



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Safer at Home Advisory and Self-Isolation

Updated May 28, 2020

Under Governor Larry Hogan’s direction, state agencies continue to develop comprehensive and coordinated prevention and response plans for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) will communicate directly with the public, providing updates as this situation develops and accurate information about how to protect yourself and your family.

If you have questions about COVID-19 that are not answered here, call your local health department or dial 2-1-1.

Am I allowed to leave the house?

Yes. On May 13th, Governor Larry Hogan announced the beginning of Stage One of the ‘[Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery](#),’ which includes moving from a Stay at Home order to a Safer at Home public health advisory and the gradual reopenings of retail, manufacturing, houses of worship, and some personal services.

On May 27th, Governor Hogan announced the resumption of outdoor dining and additional activities allowed to complete State One of the Recovery plan for Maryland (effective Friday, May 29, at 5:00 p.m.).

Marylanders, particularly older and more vulnerable Marylanders, are strongly advised to continue staying home as much as possible. Employers should continue to encourage telework for their employees when possible. Individuals who can work from home should continue to do so.

The Reopening of Certain Businesses and Facilities order is available at <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Gatherings-7th-AMENDED-5.27.20.pdf>

For the reopening status of Maryland's jurisdictions, please visit <https://governor.maryland.gov/recovery/>

Should I wear a face mask?

Marylanders must still wear face coverings when inside retail establishments or when riding any form of public transportation in the state. Read the Face Coverings executive order at <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Masks-and-Physical-Distancing-4.15.20.pdf>

Cloth face coverings can be made from household items and include wearing a scarf or bandanna that covers the nose and mouth. The CDC has detailed guidance and instructions regarding homemade cloth face coverings available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. People with disabilities who are unable to wear a mask are provided reasonable accommodations per the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Will schools reopen?

No. On May 6th, the Maryland State Department of Education announced that schools will remain closed for the remainder of the school year.

Can we go to the store for food?

Yes, getting food is considered an essential purpose.

Can I still get food from take-out places and restaurants providing take out service?

Yes, many restaurants offer take-out and curbside service. They are also able to offer outdoor dining for parties up to six. Please call first so that you ensure they are open.

Can my lawn service or landscaper come out and work in my yard?

Yes. Please confer with your lawn service and make a good faith determination about whether it is "essential or non-essential."

Can my house cleaner come and clean our house?

Please confer with your cleaning service about their willingness to keep delivering the service safely. Also, if you are ill or in any elevated risk category, limit all outside visitors to your home.

Can we go for a walk or run around the neighborhood?

Yes, but do not congregate with neighbors while you are outside. Wave and smile and continue on your way.

Can I go to a park?

Yes, you can go to a park that is open, but do not gather in a group with others once you are there. It is good to get exercise and fresh air, and to take a pet on a walk, but stay at least six feet away from others.

What sorts of businesses are open?

Many, but not all, food and drink establishments which offer carry-out are still serving. Grocery stores, big box retailers like Walmart, pharmacies and drug stores are also open, although some have limited hours. Check online to see if your local restaurants offer curbside, no-contact pick-up.

Retail stores and some personal services (e.g., barbershops and hair salons) have reopened since the Stay at Home order was lifted.

When will I be able to go back to work?

If you are well and your business is closed, you will need to continue to stay at home. Work with your employer to see if teleworking or working remotely is possible.

SELF-ISOLATING AT HOME WITH COVID-19

What is the difference between quarantine and isolation?

Quarantine is for people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and may or may not get sick. People who are quarantined stay home for 14 days. During this time, they take their temperature daily and watch for symptoms of COVID-19. Most people who are going to get sick, get sick within 2-14 days of exposure.

Isolation is for people who have COVID-19. People who are sick stay away from and limit contact with others while they recover.

People who are in quarantine or isolation from others help stop the spread of COVID-19.

I just tested positive for COVID-19. What do I do?

Follow your healthcare provider's guidance. Most people can recover at home. It is important that you stay home and take care of yourself. Stay away, or isolate, from others as much as you can. Read the CDC guidance on [What to Do if You are Sick](#). Do not have visitors, unless they are caring for you.

When can I be around others after having COVID-19?

Talk to your health care provider especially if you have [a high risk underlying health condition](#) or if you are 65 years and older. You may need to stay away from other people longer.

Most people can follow the CDCs three conditions before being around others:

1. It has been at least 10 days since you first felt sick, **PLUS**
2. It has been at least 3 days since you last had a fever without taking fever-reducing medicine, **AND**
3. All your other COVID-19 symptoms have gotten better.

When around others, remember to keep 6 feet away and wear a face covering.

This guidance is subject to change.

Will my positive COVID-19 test results be reported to anyone?

Yes. Under Maryland law, positive COVID-19 test results will be reported to the Maryland Department of Health and local Health Department. See also [Contact Tracing](#).

What symptoms require medical attention right away?

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency care provider if you have:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Let 911 or the provider know you have COVID-19. This will help them know how to care for you and keep other people from getting infected.

How can I protect my family or caregivers while recovering at home?

Try to stay away from others as much as possible. Try to stay in one room and, if you can, don't use the same bathroom as them. When around others, wear a face covering and have them wear one too. Everyone should wash their hands often. Avoid sharing anything like dishes, towels, or bedding. Make sure all high touch areas are [disinfected every day](#). See [Caring for Someone Sick at Home](#).

Caregiver Tips

- Wash hands often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Shared spaces in the home should have good air flow. If you can, open a window or use a fan. This will help remove COVID-19 respiratory droplets from the air.
- Wear a disposable facemask and gloves when you touch or have contact with the patient, especially when you have contact with their blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine.

- Wash clothes or bedding that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Keep soiled items away from your body. Wash laundry thoroughly.
- When removing gloves and mask, first remove and dispose of gloves. Then, wash your hands right away. Next, remove and dispose of facemask, and wash your hands again.
- Throw out disposable face masks and gloves after using them. Do not reuse.
- Place all used disposable gloves, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined trash can. Wash your hands at once after handling these items.
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- Household members should care for any pets in the home. Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. For more information, see [COVID-19 and Animals](#).