



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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TO: Howard County Employees

FROM: Calvin Ball
County Executive

SUBJECT: Message from County Executive Ball to Employees; COVID-19

DATE: April 2, 2020

This communication was sent via global email to all Howard County employees on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 11:11 a.m.

Dear Colleagues,

Over the nearly 18 months as your County Executive, I have time and time again witnessed your heroism and commitment. Now more than ever, I am proud of all your extraordinary efforts to keep each other safe, to ensure the welfare of our residents, and to provide the essential services that our community relies upon. I have long held the belief that Howard County's strongest asset is its workforce and your actions since the coronavirus outbreak has reaffirmed that belief.

The health and welfare of you and your family remain a priority. This is a very serious public health emergency and as a reminder: if you do not feel well, stay home. I have directed supervisors to send home employees who are sick. I have closed buildings to the public to promote social distancing and limit direct contact with the public. I have also asked departments to reduce public-facing services where possible. My Executive Staff continues to look at additional ways to keep our employees safe during this pandemic.

Many of you have asked what happens if an employee tests positive for COVID-19. If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the Health Department will take the lead in contacting potentially affected individuals and making determinations on who should be quarantined, along with any additional measures to contain the spread of the virus. If an employee is concerned about a possible contact, the employees should contact their personal physician and follow the provided recommendation. We want to prevent any possibility of contact, so if you must go into a government building, limit your physical interactions with others as much as possible. Social distancing everywhere is necessary.

The Office of Human Resources has health and wellness information available for you on the home page of the county government website. This includes links to our health care providers, information on telemedicine (accessing a doctor or medical professional virtually without having to go into an office), and links to our employee assistance program (EAP). I encourage all of you to take advantage of these resources, take good care of yourselves, and monitor your physical and mental wellness.

Each of you can take steps to help us combat the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands often and properly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds;

- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water are not available;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth;
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or into a tissue;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who exhibits symptoms;
- Practice social distancing; and
- Stay home as much as possible.

If we follow these guidelines, we can all do our part to care for ourselves and protect those around us from the spread of the virus.

I want to especially recognize our employees who are on the front line of this crisis. To our colleagues at the Department of Fire and Rescue Services, Police Department, Howard County Office of the Sheriff, Department of Corrections, Public Safety Dispatchers, and the Department of Public Works – thank you for tirelessly performing the critical work you do.

Again, I encourage us all to continue taking extra precautions to keep everyone safe. I know that this uncertainty can cause a lot of stress and anxiety. This is a challenging time, but I promise that we will get through this together. Thank you for all that you do and for being the best workforce and leaders not only in this State but across the nation. On behalf of Howard County residents, I thank you for your continued partnership in this critical effort.

All the best,
Calvin Ball

Important. Easy. Safe

