



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harford's First Confirmed COVID-19 Death Reported; Test Results Pending on "Probable Deaths"

BEL AIR, Md., (April 17, 2020) - *County Executive Barry Glassman issued the following weekly update today on the COVID-19 pandemic in Harford County:*

"I am saddened to announce that Harford County has lost our first resident to a confirmed case of COVID-19, according to a report by the Maryland Department of Health Laboratories Administration. The victim was a 27-year-old male with underlying medical conditions. He passed away on April 13 and was diagnosed post-mortem by the medical examiner. Our hearts go out to his family at this terrible time.

Earlier this week the Maryland Department of Health began reporting "probable deaths" pending confirmation by a laboratory test. As of this morning, the state is reporting a total of 6 "probable deaths" and a total of 176 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among Harford residents. This compares to 111 cases at this time last week.

Changes in reporting

The state health department has begun pulling COVID-19 reports from additional sources, including the medical examiner, and on Sunday the governor ordered cases to be reported by zip code. The Harford County Health Department's website has a map of these reports for our county updated daily, which is also accessible from our COVID-19 resource page, <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/2823/COVID-19-Resources>.

Please keep in mind that the state is not releasing data for zip codes with seven or fewer cases due to privacy laws, although these cases will still be reflected in the overall total. It is important to remember that these reports do not reflect the prevalence of the virus in our community. In fact,

public health officials emphasize that cases can be infectious before symptoms occur, so we must continue to assume everyone is a potential carrier and take appropriate precautions.

Face coverings

Wearing a cloth face covering helps protect against virus transmission, which can occur from mist sprayed through normal conversation. On Wednesday, Gov. Hogan issued an executive order requiring masks or cloth face coverings in retail spaces or on public transportation effective at 7 a.m. tomorrow, Saturday, April 18. Please note these are not the N95 masks that should be reserved for first responders. Details of the governor's orders are here:

<https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Masks-and-Physical-Distancing-4.15.20.pdf>.

Instructions on how to make, wear and safely handle face coverings is on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

All of the above and more can be accessed on the county's COVID-19 resource page, <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/2823/COVID-19-Resources>.

Supporting Harford's first responders

On Thursday, my administration began receiving delivery of PPE's (personal protective equipment) to supply Harford County's first responders. We ordered 100,000 N95 masks, 500,000 surgical masks and 100,000 gowns to keep our volunteer fire departments, police and EMS personnel safe, so they can keep us safe. We appreciate all they do.

I also want to take a moment during National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week to thank our Harford County 911 call takers and public safety dispatchers. Whenever you need help, they are the everyday heroes with a calm voice bringing you the right help in the right place at the right time.

Moving forward I continue to work closely with the governor's office and public health officials as we look for the number of new cases to peak and begin to subside. Please keep the victims of this crisis in your prayers, and continue to take precautions to stay safe, slow the spread and save lives. We will get through this together."

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