

# ***WEST VIRGINIA HIGHWAYS***

## **Classification Systems, Characteristics and Usage**

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Highway classifications are the result of the assignment of individual roads and streets into similar groups according to some chosen characteristic. Highways may be classified into these groups using a variety of systems to serve a number of purposes. West Virginia's highways are classified into several systems.

- According to ownership - the Jurisdictional system;
- According to the nature of the trips they serve – the National Highway Functional Classification System and the West Virginia Legal Functional Classification System;
- According to eligibility for matching assistance from the federal government – the Federal-aid system; and
- According to the types of roadway sign shields used to guide motorists - the Sign system.

These classifications exist concurrently and are widely misunderstood. Each classification system is further described in this section. Additionally, descriptions of both the Interstate System and Appalachian Development Highway Systems have been included separately, so that the current status of these systems may be shown. It should be noted that these classification systems are not mutually exclusive and that mileage may vary among the systems. Throughout this chapter, an urban area will denote an area with 5,000 or more persons that encompasses, at a minimum, the land area delineated by the US Bureau of the Census, which establishes urban areas based on population density.