



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Weekly Update on COVID-19 Coronavirus from Harford County Executive Barry Glassman March 20, 2020

BEL AIR, Md., (March 20, 2020) – *County Executive Barry Glassman has issued the following weekly update on the COVID-19 coronavirus in Harford County:*

“The Maryland Department of Health has reported a total of five cases of the coronavirus for Harford County, only four of which were county residents. These are the total reports as of this morning:

Harford’s first case, a woman in her 80s who contracted the virus while traveling overseas and is hospitalized;

A 69-year-old family member of the first case, who is isolated at home;

A 47-year-old man who lives in Harford but is working in Boston; he was tested and is self-isolated there;

A 44-year-old woman who is stable and isolated at home; and

A 55-year-old man reported by the state this morning, but officials now believe this was an address error by a private lab.

While the vast majority of cases fully recover and 80% have only mild or moderate symptoms, please keep these fellow citizens in your prayers.

Future cases

What we know from public health experts is that the majority of COVID-19 cases are no longer travel-related. In other words, transmission is occurring within the community. And with state and private labs doing more tests in Maryland, we should expect reported cases to rise dramatically.

The Maryland Department of Health is no longer announcing new cases in detail, but they are reporting totals by county on their website, <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>.

What we can do

While only a small percentage of cases become serious, they have the potential to overwhelm the healthcare system. This is why public health officials say our goal now is to slow the spread of virus. This includes major actions, such as the state's closure of schools, and things we must all do to reduce the number of infections.

Everyone should practice social distancing. Experts say this is one proven intervention and it will save lives. Avoid close gatherings of 10 or more, stand six feet apart, wash your hands for 20 seconds, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and stay home if you are sick.

If you think you may have the COVID-19 coronavirus, contact your physician, or the Harford County Health Department at 410-612-1779 for next steps.

In Harford County government, we have taken precautions to limit exposure to the public and county employees, while continuing to provide essential services.

Whenever possible, use our online services to pay bills and do business through the county website: www.harfordcountymd.gov.

We have made temporary provisions for all permit and license applications to be submitted electronically. <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15116/Electronic-Submittal-of-Permitting-and-Licensing-Applications>.

Public access to county buildings is strictly limited. Drop boxes are in place for necessary paper document exchanges with Treasury, Permit Center, Planning & Zoning, Public Works and Housing.

County playgrounds, pavilions, Cedar Lane Sports Complex and the skate park are closed, but we understand the need to get outdoors. All other parks and trails are open as long as you practice social distancing. No groups or teams are allowed.

Previously announced cancellations of county government programs, events and advisory board meetings through March 31 are now canceled until further notice. These and other closures in the county are posted on the Harford County Health Department website, <https://harfordcountyhealth.com/coronavirus/>.

Our 911 call center has implemented additional protocols for the safety of first responders.

Following state guidance, Harford Transit LINK bus fixed routes are suspended and demand-response service is limited to existing clients with critical needs.

We are using teleconferencing for many of our internal meetings and have taken actions to protect our valued county employees.

Finally, I declared a State of Emergency on Wednesday to help maintain essential government functions, while recognizing the impact of this crisis on daily life. My first act was to suspend for 90 days enforcement of the public notice to delinquent taxpayers with a pending tax sale, to give them extra time to reconcile their accounts. I will also be conducting Board of Estimates meetings by teleconference during this time.

In the days and weeks ahead, I will continue working closely with Gov. Hogan, Harford County Health Officer Dr. Russell Moy and other officials. I want to thank our county employees for their dedication to serving the public. I ask you to stay calm and stay informed. Continue taking precautions and keep looking out for each other. In Harford County, we have overcome challenges before and we know the best way forward is together.”

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