DHCA
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

COVID - 19 Guidance for Multi-Family Building Residents
(as of April 10, 2020)

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 six feet away from anyone not a member of your household.

- Wear a face covering (homemade cloth is fine) in public areas. Your mask protects others and others' masks protect you. To learn how to make cloth face coverings at home visit bit.ly/clothfacecoverings. Centers for Disease Control guidance on *Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19* may be found at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting- sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Wash especially when leaving and returning to your apartment.

- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water are not available.

- If you are sick, stay in your apartment 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 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. Please see the section on "What should I do if I might have been exposed? If I feel sick? Or have confirmed COVID-19?" in CDC guidance on *Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation* at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social- distancing.html

Common Area Cleaning: Your landlord is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting common areas per CDC guidelines. If you are concerned that common areas are not being cleaned properly, call Montgomery County Code Enforcement at 240-777-0311. Cleaning is NOT a substitute for physical distancing and wearing cloth masks in common areas.

Elevators: Ride only with people you live with, if possible. Take stairs, if possible. If you share an elevator, maintain as much distance as possible and wear a face covering. Wear gloves or use a tissue, cloth or your knuckle when touching buttons and other high touch surfaces such door knobs, light switches, or stair rails. Wash your hands as soon as possible.

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 the machines.

Mailrooms: When picking up mail, maintain physical distance and use disposable gloves or wash your hands with soap and water immediately after. Wipe down mail items with gloves or wash your hands before and after.

Trash Rooms: When dropping trash off, maintain physical distance, wear gloves if possible, and wash your hands immediately after.

Deliveries: Avoid contact with delivery people by requesting for items to be left at your door, if this is not yet an apartment policy. Wipe down all deliveries and wash your hands with soap and water after handling them. Per the CDC, "It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but we are still learning more about this virus. CDC recommends people practice frequent "hand hygiene," which is either washing hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand rub. CDC also recommends routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces."
(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid- spreads.html)

Maintenance Entry into Units: All existing tenants' rights rules continue to apply, including a required notice of 24 hours to request access and, resident rights to refuse access. Emergency access to fix urgent safety situations need to be accommodated by residents. Call 311 (240-777-0311) for requests for assistance.

Community Rooms: To encourage residents to stay at home, building owners and property managers should consider closing or limiting access to common areas, such as game rooms and lounges. Rooms that hold less than 5 people (like business offices/ computer rooms/ fitness rooms) can remain open and should only be used for essential reasons in accordance with CDC & state guidelines regarding spacing, and sanitizing is stringently maintained. Resident events should be canceled.

Outdoor Spaces: To encourage residents to stay at home, building owners and property managers should consider closing or limiting access to community outdoor spaces like pools, pool decks, grilling areas. Resident events should be canceled.

Vents: There is no evidence that the virus is transmitted via a properly functioning heating and cooling ventilation system.

Testing: Testing is available only when ordered by a medical provider due to limited supplies. Call Montgomery County Public Health services at 240-777-1755 if you are sick and don't have a primary care provider. Call 911 if you have an emergency.

Privacy: If someone in your building is sick, you will not be informed due to health privacy laws. Whether someone is sick or not, you should follow the guidelines of physical distancing and facial coverings to protect yourself and others. If you are sick, you do not need 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.

Eviction Moratorium: Your landlord cannot evict you or force you to leave your unit for any reason during the Maryland Courts suspension of eviction orders. The Courts have suspended eviction orders until further notice.

Utilities: State of Maryland has suspended all utility shutoffs through May 1, 2020. Residents need to work with utilities if they are unable to pay their bills to avoid future disconnection. Utility websites have steps for contacting customer service.

Code Enforcement: Montgomery County Code Enforcement can be reached at 240- 777-0311 and responds by phone to all questions or complaints. Current enforcement is limited to critical health and safety complaints.

Moving: If you have to move, take the necessary precautions to minimize contact. There are no prohibitions on moving residences right now.

Check on neighbors by phone: Periodically call your neighbors to check in on how they are doing. Maintain physical distance but stay in touch with friends and family.

Landlords should post state issued COVID-19 guidelines and posters in prominent spaces. Ask your landlord if you don't see information posted