Property Valuation and Training Procedures Commission

County Monitoring Guide
Revised 2026

W. Va. Code §§ 11-1C-3, 4, 7
W. Va. CSR 110-1Q, 1H
Legislative Rule Series 189

I. Monitoring Guide and Forms

All Assessors will be mailed and emailed a copy of the monitoring guide complete with all forms and the "Monitoring Entrance Letter" (Exhibit 1) to be used by the Property Tax monitor who has been assigned to their county.

II. Annual Evaluations

The Property Tax Section of the West Virginia Tax Division is statutorily required to monitor all 55 counties on a periodic schedule. The areas for compliance are as follows:

- Sales Validity
  - Sales Listing Forms
- Appraisal Uniformity
  - Sold versus Unsold
- Appraisal Evaluation
  - Sales Ratio
- Quality
  - Data Collection
- Procedures
  - Land Studies
  - Cost Modifiers
  - On-Schedule Valuation Plan

If it is determined by a monitor that corrections are needed for any particular county, then that county shall be monitored the consecutive year for the corrections. This means that the consecutive year monitoring will focus only on the areas to be corrected and not review areas found in compliance unless all areas were found non-compliant; however, if the non-compliance is in Sales Ratio, the county will undergo full monitoring.

Results of these evaluations will be submitted to the Property Valuation and Training Procedures Commission annually in order for the Commission to review areas of non-compliance and establish corrective training or suggest compliance procedures in accordance with its mandate in W. Va. Code § 11-1C-4(1).

III. Monitoring Schedule

The Assessor will be notified either by phone or by mail/email approximately one week prior to the visit by the appraiser/monitor. The monitoring schedule is as follows:

- **<u>First Visit</u>**: Monitors will meet with the Assessor in person to receive their Questionnaire and documentation for review. It is at this time that an Assessor may designate a secondary contact for the monitor if additional information is needed through the review process.

- **<u>Review</u>**: As the monitor reviews the information submitted by the county, they may reach out for any missing information, additional documentation, or clarification.

- **<u>Exit Conference (Exhibit 10A)</u>:** The monitor will meet with the Assessor in person at their office to submit the County Monitoring Report (Exhibit 10B) and written narrative. After this meeting, the Assessor can still reach out to the monitor to go over any findings more in-depth.

IV. Monitoring Review

The monitor will discuss with the assessor the purpose of the visit, the monitoring process, and how the assessor feels he is proceeding in accordance with his plan.

A. Tax Maps

The Information Technology-Geographic Information Systems Section of the Tax Division (IT-GIS) will monitor 1/3 of the 55 counties each year. Either an electronic or paper copy is acceptable for the purpose of monitoring. If issues are found during monitoring by IT-GIS, it will be noted to the county on the "County Monitoring Report" (Exhibit 9).

1. **Map Design and Content:** A review of the mapping design and content products will be made to determine if they are in accordance with mapping procedures adopted by the Property Valuation Training and Procedures Commission, "Tax Mapping Quality Inspection" form (Exhibit 2). A minimum sample of six parcels will be selected at random for the purpose of the review and no more than one per map.

2. **Maps Up-To-Date:** A randomly selected sample based on new parcels created on Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal systems (CAMA) of six split transfers, of the previous 12 months, will be reviewed to determine if they have been mapped. A randomly selected sample of six splits transfers, of the previous 24 months will be reviewed to determine if they have been digitized properly or 5% of the splits with a TOTAL maximum of 25, whichever is greater. The objective of this sampling is to determine the current status of map maintenance, design, and content.

3. **Map Submission:** Transfers occurring between July 1st and the following June 30th shall be reflected in the maps and submitted to the Tax Division no later than February 1st of the subsequent calendar year. Revised and finished maps shall be submitted as hardcopy or print-ready digital images in accordance with submission and map exchange specifications specified by IT-GIS.

4. **Digital Parcel Polygons (GIS Files):** During the month of April, all Assessors who maintain automated systems shall submit their digital parcel boundary files and associated metadata to the Tax Division in accordance with prescribed submission guidelines. It is recommended that digital parcel files be geo-referenced, seamless, topologically validated, and linkable to the Integrated Assessment System (IAS).

B. Real Property

1. **Quality:** A 10 parcel minimum sample will be selected at random for each appraiser/data collector whose work has not been monitored previously, whose work was previously found to be unacceptable, or at the discretion of the monitor. A "Real Property Listing Quality Check" form (Exhibit 3) will be completed for each appraiser monitored. If there are no new appraisers who have not been monitored and no appraisers who previously had errors, a random minimum sample of 10 parcels will be reviewed from the area that visitation for the tax year took place. This random sampling will be composed of residential, farm and commercial parcels. An error rate of 10% or less in the total appraised value is acceptable. An error rate of 10% or less on all parcels reviewed is acceptable.

2. **Land Studies:** A review will be made of completed commercial, residential, and farm valuation land tables along with the support documents showing their development. Land valuation studies must be conducted using three to five years of sales data unless there are sufficient valid sales within a single year to produce a reliable analysis. Copies of the support documentation showing either the changes or the documentation indicating that the current land tables are at market value will be included in final work papers. All land studies must be completed and implemented. Documentation on the implementation process and any additional market-based evidence must be given to the monitor for review. The land tables and land factors will be compared to the surrounding counties by the monitor and the information will be shared with the assessors in those surrounding counties.

   If the county passes the Sales Ratio Appraisal Evaluation required by W. Va. Code § 11-3-1, a range of up to ten percent (10%) of the neighborhoods in the implementation of their land studies may be allowed. If the results of the study indicate adjustments should be made and a full ratio movement is not implemented, the county must provide supporting documentation explaining the findings and the justification for why the rates were not adjusted. Documentation should also include explanations for any areas or neighborhoods identified as dilapidated or experiencing economic decline where values may differ from broader market trends.

3. **Neighborhood Maps:** A review will be made of the neighborhood forms/maps or listings created along with their support documentation. This review will help determine if the county is properly identifying where their neighborhoods are located. If the county does not have maps or listings for their neighborhood, the monitor will request a neighborhood listing for the county.

4. **Cost Modifiers:** A review will be made of the residential and commercial cost modifiers along with the support documentation showing their development. The Assessor must implement modifiers which are within +/- 10% of the study's indicated modifier. A county may do multiple cost modifier studies. A copy of the support documentation will be included in final work papers. The cost modifier will be

compared with the modifiers of surrounding counties to help identify problems and the information may be shared with the Assessors in those surrounding counties.

5. **Sales:** A review will be made of randomly selected sales/transfers during the past 12 months for determination of proper entry (all sales of $100 or more) and correct validation in IAS. The buyer, seller, or agents will be contacted to ensure the correct validation coding of the sale, "Sales Entry and Validity Review" (Exhibit 4). A review will also be made of the county's Sales Verification methodology.

   The International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) defines "Open Market Sale" as an arm's-length transaction that meets specific conditions ensuring the price reflects market value.

   An open market sale is a sale that:
   - Is exposed to the open market for a reasonable period of time;
   - Occurs between a willing buyer and a willing seller;
   - Involves parties who are reasonably knowledgeable about the property and market conditions;
   - Is conducted without compulsion or undue stimulus;
   - Is not influenced by special financing, concessions, or atypical motivations; and
   - Reflects typical market terms and conditions

   In IAAO publications, this concept is often described interchangeably with an arm's-length sale, meaning: a transaction between unrelated parties, each acting in their own best interest, in which the property is exposed to the open market and the price represents market value.

   Under IAAO standards, sales are presumed to be open-market (arm's length) unless reliable data indicates otherwise.
   The number of sales sampled will be based on the county's parcel size:

County Parcel Count	Sample Size
< 10,000	10 sales
10,000 - 29,999	30 sales
30,000 - 49,999	40 sales
> 50,000	50 sales

   The monitor will review the minimum required for the county. Any county with less than 15% valid sales when compared to the total sales may have twice as many sales reviewed for verification methodology. An error rate of 10% or less is acceptable. The Assessor must contact all new property owners by mail, visit, e-mail, or phone call. If a disagreement arises as to the validity and it is determined the assessor contacted the new owner and different information was provided to the Assessor, the sale will not be used as a valid sale by the monitor. The monitor will also review the sales ratio report "Excluded Sales" for incorrect type codes. Any report with five percent (5%) or more incorrect type codes, when compared to the total number of valid sales on the sales ratio, will have all excluded sales reviewed for proper keying and validation. Sales shall not be changed after February 1st.

6. **Appraisal Uniformity:** A review will be made of valid sales from the most current sales ratio analysis. Sales will be selected by the monitor from residential neighborhoods only. This review will be made by comparing the equalization of the sale parcel as it relates to prior years values/listings and comparable properties located in the same neighborhood, "Valid Sale Review" (Exhibit 5). A minimum of three comparable properties per sale will be reviewed. The monitor will make a determination of whether sales are being manipulated for the sales ratio analysis. For example, changing of the cdu and effective age is acceptable if new information becomes available as a result of the sale (such as interior photos from listing, building permits, any new knowledge of finished basements/ attics, etc.) An error rate of 10% or less is acceptable. A minimum of ten valid sales per county will be reviewed. A full report for all valid sales of residential neighborhoods providing three years of grades, cdu's, with plus or minus factors on building values and land value, will be included for advisory purposes.

C. Personal Property

Reviews of Personal Property are part of the already established workflow between the counties and Property Tax and as a result are not included in the Appraiser's Monitoring Report (Exhibit 9) for Real Estate.

1. If the county has chosen to physically appraise commercial personal property, an on-site review will be made of three randomly selected commercial businesses, per appraiser. An error rate of 10% of the total appraised value is acceptable.

2. If the county has chosen to use the property return method for valuing personal property, a review will be completed of a randomly selected sample of five individual returns and an on-site review of five businesses to determine if the return valuation process is acceptable. This review will include at least two non-filers, to ensure that the value estimates are producing adequate results. An error rate of 10% or less of the total appraised value is acceptable.

3. A review will be made to determine if the assessor is using the IAS system and the correct NAICS code, trend and depreciation schedules to uniformly value business personal property as required by W. Va. Code § 11-1C-7(a).

4. The review of the sample of five individual returns will include a review of the valuation of vehicles to determine if they are valued based on the schedule of used vehicle values as compiled by the Tax Commissioner.

5. A review will be made of at least one return to ensure that the vehicle inventory form is being properly filed with the Assessor as provided in W. Va. Code § 11-6C-1 et seq.

D. Natural Resource Property

Reviews of Natural Resource Property are part of the already established workflow between the counties and Property Tax and as a result are not included in the Appraiser's Monitoring Report (Exhibit 9) for Real Estate.

1. A review will be made to determine if the county has linked all natural resource appraisals to the appropriate real or personal property account in IAS.
2. A review may also be made to determine if the managed timberland is valued at the same value or lesser value than comparable woodland properties as required by W. Va. CSR 110-1H-2.2 which states the Assessor's responsibility to ensure the woodland value shall not be less than the managed timberland value per acre.

E. Data Entry

A general procedural review of the data entry will be made. An error rate of 10% or less is acceptable.

1. **Real Property:** A review of five randomly selected Property Record Cards (PRC) (previously PF-12s) will be compared to corresponding field source documents and noted on the "Real Property Listing Quality Check" (Exhibit 3)
2. **Personal Property:** A review of five randomly selected returns will be compared to the corresponding IAS records. Reviews of Data Entry are part of the already established workflow between the counties and Property Tax and as a result are not included in the Appraiser's "County Monitoring Report" (Exhibit 9) for Real Estate.

F. On Schedule-Appraisal Status

A review will be made of the progress of the appraisal as compared to the timetable in the Valuation Plan that was submitted to the Tax Commissioner at the start of the Valuation Monitoring Cycle by the Assessor.

V. Appraisal Evaluation

Ratio studies will be reviewed with the county to monitor their appraisal and assessment performance.

An appraisal/sales ratio study will be conducted using county-wide totals to determine if the aggregate ratios or the medians, and the Coefficients of Dispersion (COD) about the median, for residential, commercial, and industrial property meet the following standards. Any property where the sales price is more than plus or minus two standard deviations (+/-2SD) from the median may be eliminated from the sales ratio calculations with the approval of the Tax Division.

Appraisal Guidelines

Property Type	Aggregate Ratio or Median*	CoD**
Residential Improved	+/- 10%	< 15
Residential Vacant	+/- 10%	< 20
Commercial All	+/- 10%	< 20
All Property Less F & T	+/- 10%	< 20

***Aggregate Ratio or Median:** Appraisals and assessed values must be within +/- 10% of 100% of market value for appraisals and 60% of market value for assessed values.

****Coefficient of Dispersion about the Median (COD):** The COD should not be greater than 15 for residential improved property and should not be greater than 20 for all other property types.

VI. Appraisal Progress Report

The Property Tax monitor will prepare a report based on the monitoring activities. A written narrative will accompany the working papers. It will summarize the salient points of the findings including the areas of discrepancies and their remedial courses and suggestions on solving the discrepancies, "County Monitoring Report" (Exhibit 9). An exit conference will be conducted with the Assessor by the monitor in person at the Assessor's Office and both parties will sign recognition of the findings, "Exit Conference" (Exhibit 10A). A copy of the written narrative will be given to the Assessor as well.

The report will be reviewed by the Tax Commissioner and the Director of Property Tax. The Assessor will have the opportunity to meet again with their monitor if they would like as well as file their report of explanation or rebuttal to the PVC Chair and the Tax Division prior to the PVC Monitoring Evaluation Report status meeting. The report will then be submitted to the PVC and, once acknowledged, it will become public information.

An Assessor Response form (Exhibit 11) must be filed by the Assessor for the future plans to address areas of non-compliance identified in the final "County Monitoring Report" (Exhibit 9).