

Helpful Tips to Fight COVID-19

Slow the Spread:

- Stay in your apartment as much as possible. Spend as little time as possible in common areas.
- Social distancing — keep at least 6 feet away from anyone not a member of your household.
- Wear a face covering (a homemade cloth mask is fine) in public areas. Your mask protects others and others' masks protect you. For guidance, including how to make your own face covering, see the [Centers for Disease Control and Preventions' website](#).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially when leaving and returning to your apartment or house. Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- If you are sick, stay in your apartment or house except to seek medical care. Consult your primary health-care provider or urgent care for guidance. If space allows, self-isolate in a room or area alone, away from other people.
- If a member of your family is ill with, or is suspected to have, COVID19, everyone in the apartment is at risk for infection. If possible, isolate the affected person, and consider alternative living arrangements. All persons in the apartment should self-quarantine in the apartment and self-monitor for symptoms. Contact your doctor for guidance if you become symptomatic. Due to limited supplies, testing is available only when ordered by a medical provider. If you do not have a primary care provider, call Montgomery County Public Health services at 240-777-1755. Call 911 if you have an emergency. See the section on "[What should I do if I might have been exposed? If I feel sick? Or have confirmed COVID-19?](#)"

Cleaning Common Areas: Your landlord is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting common areas. The city strongly recommends that your landlord follow [CDC guidelines related to the COVID-19 emergency on cleaning facilities](#). Please keep in mind that cleaning is NOT a substitute for social distancing and wearing masks in common areas.

Elevators: Ride only with people with whom you live, if possible, or with no more than two other people. Take stairs, if possible. Maintain distance as possible and wear a face covering when sharing an elevator. Wear gloves or use a tissue, cloth or knuckle when touching buttons and other high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches or stair rails. Wash your hands as soon as possible or use hand sanitizer.

Laundry Rooms: Maintain physical distance and wipe down machines before and after use. Use disposable gloves or wash your hands with soap and water immediately after using machines.

Mailrooms and Deliveries: When picking up mail, use disposable gloves or wash your hands with soap and water immediately afterwards. Wipe down mail items while wearing gloves, or wash your hands before and after. Avoid contact with delivery people by requesting that items be left at your door, if this is not yet an apartment policy.

Trash Rooms: When dropping off trash, wear gloves, if possible, and wash your hands immediately afterwards.

Maintenance Entry into Units: All existing rules regarding tenants' rights continue to apply, including a required notice of 24 hours to request access to a housing unit and a resident's right to refuse access. As always, emergency access to fix urgent safety situations must be accommodated by residents, though landlords, tenants and contractors are all strongly urged to maintain social distancing, and to clean and disinfect all surfaces contacted after work is completed.

Community Rooms: To encourage residents of multifamily buildings to stay in their home units, building owners and property managers should consider closing or limiting access to common areas, such as game rooms and lounges. Rooms that hold fewer than five people (such as business offices, computer rooms and fitness rooms) may remain open but should only be used for essential reasons and in accordance with CDC and state guidelines regarding spacing; and it is strongly urged that sanitizing standards be stringently maintained. In-person resident events should be canceled.

Outdoor Spaces: To encourage residents of multifamily buildings to stay in their home units, building owners and property managers should consider closing or limiting access to community outdoor spaces such as swimming pools, pool decks and grilling areas. In-person resident events should be canceled.

Vents: There is no evidence that the virus is transmitted via heating and cooling ventilation systems.

Privacy: Due to health privacy laws, you will not be informed of any other person's health status. Whether someone is sick or not, you should follow the guidelines of physical distancing and facial covering to protect yourself and others. If sick, you are not required to inform your landlord or other residents. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Maryland confidentiality laws, you are not obligated to disclose protected health information, such as test results, isolation, monitoring or quarantine status. However, if you are sick, you are strongly encouraged to self-quarantine and contact a health professional to obtain further guidance.

Eviction Moratorium: Your landlord may not evict you or force you to leave your unit for any reason. An executive order from the Maryland governor's office has suspended eviction orders until further notice. City of Rockville tenants who are asked to move against their will and/or without a court order can call the non-emergency police number: 240-314- 8900.

Utilities: The state of Maryland has suspended utility shutoffs through May 1, 2020. To avoid future disconnection, residents should work directly with the utilities in question if they are unable to pay their bills. Utility websites have steps for contacting customer service.

Moving: If you are changing residences (moving), take the necessary precautions to minimize contact. There are no prohibitions on moving residences at this time.

Check on Neighbors by Phone: Periodically contact your neighbors by phone, email, text or other means to check how they are doing. Maintain physical distance, but stay in touch with friends and family.