



COVID-19 UPDATES & GUIDANCE

Summary (updates highlighted in yellow)

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Number of confirmed cases

Maryland – 28,163 (+1,046)

Prince George's County – 8,135 (+304)

Bowie zip codes – 666

20715 – 127

20716 – 177

20720 – 163

20721 – 199

Maryland COVID-19 hospitalizations increased by 0.8% today.

Visit the [Prince George's County COVID-19 dashboard](#) to view data for all zip codes in the County and the [Maryland dashboard](#) for statewide data.

Prince George's County provides this statement on its dashboard:

"Prince George's County case counts per zip code area may be impacted by multiple factors including test availability and may not be an accurate indication of the concentration of positive cases in that area. Case rates per 100,000 residents is a more accurate indication of the concentration of positive cases in the area, but it also is impacted by many factors including testing availability. What is clear, is that COVID-19 is present throughout the county and in every municipality. DO NOT assume that a lower case count or rate in your community means you are not at risk. It remains of the utmost importance, that no matter where you live in the county, you must maintain social distancing and all other recommendations regarding preventing the spread of COVID-19."

The Maryland dashboard contains data about hospitalizations, including the total number of Marylanders currently hospitalized with COVID-19, what level of care they are receiving (acute, ICU, etc.) and how many new patients have been hospitalized with the disease. When these numbers begin to stabilize or go down, these will be some of the key indicators that decision makers will use to determine if the spread of the disease is truly slowing down.

Maryland is now providing data on outbreaks in nursing homes across the state. Two nursing homes located in Bowie are on the list: Larkin Chase and Brookdale Woodward Estates.

Governor Announces Some Loosening of Restrictions on Outdoor Activities

This afternoon, Governor Hogan held a press conference to provide an update on the state's reopening and recovery plans. He said the state is making good progress on testing, contact tracing, surge capacity, and obtaining necessary supplies of personal protective equipment. He also reported that there has been a downward trend in some key metrics and that if these trends continue into next week,

“We will be ready to lift the stay at home order next week and to begin Stage One. That would mean the reopening of certain types of businesses and lower risk community, religious, and quality of life activities.”

With the guidance of the Governor's Coronavirus Recovery Team, the Governor announced that some restrictions can safely be relaxed right now, in advance of Stage 1, and prior to the lifting of the stay at home order.

The following changes will take effect on Thursday, May 7 at 7 am:

- **Elective Surgeries**

The Maryland Department of Health will issue guidelines, effective immediately, to allow for elective procedures to occur, at the discretion of local hospitals and health care providers.

- **Outdoor Activities**

- The list of safe outdoor activities will be expanded to include: golf, tennis, boating, recreational fishing, and camping.
- State parks can resume functions and reopen their playgrounds. All state beaches can reopen for walking and exercise.
- **Public health guidance and physical distancing rules must still be followed with these activities.**
- The Governor's order provides local governments with the flexibility to take similar actions at their discretion.
- **NOTE: The City of Bowie will not be opening playgrounds or lifting social distancing restrictions in city parks at this time.**

Other Announcements:

- **Schools**

- **Maryland public schools will be CLOSED for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic school year.**
- Online and distance learning opportunities will continue. The department is releasing *Maryland Together: Recovery Plan for Education*, a comprehensive plan for long-term recovery.
- Reopening of schools will not happen in Stage One.
- Different methods of returning to school could be included in Reopening Stages Two and Three.
- Decisions regarding graduation will be made by each local superintendent.

- **Test Vaccines**

Scientists at the University of Maryland Medical School (UMMS) are working as part of a global COVID-19 vaccine development program. Patients participating in this test at UMMS were the first in the US to be given a test vaccine.

Today's Amended Stay at Home Order can be viewed on the state's website at <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Gatherings-FIFTH-AMENDED-5.6.20.pdf>

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has [issued guidance on the changes going into effect on May 7.](#)

Chief Chat

Bowie Police Chief John Nesky talks directly to the community in his monthly Chief Chat released yesterday. Some of the topics he covered were:

- Call 911 or the Police Non-Emergency number (240-544-5700) if you need assistance BEFORE posting to social media so that the Police can respond to a problem in real time rather than after the fact.
- Thieves are not taking a break during the pandemic. Be sure to lock your car doors and never leave anything of value in vehicles.
- If you observe ATV riders violating the law, call the Police Department to report them.
- We understand "Quarantine Fatigue", but we encourage all to continue to abide by the Governor's Executive order to stay home except for exercise or essential trips.

The Chief also paused to remember Nicole Warrington, one of the Department's dispatchers who recently lost her battle with cancer. View the April Chief Chat on the [Department's Facebook page](#) or on the [City's Youtube](#) channel.

Prince George's County Launches Text to 9-1-1

Shortness of breath and trouble breathing are among the symptoms of COVID-19. Because these symptoms may make it difficult for someone to make a telephone call for help, the County is now able to accept 9-1-1 texts for those who are unable to speak over the phone. The County has been working on plans to roll out this program and considers this a "soft launch" to respond to an immediate community need.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Blood supplies in the region are very low. The American Red Cross invites anyone who is able, to register to donate blood at their next blood drive in Bowie. It takes place on June 3 (9 a.m. to 7 p.m.) and June 4 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) at Grace Lutheran Church on Belair Drive. Please sign up online at www.redcrossblood.org and search by sponsor code, "Gracerock" or call 1-800-REDCROSS to make your life saving donation today. Extra precautions will be in place to protect workers and donors from potential exposure to the coronavirus. If you have questions about your eligibility to donate blood, please call 1-866-236-3276.

Volunteers are needed to support this event. If you can help check in blood donors or assist with the canteen, please email Samantha Fricke at Samantha.Fricke@redcross.org by Friday, May 15.

Free Online Tutoring

Bowie Youth & Family Services is now offering a free tutoring service for Bowie-area elementary, middle, and high school students. Experienced educators are providing this service online for the remainder of the school year. Call 1-513-817-3158 for details.

Maryland Coronavirus Information for Businesses

Visit the link below to see a list of the various COVID-19 related state and federal programs to help businesses manage during this emergency.

<https://govstatus.egov.com/md-coronavirus-business>

Mental Health Webinars

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. In recognition of this, Prince George's County is hosting a series of mental health mini-webinars throughout the month of May. These sessions are open to the public and will cover a variety of topics. They will be held every Thursday in May. Here's a few of the ones coming up in the coming week.

- May 7, 11 a.m. – Students' Emotional Health amidst COVID-19
- May 7, 1 p.m. – Mental Health & Domestic Violence
- May 14, 11 a.m. – Managing Stress & Staying Connected During COVID-19
- May 21, 10 a.m. – Emotional Self-care for First Responders
- May 21, 12 p.m. – Youth Wellness & Coping
- May 28, 11 a.m. – Grief & Vicarious (Indirect) Trauma
- May 28, 12 p.m. – Early Childhood & Social Emotional Health

View each of the mini-webinars on Zoom by going to <https://bit.ly/MentalHealthWebinars>.

County Executive COVID-19 Town Hall

County Executive Alsobrooks will host a Tele-Town Hall on Thursday, May 7, at 6:30 p.m. to give an update of the Government's COVID-19 response. To register, or to submit your questions or concerns, please [click here](#). You can also tune into Comcast Channel 76 (Verizon Fios 42) at 6:30 p.m. to listen to the live broadcast of the Tele-Town Hall.