



# BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Harford County COVID-19 Update for May 8: County Playgrounds Reopen, Temporary Rental Assistance Program**

**BEL AIR, Md.**, (May 8, 2020) – *County Executive Barry Glassman issued the following weekly update on COVID-19 in Harford County:*

“Exactly two months ago on March 8th we reported Harford County’s first confirmed COVID-19 case. As of this morning, the Maryland Department of Health is reporting a total of 572 cases, 20 deaths and 4 probable deaths among our residents. Public health officials continue to monitor the nursing home outbreaks at Bel Air Health & Rehabilitation Center and Forest Hill Health & Rehabilitation Center consistent with Gov. Hogan’s latest [directives](#).

At this time Harford County has the lowest number of COVID-19 cases and deaths per capita among the 11 Maryland jurisdictions with at least 500 cases, according to the Harford County Health Department. This is good news, but we must remain vigilant, and I am proud of our residents who have been following safety precautions and have surely contributed to these outcomes. I would also like to thank our local health department and all of our partner agencies that have been working behind the scenes every day, sharing information and resources to keep our citizens safe.

On Wednesday afternoon Gov. Hogan allowed for the resumption of [elective medical procedures](#) and broadened the list of permitted [outdoor activities](#), including boating, fishing, camping, golfing and visiting cemeteries. He also allowed local governments to reopen our public playgrounds and other outdoor recreation spaces. While nearly all Harford County parks have been open throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the following day, after consulting with the Harford County Health Department, I directed all remaining county-owned outdoor recreation spaces to reopen, consistent with Gov. Hogan’s amended executive order. However, we must continue social distancing, hand washing and other procedures to maintain Harford County’s progress in slowing the spread of the virus.

## Help for workers


For workers in Harford County who lost their jobs due to COVID-19 and are having trouble paying rent, today my administration is launching a temporary, emergency rental assistance program. This assistance for up to three months' rent is funded with federal dollars and available for tenants whose employment income is at or below 80% of the median area income because of the pandemic. For details and an application, visit the county website at <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15360/COVID19-Rental-Assistance-Guidelines-and-Application>. If you have questions, please email our Office of Community & Economic Development at [commdev@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:commdev@harfordcountymd.gov).

## Small business assistance

The first federal CARES Act stimulus passed last month including funding for counties and municipalities. A portion of the \$364 million in total funds for Maryland provides reimbursement for local governments' COVID-19 expenses and a portion is for small business relief at the local level. Larger counties with populations over 500,000 received funding directly from the federal government, but funds for smaller counties like Harford were sent to the state for release through reimbursement. Because this would slow the distribution of funds and treat smaller counties unequally, my fellow county executives and I advocated for forward funding in accordance with an approved spending plan, rather than have us wait for reimbursement. On Monday the state approved our plan and we expect to roll out our small business assistance program fairly quickly.

I understand these past two months have been stressful, and I have encouraged the governor to lift business and other restrictions as soon as possible. I am encouraged that some easing has begun as spring brings signs of new life and we head into this holiday weekend. Happy Mother's Day, thanks & be safe."

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