommendations from this report are included throughout this section, including the possibility of upgrading the child restraint law, conducting Driver Attitude and Awareness surveys, and revitalizing the CPS Committee. The plan’s activities cover the entire State in a comprehensive, sustained, and strategic manner through implementation of the following components:

- High-Visibility Enforcement Activities
- Public Education and Information Activities
- Media Activities
- Training Activities
- Age Group Activities
- Child Passenger Safety
- Legislation
- Evaluation
- Occupant protection Task force

The GHSP will annually evaluate the State’s comprehensive, multiyear Strategic Occupant Protection Plan (described in this section) and make changes as needed based on new data, input received through public engagement activities, and new information and/or guidance from NHTSA. The plan’s comprehensive approach utilizes city, county, and State law enforcement agencies, six Regional Traffic Safety Coordinators, community partners, and the media, and will be coordinated statewide by the GHSP Occupant Protection Coordinator with assistance from the GHSP Child Passenger Safety Coordinator Amy Boggs and the GHSP Lead LEL Dean Capehart.

## *Impaired Driving*

### *Problem ID the Strategy Addresses*

In 2009, there were 112 alcohol-impaired fatalities in West Virginia which represented 31 percent of the State’s motor vehicle fatalities. These fatalities trended downward over the next 10 years, reaching an all-time low of 56 alcohol-impaired fatalities (21 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities) in 2019. During the COVID-19 pandemic the Nation saw an increase in alcohol-impaired fatalities and West Virginia was no exception. In 2020, the State’s alcohol-impaired fatalities rose to 76, representing 26 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities and a 36 percent increase from 2019, but dropped 14 percent to 65 in 2021. Impaired driving arrests made using Highway Safety grant funds declined 13 percent in FFY2022 to 735. Table 12 details alcohol-impaired fatalities, citations, and arrests for 2012 to 2021.

**Table 12 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities, Citations, and Arrests**

Core Performance Measures	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Alcohol-Impaired Fatalities (driver or motorcycle operator with a 0.08 BAC or greater)	91	84	72	68	72	57	56	76	65	NA
Impaired Driving Citations Issued and Arrests Made <sup>1</sup>	3,676	3,604	3,518	3,406	2,807	1,487	1,270	1,116	849	735

Source: GHSP 2023.

<sup>1</sup> Arrests made during grant-funded activities only.

Table 13 shows the data used to identify the targeted for increased DUI enforcement. The counties are determined by county population (i.e., counties more than 30,000 people), availability of alcohol (i.e., number of Alcohol Beverage Control Administration (ABCA) licenses within the county), and alcohol/drug-related fatal crashes within each county. West Virginia’s multiyear Strategic Impaired Driving Plan’s enforcement effort includes the West Virginia State Police, city, and county law enforcement agencies that represent every Class I, II, and III city. The plan covers the entire State.

GHSP will place emphasis for enhanced enforcement in the counties highlighted in red (1st priority), yellow (2nd priority), and green (3rd priority) during the FFY2024 grant year in addition to the baseline DUI enforcement effort conducted in all counties. This data will be updated for FFY2025 and 2026 which may change where DUI enforcement is focused in those years. The color codes shown below the title explain the population and licenses metrics used to determine the priority counties.

**Table 13 DUI Enforcement Special Emphasis Counties**

Population		Licenses	
<b>First</b>	County Population more than 100,000	<b>First</b>	More than 200 Licenses in County
<b>Second</b>	County Population 50,000 to 100,000	<b>Second</b>	100–200 Licenses in County
<b>Third</b>	County Population 30,000 to 50,000	<b>Third</b>	50–100 Licenses in County

Region	County	2022 Population	2022 ABCA Licenses On & Off Premise	2021 Fatal Crashes <sup>1</sup> >.08 BAC	2022 Total DUI Arrests	DUI Arrests per 1,000 Population	2022 DREs	DRE Officer within 1 hour <sup>2</sup>	2022 Drug-Related Arrests <sup>3</sup>
1	Calhoun	6,068	12	0	18	2.97	0	No	3
1	Clay	7,814	15	0	10	1.28	0	Yes	0
1	Gilmer	7,325	15	0	10	1.37	0	No	2
1	Kanawha	175,515	507	7	522	2.97	7	Yes	273
1	Ritchie	8,207	25	0	26	3.17	0	Yes	4
1	Roane	13,834	20	0	19	1.37	0	Yes	8
1	Wirt	5,091	11	1	4	0.79	0	Yes	2
<b>Region 1 Totals</b>		<b>223,854</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>2.72 Avg.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>97.5% Covered</b>	<b>292 47.95%</b>

Region	County	2022 Population	2022 ABCA Licenses On & Off Premise	2021 Fatal Crashes <sup>1</sup> >.08 BAC	2022 Total DUI Arrests	DUI Arrests per 1,000 Population	2022 DREs	DRE Officer within 1 hour <sup>2</sup>	2022 Drug-Related Arrests <sup>3</sup>
2	Cabell	92,730	325	0	160	1.73	3	Yes	57
2	Jackson	27,716	64	2	54	1.95	1	Yes	15
2	Lincoln	19,901	25	2	9	0.45	0	Yes	4
2	Mason	25,000	65	1	74	2.96	0	Yes	39
2	Putnam	57,015	119	0	182	3.19	0	Yes	49
2	Wayne	37,998	73	5	69	1.82	0	Yes	28
<b>Region 2 Totals</b>		<b>260,360</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>2.10 Avg.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100% Covered</b>	<b>192 35.04%</b>
3	Wood	83,340	272	6	126	1.51	2	Yes	17
<b>Region 3 Totals</b>		<b>83,340</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1.51 Avg.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100% Covered</b>	<b>17 13.49%</b>
4	Brooke	21,733	100	0	75	3.45	2	Yes	17
4	Hancock	28,172	112	0	92	3.27	2	Yes	17
4	Marshall	29,752	107	0	103	3.46	2	Yes	27
4	Ohio	41,447	216	2	97	2.34	1	Yes	26
4	Pleasants	7,586	16	2	16	2.11	0	Yes	4
4	Tyler	8,183	18	1	13	1.59	0	Yes	5
4	Wetzel	14,025	51	2	18	1.28	0	Yes	1
<b>Region 4 Totals</b>		<b>150,898</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>2.74 Avg.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100% Covered</b>	<b>97 23.43%</b>
5	Barbour	15,414	33	2	18	1.17	0	Yes	1
5	Doddridge	7,698	11	0	20	2.60	0	Yes	1
5	Harrison	64,915	221	0	127	1.96	1	Yes	31
5	Lewis	16,767	56	0	28	1.67	0	Yes	5
5	Marion	55,952	170	0	158	2.82	1	Yes	38
5	Monongalia	106,869	312	1	245	2.29	2	Yes	38
5	Preston	34,172	97	1	91	2.66	0	Yes	23
5	Randolph	27,600	90	0	48	1.74	0	Yes	8
5	Taylor	16,342	24	0	35	2.14	0	Yes	10
5	Tucker	6,568	48	1	9	1.37	0	Yes	0
5	Upshur	23,712	62	2	78	3.29	0	Yes	37
<b>Region 5 Totals</b>		<b>376,009</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>2.28 Avg.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100% Covered</b>	<b>192 22.40%</b>
6	Berkeley	129,490	245	4	318	2.46	1	Yes	50
6	Grant	10,968	27	0	16	1.46	0	Yes	3
6	Hampshire	23,468	52	2	74	3.15	0	Yes	27

Region	County	2022 Population	2022 ABCA Licenses On & Off Premise	2021 Fatal Crashes <sup>1</sup> >.08 BAC	2022 Total DUI Arrests	DUI Arrests per 1,000 Population	2022 DREs	DRE Officer within 1 hour <sup>2</sup>	2022 Drug-Related Arrests <sup>3</sup>
6	Hardy	14,192	43	2	57	4.02	1	Yes	17
6	Jefferson	58,979	137	2	199	3.37	1	Yes	39
6	Mineral	26,855	68	0	49	1.82	0	Yes	4
6	Morgan	17,430	50	1	41	2.35	0	Yes	15
6	Pendleton	6,011	26	0	7	1.16	0	No	1
<b>Region 6 Totals</b>		<b>287,393</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>2.65 Avg.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>97.91% Covered</b>	<b>156 20.50%</b>
7	Boone	20,968	46	1	32	1.53	0	Yes	18
7	Braxton	12,185	39	0	11	0.90	0	Yes	3
7	Fayette	39,487	130	2	134	3.39	1	Yes	78
7	Greenbrier	32,435	160	1	107	3.30	0	Yes	35
7	Logan	31,316	84	0	110	3.51	2	Yes	75
7	Nicholas	24,335	75	2	76	3.12	0	Yes	24
7	Pocahontas	7,819	42	1	17	2.17	0	No	3
7	Raleigh	72,882	195	1	277	3.80	4	Yes	103
7	Webster	8,167	11	1	4	0.49	0	Yes	4
<b>Region 7 Totals</b>		<b>249,594</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>3.08 Avg.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>96.87% Covered</b>	<b>343 44.66%</b>
8	McDowell	17,850	35	1	81	4.54	0	Yes	48
8	Mercer	58,700	151	2	176	3.00	4	Yes	64
8	Mingo	22,573	52	1	19	0.84	0	Yes	5
8	Monroe	12,296	23	0	12	0.98	0	Yes	4
8	Summers	11,762	33	1	31	2.64	0	Yes	13
8	Wyoming	20,527	39	1	37	1.80	0	Yes	9
<b>Region 8 Totals</b>		<b>143,708</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>2.48 Avg.</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100% Covered</b>	<b>143 40.17%</b>
<b>West Virginia Total</b>		<b>1,775,156</b>	<b>5,035</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>4,439</b>	<b>2.50 Avg.</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>98% of Pop. Covered</b>	<b>1,432 32.26%</b>

Source: West Virginia GHSP, 2023.

<sup>1</sup> 2021 Drug-Related Arrests includes combined with alcohol.



### Countermeasure Strategy

The GHSP, with oversight of the West Virginia Commission on Drunk Driving Prevention Board (CDDP), annually develop and approve the *West Virginia Impaired Driving Plan*. This statewide plan is used to reduce impaired-driving related crashes, injuries, and fatalities by using a sustained enforcement effort coordinated with a media campaign and following all other recommendations of NHTSA Guideline No. 8.

In FFY2024–2026, West Virginia will take a comprehensive approach to fight impaired driving crashes using city, county, and state law enforcement agencies, Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators, the Alcohol Beverage Control Administration (ABCA), community agencies, schools, retail, wholesale alcohol agents, and Drug Recognition Experts (DRE). The GHSP’s Impaired Driving Coordinator, state DRE Coordinator, and Law Enforcement Liaison will lead statewide planning, management, and coordination. The six Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators and the West Virginia State Police will coordinate their regions to ensure compliance with this plan.

### Evidence-Based High-Visibility Enforcement Activities

Publicized checkpoint and saturation patrol programs, using specially trained officers and equipment, have been proven effective in reducing alcohol-related fatal, injury, and property damage crashes up to 20 percent each. Approved examples of “high-visibility enforcement activities” West Virginia will use include:

- **Saturation Patrols.** Officers will patrol areas identified as high-DUI areas in groups of at least three patrols. Officers will prepare and stage in the enforcement area to alert motorist to the high-visibility saturated patrol.
- **Directed Patrols.** Officers will patrol areas identified as high-DUI areas based upon Crash and Criminal Data.



- **Sobriety Checkpoints.** Officers will conduct checkpoints according to GHSP guidelines or their local department regulations, requiring a large number of officers (usually 10 to 12).
- **Low-Manpower Sobriety Checkpoints.** Officers will conduct checkpoints according to GHSP guidelines or local department regulations requiring six or fewer officers.
- **Underage Alcohol Sales Stings.** Officers will work with ABCA investigators or within department regulations in an effort to monitor the sale of alcohol to underage purchasers and make arrests of violators.
- **Participate in the National and State Mobilizations.** Officers will participate in four law enforcement events during the national mobilization and as mandated for the State mobilizations.
- **Participate in the Enhanced Enforcement Program** as mandated by the GHSP.
- **Conduct Enforcement Activities during Peak Alcohol-Related Crash Times.** Peak Alcohol-Related Crash Times are defined as holidays and special events, and at high alcohol-related crash locations.

**DUI enforcement will be focused where there are people, access to alcohol, DUI fatal crashes, and increased use of DREs.** For FFY2024, twenty-two counties have at least one agency with a DRE Officer, covering a population of 1,248,166 or 68.6 percent of State population and 50 counties have access to a DRE Officer within 1-hour call-out time, covering a population of 1,777,809 or 97.8 percent of State population. The ABCA will coordinate their grant-funded enforcement with local law enforcement and the West Virginia State Police and will emphasize those counties highlighted in Table 13.

The West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Administration will coordinate their grant-funded enforcement efforts in the priority counties. Focusing DUI enforcement on the priority counties will address 66.8 percent of the State's population and 64.4 percent of the DUI fatal crash locations.

### State-Mandated Mobilizations

The GHSP conducts three State DUI enforcement mobilizations in addition to the two national Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over (DSOGPO) mobilizations each year. The GHSP designates the following as State Mandated Mobilization Periods: Thanksgiving weekend, the days immediately surrounding and including West Virginia Day (June 20<sup>th</sup>), and the days immediately surrounding and including Fourth of July. During these designated mobilization periods, the Regional Coordinators and the West Virginia State Police will attempt to get as many law enforcement agencies as possible to conduct DUI enforcement activities.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Sections 2, 6 and 7**

### Education and Information Activities

Each RTSC will conduct public education and information activities in their area. The coordinator is required to conduct at least one event per quarter. The West Virginia State Police coordinator will conduct one activity per quarter within their troop area. In coordinating these efforts, an estimated 780 public education and information activities will occur statewide during each one-year period. Approved examples of public education and information activities are as follows:

- Presenting impaired driving prevention information to a group, such as school classes, civic groups, and church groups, in a face-to-face setting or in a public forum.
- Presenting impaired driving prevention information through a media outlet such as TV, radio, newspaper, or at a local fair or festival.

## Media Plan

### Mobilization Period

Dates for the National Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over impaired driving campaign are determined by NHTSA. During the national mobilization periods, the GHSP will conduct and coordinate a media campaign along with enforcement efforts. The media campaign will include an enforcement message.

### State-Mandated Mobilizations

The GHSP will conduct a media campaign that includes either an enforcement or social norming message in coordination with the three State-mandated enforcement mobilizations Thanksgiving weekend, West Virginia Day, and Fourth of July.

### Advertising Period

These campaigns will coincide with the national and State mobilizations. Each advertising campaign will begin one week before the mobilization and run through each mobilization period. The State also will maintain a baseline of DUI commercials throughout the year to enhance the State’s sustained enforcement efforts. Each regional coordinator is provided additional funding to ensure culturally relevant messages specific to their region.

### Target Profile

The primary target audience is broken out into eight at-risk segments, listed below from “Highest” to “Lowest” by relative degrees of “at risk”:

#### Relative Degrees of “At-Risk”

Highest	
	Binge Drinkers <sup>1</sup>
	Underage Drinkers—Youth 16 to 20 years old
	Discontented Blue Collar Workers—Men 21 to 34 years old
	Middle-Class Risk Takers—Men 25 to 54 years old
	Young Adult Male Drinkers—Men 21 to 24 years old
	Midlife Motorcyclists—Men 45 to 54 who combine drinking and riding
	Responsible Drinkers—Adults 25 to 44 years old
	Socially Accountable Drinkers—Adults 25 to 34 years old
Lowest	

<sup>1</sup> Includes people who drink for the sole purpose of getting as drunk as they can as fast as they can.



In addition to the primary audiences described above, we also will target the following secondary audiences:

- College Youth.
- Unemployed Youths.
- Unemployed Men.
- Blue Collar Workers.

### **Media Purchasing Demographic**

This plan will provide emphasis on the five highest “at-risk” groups: Binge Drinkers, Underage Drinkers, Discontented Blue Collar, Middle-Class Risk Takers, and Young Adult Male Drinkers. These at-risk groups are represented in the following media demographics:

- Primary: Men 18 to 34 and Youth 16 to 20.
- Secondary: Middle-Class Risk Takers 25 to 54.

### **Media Planned for the FFY2024 for Enforcement Mobilizations**

Venues for advertising the enforcement mobilizations will include network and cable television, radio, electronic signage, Internet/social media, and printed and electronic billboards. Other creative media advertising will be engaged on an as-needed basis.

### **Overall Media Strategy**

- Continue to generate frequency in order to affect behavioral change.
- Maintain the use of television via broadcast (reach) and cable (frequency).
- Use radio to increase the frequency of the message.
- Use digital media to reach our targets in the fastest growing medium today (specifically the underage drinkers).

### **Network Television and Radio Strategy**

The GHSP Public Affairs Coordinator works closely with the media vendors to ensure the proper types of media are reaching the target audiences. The Public Affairs Coordinator coordinates the media program and is responsible for arranging the media purchases and reporting.

### **Earned and Other Media Efforts**

The GHSP Public Affairs Coordinator will work closely with the Regional Coordinators to air enforcement messages during the national Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign. This media effort will target the young adult and underage driver and will occur before, during, and after the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

campaign. In addition, earned media will be attained by distributing press releases and speaking with news outlets regarding high-visibility enforcement efforts.

Each Regional Traffic Safety Program and West Virginia State Police coordinator will be required to conduct at least two media activities per month, and advertise enforcement activities before, during, and after each enforcement event within their area or troop. A media activity involves the coverage of an ongoing event or dissemination of information through a media outlet. This combined effort will result in at least 1,000 media activities a year. Media activities include the following:

- TV, radio, and newspaper coverage of a DUI related activity.
- TV, radio, newspaper, and signage used to relay DUI related information to the public.
- Billboard or other media (e.g., stadium ad, movies).

These events are more than a simple media advisory of an upcoming enforcement event (i.e., media notification of the sobriety checkpoint). The GHSP will receive a report of each media event. This report includes the coverage area or circulation of the media used and the amount of money it would have cost the State to purchase the media time/space.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Section 5**

## Training Activities

The GHSP has developed the Law Enforcement Training Subcommittee and certified in-service credit for several training classes focusing on impaired driving issues. All classes offered by the GHSP are free of charge to any member of law enforcement agencies. The following classes are available:

- **Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) Refresher Course**—This is a recertification class for SFST. This is incorporated into the ARIDE course but is still available for those not taking ARIDE.
- **Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE)**—ARIDE was created to address the gap in training between the SFST and the Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC/DRE) Program. This is a 16-hour class offered in each of the Regional Traffic Safety Programs each year.
- **Operation and Management of Sobriety Checkpoints**—This class is for law enforcement supervisors and law enforcement officers who plan, supervise, and conduct sobriety checkpoints.
- **Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) School**—Since DREs tend to be “cream of the crop” officers, many will be selected for other positions that take them out of the daily DRE lane of responsibilities. After serving a minimum 3-year obligation, as many as 25 percent will need to be replaced. The GHSP will support an annual DRE school until sufficient DREs are certified and available statewide.

The 2017 West Virginia Legislative session passed SB 386, or the medical use of cannabis law. This bill allowed for the medical use of cannabis via prescription in pill form only. As of May 26, 2023, there are 51 operational dispensaries throughout the State and 23,299 approved patients (28,016 applications).



The DRE program continues to be critical to monitoring and enforcing impaired driving issues on West Virginia highways due to our own and surrounding States' cannabis laws. Part of the development process of the DRE program is providing professional development opportunities to the certified DREs. These include, but are not limited to, national events such as the Borkenstein Conference, International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) DRE Conference, and related courses provided by the Institute of Police Technology and Management (IPTM). Additionally, it is a goal of the DRE Program to select, train, and certify DREs as DRE Instructors. Once this is complete, West Virginia will not need to rely on other State's instructors when setting up and conducting future DRE classes.

State DRE Coordinator Joey Koher has been a key leader in statewide law enforcement training. Sergeant Koher uses these opportunities to identify motivated officers with a demonstrated performance in impaired driving enforcement for possible DRE selection and additional training. The goal is to have a DRE available for call out within one hour of each county seat in the State and for all Regional Traffic Safety Programs to have a sufficient number of DREs to handle drug-impaired drivers. Prior to becoming a DEC State in 2013, the drug-related percentage (drug only and drug/alcohol combined) of statewide impaired driving arrests was less than 10 percent. At the end of 2022, the percentage was 33.9 percent. This increase is directly attributed to more diverse impaired driving training opportunities provided by the GHSP through West Virginia's Drug Evaluation Classification (WV DEC) Program. The WV DEC Program incorporates the optional "SFST Introduction to Drugged Driving" section to all WV law enforcement officers during their required Police Academy training.

Additionally, West Virginia's DRE program continued to teach the Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) courses in 2022 as has been done for many years. These drug-impaired driving courses have dramatically increased the quality of all drug-impaired drivers arrests. West Virginia currently has 36 certified DREs (2 to 6 DREs per region) and 11 certified DRE Instructors. Sergeant Koher will continue the statewide training events to identify additional officers for DRE training.

Starting in FFY2024, the GHSP will work to enhance the DEC Program by adding a law enforcement phlebotomy program. A phlebotomy program would increase the chances the DREs could obtain a blood

sample for testing to complete their evaluations and create a rapid collection of the secondary chemical biological test for court which would satisfy the legal desire for chemical testing information. The result would be a better result in the adjudication process.

Also during FFY2024–2026, the GHSP will work with the West Virginia Supreme Court to facilitate an electronic warrant system which results in quicker and more streamlined procedures for officers to obtain biological blood samples for impaired driving investigations. E-warrants would reduce the number of cases which do not have biological samples due to refusals and the number of DUI-D cases which do not have a secondary chemical test.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Sections 2, 5 and 7**

## Age Group Activities

All Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators will conduct two age group-specific activities per year in their area. West Virginia State Police coordinators also will conduct two age group-specific activities per year in their troop area. This totals 26 age group-specific activities throughout the State. In addition, each RTSC will conduct one ongoing alcohol project focusing on the 21- to 34-year-old age group, bringing the total of age group-specific activities to 32 statewide. Age group-specific activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- **High School Prom Activity.** Officers will assist schools during prom in monitoring for alcohol use. Pre-prom visits by law enforcement deter the use of alcohol.
- **High School Graduation Activity.** Officers will be involved in alcohol-free graduation parties and assist school personnel in the education of students concerning alcohol abuse.
- **High School Drivers Education Classes.** Visits to Drivers Education classes to educate students against driving while impaired.
- **High School SADD Groups.** Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators work with SADD groups in their region to assist with their activities and assist in the Statewide SADD Program.
- **College Project.** The WVCIA (West Virginia Collegiate Initiative to Address High-Risk Substance Use), is a statewide organization partially funded through the Region 5 GHSP grant. The organization proactively addresses collegiate alcohol, other drug, and associated violence issues. Through the use of evidence-based strategies, the program promotes healthy campus environments through self-regulatory initiatives, information dissemination, public policy influence, cooperation with prevention partners, and technical assistance. Member organizations and partners of WVCIA include universities, colleges, community and technical colleges throughout West Virginia, State agencies, community partners, and more. The group is governed by an executive committee and three standing committees—professional development, public policy, and the assessment committee. The organization holds quarterly group meetings, provides professional development opportunities for members, and participates in statewide assessments and strategic planning.
- **Ongoing Project for 21 to 34 Age Groups.** The Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators will work with area bars, distributors, and community agencies to establish an ongoing project that will assist 21- to 34-year-old individuals to avoid driving under the influence by finding alternative transportation (e.g., designated drivers, public transportation, and TIPs Training).

## Underage Activities

The Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators will conduct a minimum of one coordinated statewide enforcement effort and eight other local underage activities each year, in addition to the high-visibility enforcement activities previously cited. Annual underage activities include:

- Each Regional Coordinator will support to encourage the development of local SADD Chapters.
- All Regional Traffic Safety Program and West Virginia State Police coordinators will conduct a statewide underage alcohol sting on the same night across the State. The ABCA will be involved to enforce rules violations against owners of stores found in violation.
- Each Traffic Safety Coordinator will conduct a minimum of four underage stings with an ABCA enforcement officer during the year in addition to the statewide sting.
- The Regional Traffic Safety Coordinators will work with the colleges in their areas to implement the approved college project.
- The Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators will work with the high school SADD chapters to help the public information and education messages reach the high school audience.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Section 6**

## Focused Patrols

In addition to the required enforcement activities, officers will conduct patrol activities focusing on locating drug- and alcohol-impaired drivers each year. Officers will conduct this patrol during their regular duty while focusing their activities on impaired drivers. This activity does not replace the required weekly activity. The Regional Traffic Safety Program and West Virginia State Police coordinators will track DUI arrests made by on-duty officers to evaluate this area.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 1: Sections 2, 5, 6, and 7**

## Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses

### Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities

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**Maintain or reduce alcohol impaired driving fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 65 to the following in the preceding years:**

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2024	62
2025	62
2026	60

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**Rationale:** The number of fatalities involving an impaired driver has trended downward four percent from 2012-2021 on average each year. Current programmatic efforts in the state appear to be impacting these fatalities. Therefore, reducing impaired driving fatalities by five percent from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 65 to 62 fatalities in 2024 and maintaining that for 2025 is reasonable. By 2026 West Virginia projects a target of 60 or fewer impaired driving fatalities, a reduction of 7.7 percent from the current five-year rolling average of 65.

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## *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 402, 405d

**Estimated Allocation:** \$2.5 million, \$4.3 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia's traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA's Uniform Guidelines*

The Impaired Driving countermeasure strategies and the State's Impaired Driving Strategic Plan align with the elements in NHTSA's Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 8 - Impaired Driving. The last NHTSA-facilitated Impaired Driving Assessment in West Virginia was conducted on February 2–6, 2015. During this 3HSP, the GHSP plans to request a NHTSA Impaired Driving assessment, likely in FFY2025, to help assess our program and identify additional actions we can take to strengthen our program.

## **Motorcycle Safety**

### *Problem ID the Strategy Addresses*

While all West Virginia motorcycle riders and passengers are required to properly wear a DOT-certified helmet, in 2021, 44 percent of all motorcycle fatalities were unhelmeted; in 2020, 53 percent were unhelmeted compared to 32 percent that were unhelmeted in 2019. Since 2012, the proportion of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities compared to all motorcyclist fatalities in West Virginia has slightly decreased. In 2012, unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities represented 45 percent of all motorcyclist fatalities, the percentage decreased to as low as 22 percent in 2015, before it spiked again to 34 percent and 38 percent in 2016 and 2017, respectively. The percent of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities started to decrease in 2018 and 2019, but it reached the highest (53 percent) in 2020 and came down to 44 percent in 2021. Of significance is preliminary data which shows 12 unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities in 2021, which is a drop from 20 in 2020.

Individuals who want to operate a motorcycle in West Virginia must first obtain either a motorcycle endorsement (F) on their driver's license or a Class F motorcycle only driver's license. A knowledge test must be taken at the Division of Motor Vehicles or online first to obtain a motorcycle learner's permit. After holding the learner's permit for 7 days, the individual must then take and successfully pass an on-cycle skills test before an endorsement can be added to the license or before a motorcycle only license can be issued. The individual may instead opt to take a motorcycle safety course developed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation instead of the State riding skills test to receive their motorcycle license endorsement. Unfortunately, many individuals do not follow through with the training requirement. Motorcycle fatality data for 2018 to 2021 shows that of the 132 motorcyclist fatalities, 73 motorcycle operators (55 percent) did not have an F endorsement on their driver's license.

Data on motorcyclist fatalities are provided in Table 14.



**Table 14 Motorcyclist Fatalities**

Core Performance Measures	Actual									
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Motorcyclist Fatalities	31	24	26	32	29	26	39	28	38	27
Unhelmeted Motorcyclist Fatalities	14	8	7	7	10	10	14	9	20	12

Source: FARS, April 2023.

The GHSP has administered the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program since 2006; the program is supported by both State and Federal funds. Section 405f Federal funds are used to enhance the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program through paid media and PI&E, delivering “Share the Road with Motorcycles” messages to motorists, while State funds collected from motorcycle registrations and license fees are used for motorcyclist training, media, and PI&E. State-funded media campaigns will continue to be used to encourage motorcyclists to obtain their F endorsement. Unhelmeted fatalities will be addressed through an emphasis on West Virginia’s motorcycle helmet law in media campaigns and the State’s Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program training courses. Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program staff attend health/safety fairs and motorcycle-based events with the Safe Motorcyclist Awareness and Recognition Trainer (SMART) motorcycle safety training simulator which gives individuals a simulated motorcycle riding experience. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, there were no health/safety fairs to attend but attendance at these events will likely increase in FFY2023.

**Countermeasure Strategy**

West Virginia’s Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program will continue to monitor crash data provided by the West Virginia Division of Highways and FARS to help identify problem areas and locations. Additional training sites in rural and remote areas will afford the program greater contact with potential students seeking motorcycle training in both the Basic Rider’s Course and the Experienced Rider’s Course.

West Virginia’s Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program will continue to employ a statewide advertisement program through paid media. Radio and television ads and billboards will be geared to reach both motorcycle riders and motor vehicle drivers. This approach will hopefully make both drivers and riders aware of each other and each individual’s



responsibility to the other, thus creating a safer driving environment.

- Training funds for motorcycle law enforcement officers and travel funds for Rider Coaches for Smart Trainer training at various motorcycle themed events across the State.

- Paid media to promote motorcycle safety and motorist awareness messages. Radio and television ads and billboards will be purchased to reach motor vehicle drivers to increase awareness of each individual’s responsibility to share the road with motorcyclists to create safer roadways.
- Development and distribution of public information materials promoting safety messages for motorists to be aware of and share the road with motorcyclists.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 5: Sections 1, 3 and 4**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

#### **Motorcyclist Fatalities**

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**Maintain or reduce motorcyclist fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 32 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	30
2025	30
2026	28

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**Rationale:** The 2017-2021 five-year average of motorcyclist fatalities is 32. Motorcycle fatalities have remained relatively flat over the last five years therefore it is believed a decrease in motorcyclist fatalities to 30, or 6.25 percent reduction, is reasonable for 2024 and to maintain for 2025 and work towards reducing motorcyclist fatalities to 28 or 12.5 percent reduction from the current five-year rolling average of 32 is reasonable.

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#### **Unhelmeted Motorcyclist Fatalities**

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**Maintain or reduce unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 13 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	11
2025	11
2026	10

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**Rationale:** West Virginia does have a mandatory helmet law and due to Federal restrictions on use of funds GHSP is limited in the number of programs to impact this area. With low numbers to begin with, it becomes increasingly difficult to account for fluctuations from one year to the next. Because of this the most practical justification for determining the 2024 target is to reduce the number of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities to 11 in 2024 and maintain that in 2025 while working towards reducing the unhelmeted fatalities to ten or fewer by 2026, a 23 percent reduction over the 2017-2021 rolling average.

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### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 405f

**Estimated Allocation:** \$175,000

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.



## How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines

The activities described in the Motorcycle Safety countermeasure strategy align with the elements in NHTSA’s Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 3 - Motorcycle Safety. During this three-year period the GHSP plans to request a NHTSA Motorcycle Safety assessment to help assess our training program and media efforts and identify additional actions we can take to strengthen West Virginia’s approach to reducing motorcycle fatalities and serious injuries.

## Speed Enforcement

### Problem ID the Strategy Addresses

Speeding-related fatalities have decreased significantly over the last 10 years in West Virginia. In the last decade, 2012 had the highest number of fatalities at 144 and dropped to a low of 60 fatalities in 2016 and 2020. Despite an uptick since 2017, the State has experienced a significant decrease of 47.8 percent from 115 in 2011 to 60 in 2020.

Analysis conducted for West Virginia’s SHSP update showed that speeding in combination with other high-risk behaviors (e.g., impaired driving and failure to wear a seat belt) continues to be prevalent in a majority of fatalities. As a result, speed and aggressive driving will continue to be an emphasis area in the next SHSP as well. Speeding-related fatalities and citations are shown in Table 15.

**Table 15 Speeding-Related Fatalities and Citations**

Core Performance Measure	Actual									
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Speeding-Related Fatalities	130	66	66	60	84	88	85	60	64	NA
Speeding Citations Issued <sup>1</sup>	14,229	10,729	11,279	11,368	13,952	10,817	13,317	11,035	10,374	13,847

Source: West Virginia GHSP, 2023.

<sup>1</sup> Reflects citations issued during grant-funded activities only.

### Countermeasure Strategy

- The seven Regional Traffic Safety Programs coordinate their region’s speed enforcement effort in collaboration with the seven West Virginia State Police troops. Each region is responsible for overtime enforcement, coordinating a statewide speed enforcement mobilization on top speed crash roadways and earned media.
- Overtime speed enforcement funds for counties to conduct directed and saturation speed enforcement patrols.
- Paid media by the GHSP to support law enforcement’s targeted enforcement focusing on speed violations.

Speed enforcement is conducted year-round each grant year and mobilizations occur statewide in July and September, usually two weeks in each month. With speed being a major factor in a majority of West Virginia’s roadway fatalities, the GHSP plans to continue conducting annual statewide speed enforcement. Locations and dates will be determined through crash and injury data on top speed crash roadways.

The West Virginia Legislature passed legislation allowing Class 1, 2, and 3 cities to use radar speed measurements as prima facie evidence for speeding violations. The LEL Office will continue to provide annual speed radar training statewide for law enforcement officers in 2024–2026.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 3: Sections 2 and 4**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

#### **Speeding-Related Fatalities**

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**Maintain or reduce speeding-related fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 76 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	73
2025	73
2026	71

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**Rationale:** The average number of speed-related fatalities between 2012 and 2021 fell 8.6 percent on average per year. The West Virginia GHSP has invested enforcement and media funding to address speeding related fatalities. Programs to address unbelted occupants and impaired drivers may have a correlation in affecting speeding-related fatalities as well. Reducing speeding-related fatalities to 73 for 2024 and maintaining that in 2025 seems a reasonable approach to develop a consistent downward trend for 2026 target of 71 which would be a 6.6 percent reduction from the current five-year rolling average of 76.

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### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 402

**Estimated Allocation:** \$1.6 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines*

The Regional Traffic Safety Programs coordinate and implement traffic safety programs which include speed management-related activities within their region in collaboration with the West Virginia State Police, GHSP LEL, local law enforcement agencies. The activities described in this countermeasure strategy align with various elements in NHTSA’s Highway Safety Program Guideline No.19 – Speed Management including Problem Identification, Communications Program, Enforcement Countermeasures, and Data and Evaluation.

## Traffic Safety Information System Improvements

### *Problem ID the Strategy Addresses*

West Virginia's highest priority for highway safety data improvements continues to be the implementation and use of the State's electronic crash and citation reporting system, ReportBeam, which was purchased in 2007. The software can be used on mobile computers or on desktop hardware inside the station. Adoption rates of the software are such that very nearly all the crash reports submitted to the State crash repository are electronic data transmissions. Crash data access has been given to key highway safety personnel and law enforcement. The GHSP works to assist those personnel with the analysis of that data so it can be used effectively.

In previous years, emphasis has been placed on the crash data portion of this system, with the focus ranging from training law enforcement to utilize the system, to expanding the use of the system by assisting law enforcement agencies in obtaining the equipment needed to use the system. In 2018, additional focus areas were added to the software.

ReportBeam functionality was expanded to include the Electronic Uniform Citation. The Electronic Uniform Citation has been developed to follow a citation through its entire process from issuance to adjudication, and when applicable to the inclusion on the violator's driver record. The West Virginia State Police piloted using electronic citations for the State which has now been expanded for use at other agencies. West Virginia is in the process of rolling electronic citation capabilities out to all law enforcement agencies.

Another statewide initiative is working to combine data systems into functionally related enterprise systems. One of these systems, the Enterprise Research Planning system, is being designed to encompass safety related data, including crashes, emergency medical, roadway, driver, and other data sources. This effort is separate from, and somewhat overlapping with, the efforts within the Division of Highways to develop a user-friendly web-based analysis tool for crash data. The intent is to create a system that will support all highway safety analyses, including those described in the Highway Safety Manual.

The State will continue to roll the availability of the Electronic Uniform Citation portion of the ReportBeam data collection out to all law enforcement agencies and courts within the State. The GHSP will continue to assist law enforcement agencies and court locations to fully and efficiently utilize ReportBeam. The GHSP LEL will coordinate and support the Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators and LELs' efforts to convert law enforcement agencies to electronic reporting and provide training to enforcement personnel in their region on electronic crash and citation reporting. Much of the focus currently revolves around providing in-car printers and computers to assist with the roll-out of the electronic citation. This project will include the ability of the DMV to more quickly obtain conviction data from ReportBeam and add it to the driver's record. Additionally, the electronic processing of citations will significantly enhance DMV's ability to meet FMCSA standards of timeliness for reporting commercial driver's license violations to driver records.

The Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC) will continue to act as the primary advisory committee for traffic records-related activities and projects following the recommendations contained in the latest Traffic Records Assessment. The GHSP Director, Federal Programs Administrator and Traffic Records Coordinator serve on the TRCC. The GHSP's Traffic Records Coordinator serves as the champion for safety data initiatives and markets the traffic records ideal throughout the State, is chairperson of the TRCC, and administers the daily business of the committee. All aspects of the Strategic Plan are maintained and

managed by the Coordinator, as well as providing regular progress reports to Federal sponsors about its implementation.

The TRCC will continue to act as the primary advisory committee for traffic records-related activities and projects following the recommendations contained in the latest Traffic Records Assessment. The Coordinator will conduct TRCC meetings and work with the TRCC to further revise the Traffic Records Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan will be utilized as a guide to ensure proper steps are being taken to implement a statewide comprehensive traffic records system that will be used by Federal, State, and local highway safety stakeholders, including the GHSP, Division of Highways, Division of Motor Vehicles, Administrative Office of the Courts, Municipal Courts, and Department of Health and Human Resources. The TRCC identifies projects that will improve the timeliness, accuracy, completeness, uniformity, integration, and accessibility for the core data systems (crash, roadway, driver, vehicle, citation/adjudication, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)/injury surveillance). For each core system, the TRCC catalogs existing, future, and proposed projects and ideas that would both significantly and remotely impact the quality of the State's safety data. Each project is prioritized by high/low cost and high/low payoff using the following considerations: cost, length, difficulty of coordination, significant effect if successful, likelihood of desired impact, and major costs associated with failure. The catalog, which is in the strategic plan, is updated as new projects are selected and project completions and updates become available. Project elements are included such as problem identification, project description, short-term/long-term completion, priority risk, and other variables. In 2024, the TRCC is focused on the following strategies:

- Implementing a law enforcement-friendly electronic, statewide data collection and reporting system for data to be captured accurately, efficiently, and timely. The core system build was completed in July 2018.
- Implementing electronic citations statewide for all law enforcement agencies. This project will enhance the State's ability to analyze problem traffic areas and increase the timeliness of the entire citation process. The expected completion date for this project is contingent on law enforcement agencies implementing an electronic citation system.

The following FFY2024 projects support the priorities in the Traffic Records Strategic Plan.

### *Countermeasure Strategy*

The following countermeasure strategies will be pursued in 2024–2026 to support implementation of the Traffic Records Strategic Plan.

- The GHSP, through their Traffic Records Coordinator, provides support to the TRCC in implementation of the Traffic Records Strategic Plan. The Traffic Records Coordinator serves as the champion for safety data initiatives and markets the traffic records ideal throughout the State, is chairperson of the TRCC, and administers the daily business of the committee. All aspects of the Strategic Plan are maintained and managed by the Coordinator, as well as providing regular progress reports to Federal sponsors about its implementation.
- All Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators assist the TRCC in implementation of the Traffic Records Strategic Plan within their region. The Coordinators support efforts to convert law enforcement

agencies in their region to electronic reporting and provide training to enforcement personnel in their region on electronic crash and citation reporting.

- The GHSP LEL assists the TRCC in implementation of the Traffic Records Strategic Plan by working with State and local law enforcement agencies throughout the State. The GHSP LEL coordinates and supports Regional Traffic Safety Coordinators and LELs' efforts to convert law enforcement agencies to electronic reporting and provide training to enforcement personnel in their region on electronic crash and citation reporting.
- Purchase of equipment to convert agencies to the electronic reporting of crash reports, citations, and training.
- Establishment of a regionwide Crash Reconstruction Team in Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan Counties. This project will move forward once the GHSP has established a coordinator for this region.
- Upgrade the electronic crash and e-citation software which will provide more accessibility and accuracy of data for all users. This will begin in FFY2024 and continue through FFY2026 with the implementation.
- Work with ReportBeam to create two Secure File Transfer Protocols (SFTP) to automatically pull crashes and citations from ReportBeam's servers. These will be used to feed a database that will allow for easier reporting. Completion is expected in FFY2024. The SFTPs will then be explored to allow automatic upload of citation data to the driver's record.
- Pursue integration of bio-statistics, such as data from fatality notices/reports, with data from crash records.
- Create an electronic system for the submission of fatality reports from the Medical Examiner's office.
- Update the crash form to better align with the MMUCC.
- Add racial/ethnic data to the citation and crash forms to better track equity and diversity.
- Improve tools for law enforcement to provide more accurate location data for crash reports.
- Seek ways to integrate EMS run sheets and other hospital information with the crash reporting forms to paint a more accurate, timely, uniform, and accessible picture of the circumstances surrounding crashes.

**Citation: Traffic Records Model Performance Measures: C-T-1, C/A-U-2 and I-I-1**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

1. Improve the timeliness of citation data exchange from police agencies to the Division of Motor Vehicles.
2. Improve the accessibility of electronic citations to every agency in the State.
3. Increase the timeliness and accuracy of crash reports through the implementation of a statewide electronic data collection and reporting system.

4. Increase local, State, and Federal traffic safety professionals' accessibility to State traffic safety data to conduct analysis through implementation of a statewide or web-based system.
5. Improve the accuracy of fatality reports and the timeliness of the fatality data transferred to the FARS analyst.
6. Increase integration of the crash reports and EMS data.

### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 405c

**Estimated Allocation:** \$2 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia's traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA's Uniform Guidelines*

The traffic records countermeasure strategies planned for 2024–2026 align with the State's Traffic Records Strategic Plan and the elements in NHTSA's Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 10 - Traffic Records. West Virginia's last NHTSA-facilitated Traffic Records assessment was conducted from January 31, 2022, to May 2, 2022. The Traffic Records Coordinating Committee updated the Traffic Records Strategic Plan based upon the findings and recommendations from this assessment. A complete list of 2022 assessment recommendations are included in the Traffic Records Strategic Plan.

## **Distracted Driving**

In July 2012, West Virginia passed a cell phone/texting ban while driving which prohibits texting or the use of a cell phone without hands-free technology while operating a motor vehicle. Most recently, in the 2023 Legislative Session, the West Virginia Legislature passed House Bill 2218 which rewrote W.Va. Code §17C-14-15 with a new title of Electronically Distracted Driving Act and with several amendments known collectively as the Robin W. Ames Memorial Act. The new law is effective June 9, 2023, and includes additional prohibitions against distracted driving, increases penalties for distracted driving offenses and closes loopholes in the prior law. Under the new law no person operating a vehicle may:

- Physically hold or support any wireless communication device or stand-alone electronic device.
- Write, send, or read any electronic communication.
- Make any communication involving a wireless telecommunications device except for hands-free voice activated communication.
- Engage in any form of data retrieval.
- Manually enter letters, numbers or symbols on any wireless telecommunications device or stand-alone electronic device.

- Watch, record, post, send or broadcast a video, movie or video conference on a wireless telecommunications device or stand-alone electronic device.
- Actively play any game on a wireless telecommunications device or stand-alone electronic device.

Importantly, drivers are no longer permitted to dial or enter a phone number on a pushpad or screen to initiate a call. Drivers are limited to activating a voice-operated or hands-free function if it can be accomplished with a single touch or single swipe. Violations of the law are a primary offense and are no longer exempt from court costs and fees. In addition, the Legislature authorized courts to order a 90-day license suspension for a third offense within a 24-month period. The Legislature added new criminal penalties for any person who:

- Damages property while in violation of the Electronically Distracted Driving Act - up to 30 days in jail or a fine of \$100 to \$500.
- Injures another while in violation of the Act - up to 120 days in jail and/or a fine of \$500 to \$1000, and a mandatory one-year license revocation.
- Kills another while in violation of the Act - up to one year in jail and/or a fine of \$100 to \$1000, and a mandatory one-year license revocation.

Despite the State’s primary laws banning handheld device use and texting for all drivers, and all cell phone use for novice drivers, distracted driving is still a problem in West Virginia. While detailed distracted driving crash data currently are not available, the GHSP has citation and nonscientific survey data that support the need to address distracted driving.

Annually, the GHSP tracks the number of citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities. FFY2022 citation data reported under grant-funded activities included 2,549 distracted driving (cell and text) citations which represented a 9.1 percent increase over FFY2021 totals.

In addition, the ABCA sets up a DUI Simulator at schools, fairs, etc., and asks event participants to take a 22-question survey regarding their alcohol use, seat belt use, adherence to speed limits, use of electronic devices while driving, etc. Two of the questions are: a) Have you ever talked on a cell phone while driving; and b) Have you ever texted on a cell phone while driving. Between February 2015 and September 2019, 9,078 individuals took the survey (98 percent were ages 15 to 18); following is their response to these 2 questions:

- 2,960 people (32.6 percent) indicated they had talked on a cell phone while driving.
- 2,265 people (24.9 percent) indicated they had texted on a cell phone while driving.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and loss of the survey data collection vendor, the ABCA was unable to conduct DUI Simulator activities and capture survey data in 2020, 2021, and 2022, as a result, the GHSP is unable to add to this data set at present. However, it is anticipated that as restrictions are lifted, this effort will be resumed in FFY2024–FFY2026.

Legislation passed in 2020 closed a “loophole” in West Virginia’s Graduated Driver License law that allowed a Level III (Licensed with full driving privileges) under the age of 18 individual to talk on a wireless communication device. This loophole in the law had previously allowed approximately 90 individuals under



the age of 18 who had reached Level III to use their mobile device while driving without penalty was the reason NHTSA determined the State did not meet the criteria for “Youth Cell Phone Use Prohibition” to qualify for a Section 405e Distracted Driving grant in each year beginning in FFY2017. With this loophole now closed, West Virginia qualified for a Section 405e grant, and in FFY2022, was awarded just over \$1.3 million for comprehensive distracted driving programs. This funding enabled the GHSP to create and distribute new media assets and participate in the National Distracted Driving Awareness Month campaign. In addition to awareness, education, and enforcement initiatives, the GHSP plans to use this funding to conduct the State’s first scientific distracted driving survey in in FFY2024. The survey was originally planned for FFY2022 and again in FFY2023, but not conducted.

### *Countermeasure Strategy*

West Virginia will continue its successful strategy of addressing this program area through the Regional Traffic Safety Programs, Regional Law Enforcement Programs, and coordinated with law enforcement through LELs. Law enforcement agencies will implement targeted enforcement focusing on distracted driving violations. Distracted driving mobilizations also may include speed enforcement activities. The GHSP will provide statewide support of the effort through awareness materials and messaging.

The GHSP’s Distracted Driving Simulator program, operated by the Regional Traffic Safety Programs, includes a hands-on educational experience to educate West Virginia drivers of all ages about the dangers of distracted driving. These simulators provide a realistic look into the dangers of driving distracted behind the wheel, without putting anyone’s safety at risk. To date, all but one but one RTSP are equipped and using the simulators at health fairs, high schools, colleges, universities, driver’s education classrooms, staff training, career events, safety personnel meetings, and other community events. The remaining Region is waiting for the new simulator version that boasts virtual reality (VR) goggles and has an expected release date of early FFY2024. For FFY2024–2026, Coordinators will be required to demonstrate the simulated device at community events , coordinate the use of the device with community leaders and educators, document their use, collect data on the results of the user’s interaction with the simulated drive, and collect surveys from each participant. Additional requirements for the regional distracted driving activities are in the GHSP’s revised Required Activities document. Each Region must:

- Conduct or facilitate at least one monthly activity/media event on distracted driving, cell phone use/texting while driving, and is responsible for associated enforcement and earned media. Additional RTSP activities are encouraged during Distracted Driving month (April).
- Coordinate earned media and statewide overtime distracted driving efforts in collaboration with all the Regional Traffic Safety Programs throughout the year. Each troop also is responsible for conducting focused distracted driving enforcement and earned media during distracted driving month (April).
- Conduct distracted driving overtime enforcement.
- Purchase paid media by the GHSP to support law enforcement’s targeted enforcement focusing on distracted driving violations and/or the Regional Traffic Safety Programs’ activities on distracted driving, cell phone use and texting while driving.
- Conduct a scientific-based survey to assist in determining the severity of distracted driving in West Virginia.



**Citation: CTW, Chapter 4: Sections 1 and 2**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

#### **Drivers Age 20 or Younger Involved in Fatal Crashes**

**Maintain or reduce drivers age 20 and younger involved in fatal crashes from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 27 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	25
2025	25
2026	24

**Rationale:** In recent years the GHSP has put additional resources towards programming and education of young drivers. Fatalities have fallen on average six percent a year from 2012 to 2021 for young drivers in the state. The number of drivers 20 or under involved in fatal crashes averaged 27 per year between 2017 and 2021, therefore a target of 25 for 2024 and maintaining that in 2025 appears achievable based on current trends while working towards reducing the young driver fatalities to 24 or fewer by 2026, an 11 percent reduction from the current rolling average of 27.

### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 405e

**Estimated Allocation:** \$4.75 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines*

In the absence of a specific Highway Safety Program Guideline for Distracted Driving, the countermeasure strategies were informed by the most recent edition of Countermeasures That Work. Specifically, the High-Visibility Cell Phone/Text Messaging Enforcement and Communications and Outreach on Distracted Driving countermeasures.

In addition, these countermeasure strategies are guided by Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 15 – Traffic Enforcement Services. The GHSP provides leadership, training and technical assistance, as well as centralized planning, implementation, and coordination efforts to achieve and sustain an effective and successful community/regional approach to traffic enforcement services in West Virginia. The GHSP has designed a program in which all Regional Traffic Safety Programs coordinate and implement traffic safety programs within their region in collaboration with the West Virginia State Police, GHSP LEL, local law enforcement agencies, schools, and safety stakeholders. These efforts include enforcement and communication and outreach focused on distracted driving.

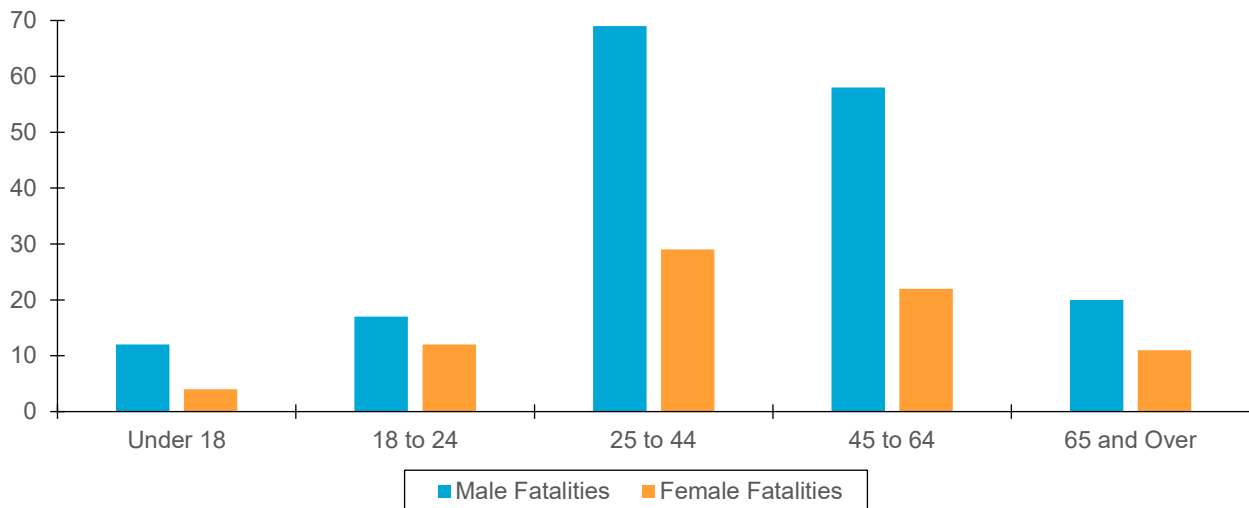
**Citation: CTW, Chapter 4: Sections 1 and 2**

## Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety

### Problem ID the Strategy Addresses

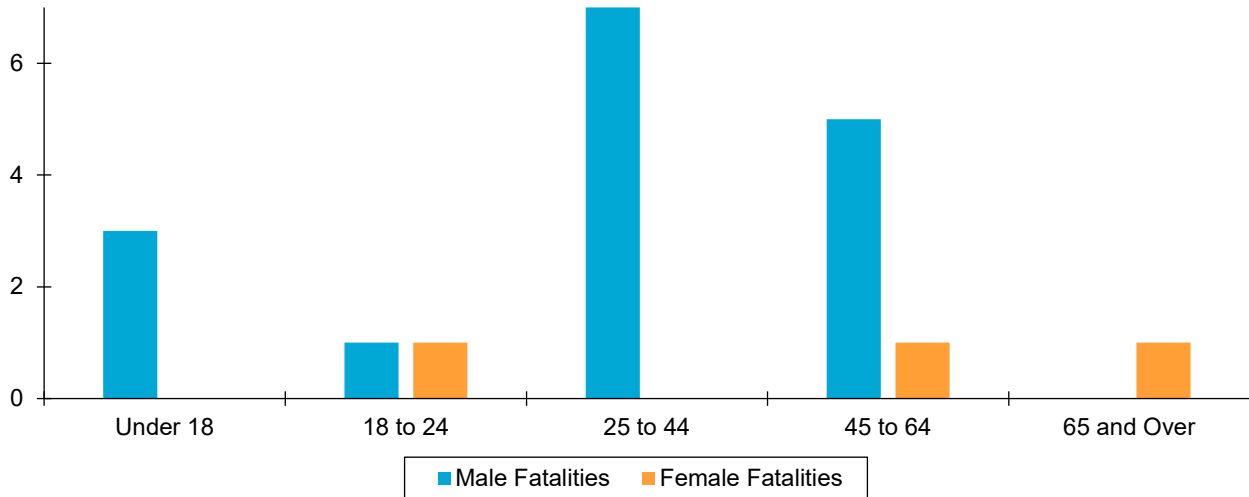
Pedestrian fatalities in West Virginia trended downward and decreased from 20 to 18 (10 percent) between 2012 and 2020, then made a sharp increase in 2021, doubling to 36. Over this same period, bicyclist fatalities remained at or below three per year with the exception of 2018, which saw an increase to 5 fatalities. There were zero bicyclist fatalities in 2021. Looking at pedestrian fatalities by gender and age over the past ten years reveals that male pedestrians experienced more than double fatalities than female (Figure 24). Male bicyclists over that same timeframe experienced fatalities five times higher than female bicyclists (Figure 25). However, the majority of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities occurred among the 25 to 44 age group, followed by the 45 to 64 age group.

**Figure 24 Pedestrian Fatalities by Gender and Age Group**  
2012–2021



Source: FARS using Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), May 2023.

**Figure 25 Bicyclist Fatalities by Gender and Age Group**  
2012–2021



Source: FARS using Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), May 2023.

The GHSP wants to reverse the rise in pedestrian fatalities and keep the number of bicyclist fatalities from increasing and feels that continues education on pedestrian/bicycle safety is warranted. West Virginia will address this program area through the Regional Traffic Safety Programs in combination with activities conducted by the GHSP Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Coordinator.

### Countermeasure Strategy

The Regional Traffic Safety Program Coordinators will provide pedestrian and bicycle safety presentations to various age groups, typically in conjunction with education on other program areas in a more comprehensive presentation. Depending on the audience, presentations will address safe behaviors/practices as a pedestrian or bicyclist, or as a vehicle operator while driving alongside pedestrians and bicyclists. Regional Coordinators also may host and/or participate in local bicycle rodeos or other youth fairs where the safety aspects of riding a bicycle are taught and a variety of bicycle safety-related materials are distributed. In addition to bicycle safety, youth fair presentations also include pedestrian safety. Education on these topics also is included in curriculum at both Safety Town in Huntington and Safety City in Charleston.

All Regional Coordinators will work to gain earned media for both pedestrian and bicycle safety, whether due to participation in an upcoming event or a recent crash. When there is a crash involving a bicycle or pedestrian, the media often reach out to our regional programs to discuss the issues as well as applicable State laws.

The GHSP will continue to work with pedestrian and bicycle safety groups, as well as other interested entities, to provide input on pedestrian and bicycle safety issues, as well as to develop educational materials and opportunities that can be adapted and implemented in communities statewide. In addition, the GHSP will continue to coordinate with the Morgantown Pedestrian Board, a municipal board that strives to create a pedestrian-friendly environment in this populous college town. The Board works with city, State and Federal Government officials, community members, and developers to ensure that common routes through the city are safe, attractive, and accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists. The City of Huntington, a grantee, also has

recently created a municipal Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, and the GHSP looks forward to working with this group as well. Huntington is the second-largest city and has the second-largest college population in West Virginia.

The GHSP will work to develop a concentrated pedestrian safety media plan for the next three years in an effort to bring pedestrian fatalities down. The GHSP Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Coordinator will also review all pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities to determine if there are any trends in why the crash occurred, such as impairment, distraction, or engineering issues.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 8: Sections 3 and 4**

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 9: Sections 3 and 4**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

#### **Pedestrian Fatalities**

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**Maintain or reduce pedestrian fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 27 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	25
2025	25
2026	23

**Rationale:** Based on historical fluctuations in the data, the linear trend line shows estimating this target is challenging since the numbers are low and rose recently to 36 in 2021. While the number of pedestrian fatalities has averaged 27 per year between 2017 and 2021, countermeasure strategies implemented and continuing should allow West Virginia to decrease pedestrian fatalities to 25 in 2024 and maintain that target for 2025. It is anticipated that with the implementation of the Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment, to be completed in late 2023, West Virginia will see a downward trend of 23 fatalities or fewer by 2026.

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#### **Bicyclist Fatalities**

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**Maintain or reduce bicyclist fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 3 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	2
2025	2
2026	1

**Rationale:** Few bicyclist fatalities occur annually in West Virginia, and with the low numbers it becomes increasingly difficult to account for fluctuations from one year to the next. Because of the GHSP's work in several other program areas, such as impaired driving, West Virginia believes this is a program area where fatalities can be reduced from three to two in 2024 and maintain this decline in 2025. It is anticipated with the implementation of the Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment, to be completed in late 2023, West Virginia will see a downward trend of one or fewer fatalities by 2026.

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### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 402

**Estimated Allocation:** \$100,000

## Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

## How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines

The pedestrian and bicycle countermeasure strategies align with Communication Program and Outreach Program elements of Highway Safety program Guideline No. 14 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety.

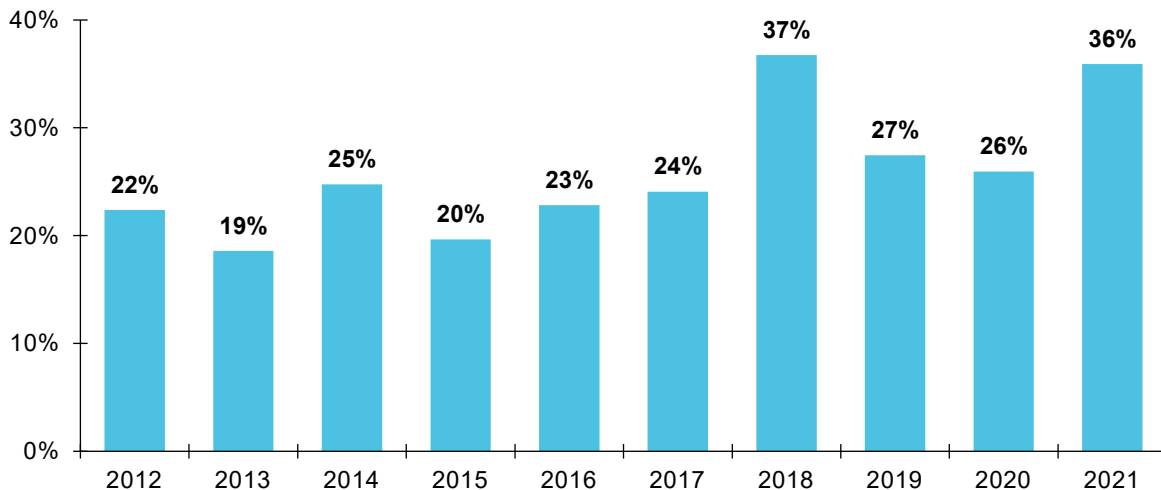
## Older Road Users

### Problem ID the Strategy Addresses

West Virginia’s population is getting older. In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau data indicated that 16 percent of West Virginia’s population were persons 65 years old or older. The 2020 U.S. Census data indicates that 20 percent of West Virginia’s population is persons 65 years old or older. In recent years, the percentage of fatalities involving older road users has also increased.

As shown in Figure 27, from 2012 through 2017, 19 to 25 percent of all fatalities involved an older road user. From 2018 through 2021, these percentages increased to between 26 and 37 percent.

**Figure 26 Older Road User Fatalities as Percent of Total Fatalities**



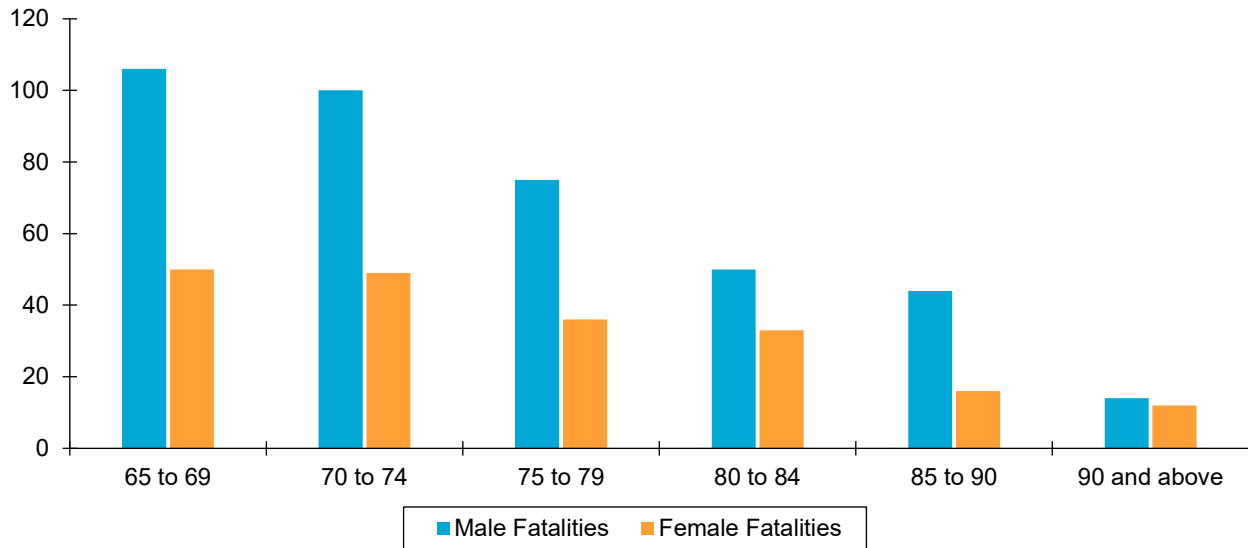
Source: FARS using Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), May 2023.

Two third of the older road users who died in traffic crashes in the past 10 years were male (Figure 27). More than half of the older road user fatalities are in the age group of 65 to 74, another 33 percent are in the 75 to 84 age group, and the remaining 15 percent are 85 and above.

As shown in Figure 28, over the last five years the majority of the older road user fatalities (75 percent) were experienced by older drivers, followed by older passengers (18 percent), and older pedestrian (6 percent).

During this time period, there was only 1 percent of other non-motorist fatalities and less than 1 percent of bicyclist fatalities who were age 65 and above. From 2020 to 2021, fatalities involving older drivers and passengers increased by 31 percent while older pedestrian fatalities went up by 100 percent.

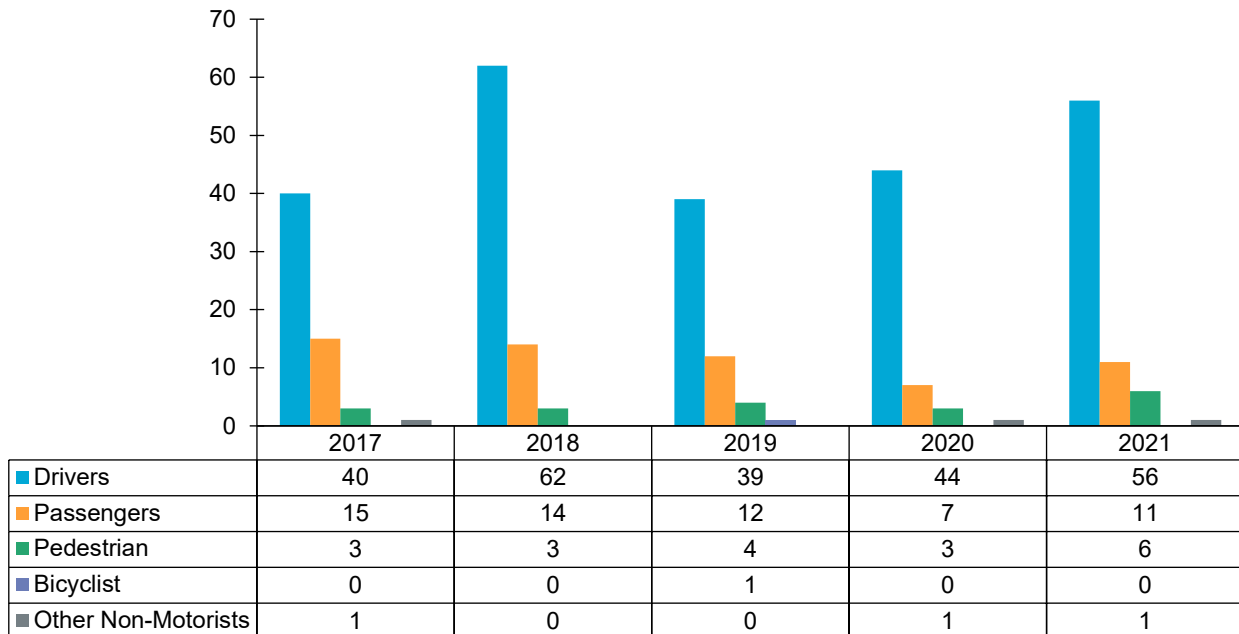
**Figure 27 Older Road Fatalities by Gender and Age**  
2012–2021



Source: FARS using Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), May 2023.

**Figure 28 Fatalities by Older Road User Group**  
65+

Number of Fatalities



Source: FARS using Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), May 2023.

Impaired vision and hearing, and reduced cognition and reflexes, often decrease driving abilities and judgement in older drivers and other road users, which increases the potential for a crash. Additionally, older road users are at greater risk of being killed or seriously injured in a crash because of increased frailty and other medical issues associated with aging. As the percentage of older persons in West Virginia's population continues to grow, the GHSP recognizes the strategies to address crashes and driving, riding and walking behaviors of older road users becomes increasingly important. As a result, the GHSP has added a new Older Road Users program area, which includes vehicle drivers and passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists who are ages 65 and older, in FFY2024-2026.

### *Countermeasure Strategy*

In 2024, the GHSP will collect and analyze data on crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving older road users ages 65 and over. This information will be used to identify and prioritize the State's older road user safety problems. For this population, we will identify the 65+ age ranges and locations where fatal and serious injury crashes are most prevalent for drivers, motorcyclists, pedestrians and bicyclists and the various factors associated with those crashes. Statewide surveys will be conducted to learn about and establish a baseline for public knowledge and attitudes about older driver safety. We will also seek opportunities to engage our older road users to better understand their issues and what is impacting their decisions to drive, bike, or walk so that we can design more specific materials, messages, and programs for older road users, their families and caregivers.

West Virginia's 2022 – 2026 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) includes an Older Driver (65+) Involved emphasis area which focuses on persons killed or seriously injured in crashes involving a driver 65 years of age or older. In 2024, the GHSP will work with our partners on the SHSP's Safety Management Task Force who specialize in this demographic, such as the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services and AARP, to determine if and how they are addressing traffic safety issues with their customers. The GHSP will collaborate with these partners to identify general and West Virginia specific information for this new program area which can be disseminated through these partners and the Regional Traffic Safety Programs. The GHSP will identify any gaps in information and begin development of new material in 2025.

As more is learned about and from our older road users, in 2025 and 2026 we will work to integrate older road user safety into our other countermeasure strategies including impaired driving and occupant protection. The GHSP will also develop and implement a plan to train law enforcement officers on identifying potentially medically at-risk drivers, such as using the Driver Orientation Screening for Cognitive Impairment (DOSCI) tool which helps law enforcement identify drivers with cognitive impairments after alcohol and drugs have been ruled out, as well as how to make a referral of the medically at-risk driver to the Division of Motor Vehicles.

Throughout the three years, the GHSP will evaluate the effectiveness of our material dissemination and educational programs by measuring behavior and attitude changes using surveys to learn about the public's knowledge and attitudes about older driver safety and available resources.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter 7: Section 1**

## Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses

### Older Road User Fatalities

**Maintain or reduce older road user fatalities from the 2017-2021 rolling average of 65 to the following in the preceding years:**

2024	62
2025	62
2026	60

**Rationale:** West Virginia’s population is aging, as such, has seen its five-year rolling average of older road users (65 and over) climb from 52 in 2017 to 65 in 2021. To address this trend the GHSP is placing additional focus on the safety of older road users. The immediate focus will be to curtail the upward trend and reduce the rolling average of older road user fatalities to 62 in 2024 and maintain that or lower for 2025. It is anticipated that additional focus on programming to address this area will start to show additional declines by 2026 of 60 or fewer older road user fatalities.

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### Federal Funds the State Plans to Use

**Funding Source:** 405e

**Estimated Allocation:** \$500,000

### Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities, and impacted locations, input received from our public engagement efforts, and solicitation of proposals.

### How the Countermeasure Strategy was Informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines

The GHSP reviewed Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 13 - Older Driver Safety to identify countermeasures that could be addressed over the three years of this plan and selected countermeasure strategies that were attainable and would lay the groundwork for building an Older Road User Safety program.

## Roadside Safety

### Problem ID the Strategy Addresses

Though all 50 States have a “Move Over” law, according to NHTSA, one-third of the public is not aware of these laws, and traffic-related incidents continue to be the number one cause of death among on-duty law enforcement officers.

### Countermeasure Strategy

The GHSP will apply for Preventing Roadside Deaths (405h) grant funding starting in FFY2024. The GHSP will build our plan to focus on better and more accurate data collection, public education, and enforcement of West Virginia’s Move Over law.



In FFY2024, we plan to use the 405h funds for a public information campaign aimed at preventing roadside deaths. Funding will be used for the production of public information assets as well as up to four statewide paid media campaigns to take place each quarter annually. Assets will include, but are not limited to television spots, video (for use on social media and other channels), still photography, motion graphics, static graphics, and radio spots. The media buy will include, but is not limited to, broadcast and/or cable television, terrestrial radio, streaming radio, YouTube, and social media platforms.

The campaign will encompass education about West Virginia’s Move Over law and keeping first responders including law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS, and other crash responders such as tow truck operators, as safe as possible. The campaign will be measured by public input provided on a Driver Attitudes and Awareness Survey. Roadside deaths of first responders will be monitored annually using crash data to determine the annual number of fatalities among first responders.

The GHSP will also work closely with our DOH and Traffic Records Coordinating Committee to identify the data related to roadside worker crashes (work zone, first responders, tow truck operators, etc.) and near-miss incidents, or how to capture this data if it is not presently available. In addition, we will work to expand our working group, public education efforts, and enforcement of West Virginia’s Move Over law in FFY2025 and FFY2026.

**Citation: CTW, Chapter: 8 Section 3 and 4**

### *Performance Targets the Strategy Addresses*

1. Increase knowledge of West Virginia’s Move Over law at least 10 percent annually based on the results of the initial 2024 attitudinal survey by 2026.

Note: A performance target and the accompanying rationale to decrease roadside first responded related fatalities will be established for 2025 and 2026 after the GHSP and their partners identify and collect the required data in FFY2024.

### **Roadside Safety – Move Over Law**

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***Increase knowledge of West Virginia’s move over law to 60 percent or more based on the attitudinal survey results for each of the preceding years:***

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2024	60
2025	62
2026	65

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**Rationale:** GHSP anticipates receiving and utilizing 405h funding to educate and inform the motoring public on the State’s Move Over law to help prevent roadside deaths. This would be a new program focus area and GHSP believes a robust education and media campaign can increase motorists’ awareness of the law each and every year from 2024 to 2026 based on the attitudinal telephone survey results.

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### *Federal Funds the State Plans to Use*

**Funding Source:** 405h

**Estimated Allocation:** \$1.5 million

### *Considerations Used to Determine What Projects to Fund for the Strategy*

When determining what projects will be funded each year to implement this countermeasure strategy, the GHSP will consider analysis of West Virginia’s traffic safety data, affected communities and impacted locations, and input received from our public engagement efforts.

### *How the Countermeasure Strategy was informed by NHTSA’s Uniform Guidelines*

The GHSP reviewed Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 21—Roadway Safety to identify countermeasure strategies that could be addressed over the three years of this plan and selected strategies to begin work in this area that were attainable to accomplish.

## Performance Report

West Virginia’s progress in meeting the State’s core performance targets identified in the FFY2023 HSP is shown in Table 16.

For measures C-1 and C-3 through C11, the data source is 2021 FARS Annual; for C-2 the data source is 2022 State Annual, and for B-1 the source is the 2022 NHTSA Certified State Seat Belt Observational Survey.

**Table 16 Progress on FFY2023 Performance Targets**

Performance Measure	Target Period	Target Years	Target Value FY23 HSP	FY23 Results	On Track to Meet FY23 Target
C-1) Total Traffic Fatalities	5 year	2019-2023	262	280	In-Progress
C-2) Serious Injuries in Traffic Crashes	5 year	2019-2023	855	766	Yes
C-3) Fatalities/VMT	5 year	2019-2023	1.692	1.74	In-Progress
C-4) Unrestrained Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, All Seat Positions	5 year	2019-2023	75	74	Yes
C-5) Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities	5 year	2019-2023	59	65	In-Progress
C-6) Speeding-Related Fatalities	5 year	2019-2023	65	64	Yes
C-7) Motorcyclist Fatalities	5 year	2019-2023	25	27	In-Progress
C-8) Unhelmeted Motorcyclist Fatalities	5 year	2019-2023	7	12	In-Progress
C-9) Drivers Age 20 or Younger Involved in Fatal Crashes	5 year	2021-2023	24	18	Yes
C-10) Pedestrian Fatalities	5 year	2021-2023	18	36	In-Progress
C-11) Bicyclist Fatalities	5 year	2021-2023	2	0	Yes
B-1) Observed Seat Belt Use	Annual	2022	90.2%	92.5%	Yes