



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

On May 13, 2020, Governor Hogan announced an easing of the March 30 "Stay-at-Home" order. This new order also authorizes local governments to implement stricter safety measures affecting residents and businesses. The new "Safer-at-Home" order was effective at 5:00 pm on May 15, 2020, and eased restrictions on the following entities:

- Public space (like parks, sports fields, etc.)
- Certain retail businesses that were previously deemed non-essential
- Religious facilities
- Manufacturing
- Certain personal services (barber shops and beauty salons)

**The previous guidance on real estate practice issued in early April remains in effect for now.**

Real estate services were deemed essential in Maryland under Governor Hogan's March 30, "Stay at Home Order," permitting brokerages to conduct business during this time.

Governor Hogan's Orders incorporate 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 Safer-at-Home Order emphasizes the over-riding importance of reducing community transmission of the virus while strategically activating the Maryland Strong Roadmap to Recovery plan. The real estate brokerage industry shares the Governor's priorities. Our paramount concern remains the safety of the public and 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.

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

- Except for open houses, in-person activities should 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 photography/videography, inspections, appraisals, buyer "walk-throughs," and key delivery

Although remote activity is recommended, if a seller demands an open house, it is not prohibited by law and open house activities should follow the in-person guidelines above as well as CDC guidelines and social distancing.

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.

**As always, consult with your broker to ensure your practices are consistent with company policy.**

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.