

Information for renters

Landlord-Tenant Handbook

This offers a good description of the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants in Montgomery County.

- Tenants who expect to experience difficulty with paying their rent on time are advised to communicate with their landlord or management company, to explain their expectations and begin to work on options.
- Continuing to make payments and working on arrangements for payment shortages can help all parties to work through the current situation.

Temporary Protection From Eviction

Most renters having trouble paying rent due to the Coronavirus situation can benefit from temporary protection against eviction. The [Order of the Governor of Maryland: Temporarily prohibiting evictions of tenants suffering substantial loss of income due to COVID-19](#). The March 5 order remains in effect until the State of Emergency is terminated and the catastrophic health emergency is rescinded.

- Court Limits on Evictions: This [Maryland court administrative order](#), effective March 18, 2020, halted action on residential foreclosures and residential evictions. As stated, the order will be revised as circumstances warrant.

Changes in Housing Code Enforcement

- As of March 23 and continuing indefinitely, Housing Inspectors will not be handling any code inspections, except in the case of an emergency situation or a court order.
- DHCA will continue to review and assess housing code complaints. Please call DHCA at 311 (240-777-0311) to submit service requests.
- DHCA will triage any urgent service requests to determine actions needed. Staff from Housing Code Enforcement will respond by phone or email to every MC311 call in order to assess the situation and explain the timing of any further actions or inspections. Some actions or inspections may not be immediately forthcoming based on the nature and severity of the issue.
- All current housing inspection "Notices of Violation" will be given an extension of time, for corrections to occur. These new timelines will be determined once DHCA housing inspectors resume normal operations.
- For any scheduled inspections, DHCA staff is in the process of notifying the owner/agent/tenant (to the extent we have contact information) that the inspection will be postponed due to the COVID-19. And, that once an all clear has been given, DHCA will reschedule.

Utilities

Limits on Utility Shutoffs: Electric, gas, and water utilities encourage residents having difficulty paying their bills to contact the utility to discuss payment options or programs for which they might qualify. Area utilities are suspending shutoffs, for a time. For more information, visit their websites:

- [PEPCO](#)
- [BGE](#)
- [Washington Gas](#)
- [WSSC](#)
- [Verizon](#)
- [Comcast/Xfinity](#)
- [AT&T](#)

[Utility Assistance Program](#)

Consumer credit and dealing with debt

During the Coronavirus pandemic, the federal government Consumer Finance Protection Bureau (CFPB) and other financial regulators have encouraged financial institutions to work with their customers. Click on the [Consumer Finance Protection Bureau](#) for more information.