

COVID-19 Guidance for Multi-Family Building Landlords

05.19.2020



Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive

It's important that we are ensuring the safety and well-being for every resident in our community. We understand there are many residents who live in multi-family residences. Our guidance for the landlords of such facilities to ensure they are taking extra precautions is as follows:

KEEPING RESIDENTS SAFE



Check on neighbors by phone: Periodically check in on how residents are doing. Landlords should post state issued COVID-19 guidelines and posters in prominent spaces.



Cleaning Common Areas: Landlords are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting **ALL** common areas. Please note, cleaning is **NOT** a substitute for physical distancing and wearing face coverings.



Community Rooms: To encourage residents to stay at home, property managers should consider closing or limiting access to all common areas, such as game rooms and lounges. Rooms that hold less than 5 people (like business offices/ computer rooms/ fitness rooms) can remain open and should only be used for essential reasons in accordance with state guidelines regarding spacing, and sanitizing is severely maintained. It's advised that all resident events should be canceled.



Deliveries: Avoid contact with delivery people by requesting for items to be left at the door or in an appropriate location, if this is not yet an apartment policy. Wipe down all deliveries and wash hands with soap and water after handling them.



Elevators: Ride only with individuals from the same household, if possible. Taking stairs are preferred. If sharing an elevator, maintain as much physical distance as possible. Wear gloves or use a tissue or cloth when touching buttons and other high touch surfaces such as public door knobs, light switches, or stair rails. Wash and/or sanitize hand as soon as possible after making contact.



Laundry Rooms: Encourage residents to maintain physical distance and wipe down machines before and after use.



Mailrooms: Encourage residents to maintain physical distance and use disposable gloves when picking up the mail. Additionally, wipe down mail items with gloves and/or wash hands before and after.



Moving: If moving is necessary, take the essential precautions to minimize contact. There are **NO** prohibitions on moving residences at this time.



Trash Rooms: Encourage residents to maintain physical distance and wear gloves if possible when dropping trash off.



Vents: There is **NO** evidence that the virus is transmitted via a properly functioning heating and cooling ventilation system.

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KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESOURCES



Code Enforcement: Howard County Planning and Zoning Code Enforcement can be reached at (410) 313-2350 and will respond by phone to all questions or complaints pertaining to Zoning regulations. Howard County Health Code enforcement can be reached at (410) 313-6300. Current enforcement is limited to critical health and safety complaints.



Eviction Moratorium: Landlords cannot evict residents or force them to leave their unit for any reason during the Maryland Courts suspension of eviction orders. The Courts have suspended eviction orders until further notice.



Maintenance Entry into Units: All existing tenants' rights rules continue to apply, including a required notice of 24 hours to request access and, resident rights to refuse access. Emergency access to fix urgent safety situations need to be accommodated by residents.



Outdoor Spaces: To encourage residents to stay at home, building owners and property managers should consider closing or limiting access to community outdoor spaces like pools, pool decks, grilling areas. All resident events should be canceled.

SHARE TESTING INFORMATION



Testing: Testing is only available when prescribed by a medical provider due to limited supplies. If residents **DO NOT** have a medical care provider, contact the Howard County Health Department at (410) 313-6482. Call 911 in cases of emergency.



Privacy: If someone in the building is sick, residents will not be informed due to health privacy laws. If residents are sick, they are **NOT** required to inform their landlord or other residents. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Maryland confidentiality laws, residents are **NOT** obligated to disclose protected health information such as test results, isolation, monitoring, or quarantine status with community members or landlords.

STAYING SAFE



Slow the Spread: It's important that every person does what they can to slow the spread of COVID-19 wherever possible. All individuals are encouraged to maintain a six-foot physical distance from anyone not a member of their household, wear face coverings when in public areas, and wash hand frequently with soap and water.

If you or a member of your community is ill or suspected to have COVID-19, please contact your primary care provider right away. If possible, isolate the infected individual and assist in finding any alternate living arrangements. For more information, contact the Howard County Health Department Coronavirus Information line at (410) 313-6284.