



March 13, 2020

HOC Measures to Combat the Spread of Coronavirus

Dear Customers:

The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) is committed to doing everything we can to ensure the health and well-being of our customers. We want to keep you informed about HOC's response to the presence in the Montgomery County region of the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. We are taking extra measures, including frequent sanitation of common areas in HOC offices and properties and asking customers to call or email rather than visit our offices in person. The following actions are designed to help keep our customers, staff, partners and communities safe.

STAYING HOME IF ILL

- HOC is encouraging all staff who are ill, or have an ill family member, not to come to work until they have been symptom-free for at least three days.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- HOC is reducing person-to-person contact by providing the option for staff whose jobs enable them to perform their work remotely from home to do so.
- HOC is postponing non-essential meetings and events and encouraging staff to conduct meetings as much as possible by telephone or online.
- Walk-in meetings **will not** be accepted – meetings will only be conducted if necessary and by prior appointment. HOC is asking customers to conduct business with HOC by phone or email to reduce opportunities for the virus to spread.
 - Where possible, we encourage customers to make rent payments online with HOC or the on-site property management company. HOC scattered site customers can use the Payer Express portal at:
<https://www.hocmc.org/extra/20-online-rent-payment.html>
 - We also encourage customers to submit all essential paperwork (e.g., recertification packets) via U.S. mail and to allow enough time for paperwork to arrive and be processed.
- HOC is ensuring adequate staffing to respond to an increase in residents who contact us by phone or email. Our Call Center staff will be available via telephone and email from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday through Friday to provide information and direct your concerns to the proper staff member. Customers are able to submit emergency requests for maintenance during all other hours using the same contact information below.
 - **Call:** (240) 627-9400

- Email: help@hocmc.org

SANITATION

- HOC has instructed staff on additional personal sanitation practices to ensure they are not transferring viruses to themselves or others.
- HOC is now cleaning common areas of buildings several times daily, sanitizing door handles, railings, bathrooms, elevator buttons and other frequently touched surfaces.

HOC is currently operating on normal hours and has not closed any of its offices. We will notify you if this changes. Some meetings, classes, workshops and other activities at HOC locations may be canceled or postponed; please check with the organizers of these activities and/or look for communications from us regarding programming changes.

The spread of COVID-19 is a public health issue. To stay informed, visit:

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services:

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/RightNav/Coronavirus.html>

Maryland State Department of Health:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Pages/Novel-coronavirus.aspx>

We know the COVID-19 virus is causing great concern and want you to know that we share that concern and are taking the situation very seriously by closely monitoring developments. We will adjust our operations further as needed and will keep you informed of any additional changes we may make to protect our customers and community.

Sincerely,



Roy O. Priest
Chair, Board of Commissioners



Stacy L. Spann
Executive Director