



The Governor of Maryland issued a new Emergency Order on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, directing all non-essential businesses to close to the general public as of 5:00 p.m. March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. The emergency order does NOT direct Maryland residents to shelter-in-place. Guidance from the Office of Legal Counsel also states: “employers are urged to promote work-from-home arrangements to the greatest extent possible.” [Click here for the Office of Legal Counsel Guidance.](#)

Based upon Governor Hogan’s Amended and Restated Executive Order ([click here](#)), all state and local REALTOR® boards and associations should be **closed to the general public** as of 5:00 p.m. on March 23, 2020.

All real estate brokerage offices and branch offices should be **closed to the general public** as of 5:00 p.m. on March 23, 2020. The Executive Order does not expressly prohibit making appointments, meeting with a client, or continuing work on pending transactions; however, *every effort should be made to comply with the CDC protocols on hygiene and social distancing, and to enlist strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading the disease.*

The Maryland REALTORS will update, as necessary, any guidance related to the provision of real estate services and future changes to the Emergency Order.

When determining whether a business function is “essential,” Marylanders are directed to follow the federal guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security under the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) and the interpretive Guidance issued by the Governor’s Office of Legal Counsel (OLC). The list of essential businesses does NOT include a broad definition of real estate services but guidance from the OLC includes certain elements of the Commercial and Government Facilities Sectors:

- Building and property maintenance companies, including without limitation plumbers, electricians, HVAC service companies, roofers, environmental services companies, exterminators, arborists, and landscapers.
- Companies that sell supplies and materials for maintenance of commercial and residential buildings, including “big box” home improvement supply stores, plumbing distributors, electrical distributors, and HVAC distributors.
- Commercial and residential construction companies.
- Self-storage facilities.
- Lawyers and law firms.
- Furthermore, CISA guidance includes the following personnel:
  - “Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences”
  - “Workers to ensure continuity of building functions”
  - “Security staff to maintain building access control and physical security measures”
  - The full CISA Memorandum may be accessed [here](#).