



March 13, 2020

HOC Measures to Combat the Spread of Coronavirus

Dear Staff:

The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) is committed to doing everything we can to ensure the health and well-being of our staff. 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 senior and multifamily properties as well as asking customers to call or email rather than visit our offices in person. Additionally, during this state of emergency, HOC's Maintenance Division will prioritize emergency, exigent high-priority work orders and sanitation as an effort to limit interpersonal contact and to comply with the recommended CDC social distancing protocols. The following actions are designed to help keep our customers, staff, partners and communities safe.

STAYING HOME WHEN 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. Staff must notify their supervisor.

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. Staff working remotely under the Social Distancing Protocol must notify and receive approval from their supervisor.
 - Resources for staff to work remotely under the Social Distancing Protocol are available on HOC's website.
 - **Directions to employee Social Distancing Work Resources**
 - If you have the VMware application installed on your desktop, log-in using your HOC credentials.
 - If you do not have VMware installed, do the following:
 - Visit the HOC employee page at:

<https://www.hocmc.org/extra/101-hoc-employees.html>

- Click the VMware View button for instructions to download the VMware application to your machine and log-in using your HOC credentials.
 - Once on VMware, access the employee Social Distancing Work Resources intranet page at:

<https://pulse.hocmc.org/Site/view.cfm?pageID=2000455>
- Staggered office start times and work schedules will be rolled out in the coming days. Staff should reach out to their supervisor for guidance on divisional work plans and schedules under the Social Distancing Protocol.
- HOC is postponing non-essential meetings and events and encouraging staff to conduct meetings as much as possible by telephone or online. Resources for conducting remote meetings are available on the employee Social Distancing Work Resources intranet page. If meetings must be conducted in-person, essential personnel **only** should be in attendance.
- 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. We are encouraging customers to allow enough time to submit all essential paperwork (e.g., recertification packets) via mail and to pay rent using online resources provided by HOC or their relevant on-site property management company.
- 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 customer 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.
 - **Phone:** (240) 627-9400
 - **Email:** help@hocmc.org

SANITATION

- HOC is providing staff with instructions on additional personal sanitation practices to ensure they are not transferring viruses to themselves or others. Signage with information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) encouraging proper handwashing, best practices to prevent the spread of germs, and recognizing early symptoms of COVID-19 are being posted throughout all HOC office locations.
- HOC is now deep-cleaning and sanitizing common areas of buildings several times daily, sanitizing door handles, railings, bathrooms, elevator buttons and other frequently touched surfaces. Regularly used common spaces will be cleaned approximately every 30 minutes and after each

use. Signs are posted in these spaces with the following contact information to request sanitization of these spaces, as needed:

- **Kensington Office** – Email: kenoffclean@hocmc.org; Phone: (240) 706-3211
 - **East Deer Park Office** – Email: edpoffclean@hocmc.org; Phone: (240) 706-3212
 - **Silver Spring CSC** – Email: sscsclean@hocmc.org; Phone: (301) 655-3315
 - **Lakeforest (Gaithersburg) CSC** – Email: lfcsclean@hocmc.org; Phone: (301) 655-3346
- Please note, cleaning services are **not** to be requested for individual offices/cubicles and only for common spaces and meeting rooms.

HOC is currently operating on normal hours and has not closed any of its offices. We will notify you if this 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. The agency is mindful of the ever changing COVID-19 situation and will take every practical precaution to ensure customer, staff and community safety. 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.

Take Good Care,

Stacy L. Spann
Executive Director