

Information for Home Buyers and Sellers



Best Practices for Compliance with Governor Hogan's Stay-at-Home Order

As REALTORS®, we have the honor of serving people who want to buy and sell homes. We care about our clients, our communities, and our colleagues. Nothing in recent memory has brought this into sharper focus than the COVID-19 pandemic.

As discussed below, providing real estate services has been deemed essential in Maryland, permitting brokerages to conduct business during this time. With that right comes the responsibility of doing so in a safe way.

Governor Hogan issued a statewide "Stay at Home Order" (the "Order") that became effective at 8 pm, Monday, March 30, to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus that requires the closure of all "non-essential businesses." Except for staff and owners maintaining minimal operations, all workers that are considered non-essential must work only remotely.

Governor Hogan's Order incorporates federal guidance, which includes residential and commercial real estate services as "essential" in acknowledgment of the vital nature of providing housing to the public. The Governor's Order also acknowledges the over-riding importance of protecting public health through staying home and social distancing. The real estate brokerage industry shares the Governor's priorities. The industry's paramount concerns are safety of the public and the prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The following guidelines outline procedures which will allow us to continue to do business in a way that is mindful of the unique risks we are all facing. It is **our** responsibility to follow these guidelines so that we and our clients are protected. If we cannot adopt these safe practices, the industry may face additional restrictions or even a complete prohibition on providing real estate services.

Accordingly, real estate licensees will limit personal interactions to the greatest extent possible and will engage in-person only when necessary, and by following these strict protocols:

- In-person activities must be by appointment only.
- No more than three (3) people, including the agent, may be at the property at any one time.
- Those three persons must strictly follow physical distancing guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") by remaining at least six feet apart at all times

Real estate licensees who strictly follow the above protocols are permitted to engage in the following in-person activities related to the purchase and sale of homes:

- Conduct listing presentations, take property photos, and create virtual tours for new listings
- Facilitate signing of contract documents
- Preview and show listings by appointment only
- Facilitate inspections, appraisals, buyer "walk-throughs," and key delivery

All other real estate brokerage services will be limited to services we can provide remotely. There are risks associated with leaving the safety of your home and viewing homes for sale, as well as having prospective buyers enter the seller's home. Buyers and sellers must be attentive to and abide by the mandates and guidelines from public health officials and work with their real estate agent to make informed decisions about listing, selling, and purchasing real property. REALTORS® will exercise their best judgment under the circumstances to provide advice regarding all aspects of the current real estate market.

Updated information about COVID-19 is available from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and from the [Maryland Department of Health's COVID-19 Information Portal](#). If you have specific questions about health concerns related to COVID-19, you should consult with a health professional.

Maryland REALTORS® will continue to provide updates on our [website](#) and through social media as we get new information.