

## Montgomery County Maryland Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Residential Buildings

*This guidance was developed based on the best available information as of March 25, 2020 and will be updated as warranted and as more is learned about COVID-19.*

### **Are there specific safety measures building owners and managers should follow?**

- Building owners and managers should ensure that common areas are frequently cleaned and disinfected. Disinfection guidance can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html>.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, stairway railings, elevator buttons, and laundry room equipment. The COVID-19 virus can live on these surfaces and be transmitted by touching a contaminated surface and then touching one's face – so keeping unwashed hands away from the face and frequent cleaning and disinfection are important.
- Building staff and others entering and leaving the building should practice social distancing, keeping 6 feet between themselves and others, whenever possible.
- In elevators, people should consider only riding the elevator with their own party, taking the stairs, or waiting for the next elevator.
- Building owners and property managers should encourage residents to stay home and only go out if necessary.

### **Are there guidelines on building staff ability to report to work?**

- The State of Maryland guidelines include property management operations in the businesses exempt from closure. <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/OLC-Interpretive-Guidance-COVID19-04.pdf>.
- Building owners and property managers may consider identifying back-up staff or asking for resident volunteers to help with package delivery, routine cleaning and disinfecting, and other tasks in the building as appropriate, while encouraging social distancing.

### **Should anyone be notified if someone in the building is sick or tests positive for COVID-19?**

- No. Montgomery County Health Department will not notify building owners or residents of reports of sickness or cases.

### **Should property managers or residents notify the County or others in a building if a person in the building is sick or has COVID-19?**

- No. Property managers and residents do not need to notify the County or others in a building if someone in the building is sick. With widespread community transmission, many people will get sick and recover at home. All residents should follow health guidance, take care of themselves and assist and support their neighbors to help limit the spread of the virus.
- If you become aware of an ill resident who needs emergency assistance, call 911.
- If you or someone else needs help finding a health care provider, call 311.

- The Montgomery County Disease Control Call Center is open Monday – Sunday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., at (240)777-1755.

#### **Should building deliveries (i.e. food, basic supplies, or medicine) be handled differently?**

- Building occupants (staff and residents) should maintain social distancing when getting packages, mail, and entering or exiting the building. In a large residential building where packages are left in the lobby, building staff may consider assisting residents by dropping deliveries outside of their apartment.
- Some delivery services (e.g., Uber eats, Freshdirect, Amazon) also have an online section for “special instructions” where individuals can enter more information and request that packages be delivered to the door, or to text/call and leave the package(s) at the door in an effort, etc., to minimize person-to-person contact and touching of surfaces.

#### **What temperature should the water used to clean hands be set at in bathrooms in buildings?**

- Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. While soap and running water are both needed, hands can be cleaned using either warm or cold water. For more information about hand washing, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science-handwashing.html>.
- Building owners and property managers can consider putting posters about hand washing in bathrooms and other key locations.  
(Example: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cd/cd-adult-handwash-poster.pdf>)

#### **Should building owners proceed with eviction processes during this time?**

- The State of Maryland has issued a moratorium on evictions and the state courts have suspended actions. Building owners are encouraged to work with tenants during this period to develop payment plans or other options. See <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Executive-Order-Temp-Evictions-Prohibiting.pdf> and <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/admin-orders/20200318suspensionofforeclosureevictions.pdf>.

#### **How else can residential building owners and property managers help residents stay healthy and reduce isolation during this time?**

- If building staff have the capacity, consider checking in with residents by phone or text (not in person) who express interest in this type of contact.

#### **For more information and support:**

- The Montgomery County Disease Control Call Center is open Monday – Sunday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., at (240)777-1755.

The COVID-19 situation is rapidly changing. For updates, please review guidance at:

Montgomery County Maryland COVID-19 website: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/coronavirus](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/coronavirus).

Maryland Department of Health COVID-19 website: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>.

Centers for Disease Control COVID-19 website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.