

## **Governor Hogan's Press Conference - Thursday, October 22, 2020 2:00 PM**

Governor Hogan announced a doubling of Maryland's economic relief and recovery for small businesses. In the beginning of the press conference, Governor Hogan briefed on the State's health metrics. The State is monitoring a small uptick in hospitalizations, but hospitalizations are still down from their peaks. Maryland still has one of the lowest death rates in the country and in October there were two days with zero days. Other areas in the country are spiking. The virus does not recognize state borders. Maryland is open for business by remaining cautious and following public health guidance, including masking and physical distancing.

Contact tracing continues to show that small family gatherings followed by house parties are the two top situations for spread. According to a Goucher poll, 89% of Marylanders agree with protocols. Outdoor is better than indoor and handwashing is an important tool with masking and distancing.

With regard to economic recovery, in addition to the relief already provided by the federal Payroll Protection Payroll and over State grants and funds, the State will invest another \$250 million from the State's Rainy-Day Fund through the Maryland Strong Economic Recovery Initiative. This will fund a combination of existing and new relief programs. It will include:

- \$50 million for Small Business Relief Grant Funds, which will allow the full backlog to be processed
- \$50 million for Maryland restaurants to expand outdoor dining, purchase tents, upgrade HVAC systems and technology. This funding will be provided to local jurisdictions to be dispersed immediately but no later than December 31<sup>st</sup>
- \$20 million for Main Street MD and Baltimore Main Street)
- \$20 million COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund
- \$5 million for Small and Business Minority Low-Interest Loans
- \$2 million for the State's hometown tourism program
- \$3 million for an arts program
- \$100 million Dedicated Emergency Rapid Response Fund (this is reserved for future needs).

Governor Hogan said that local jurisdictions need to focus on moving into Stage 3 and needs to ensure funding from the CARES Act is being fully disbursed by the counties. For some counties, only about a 1/3 of the funds has been spent. The \$250 million is above and beyond the requirement for maintaining funds in the Rainy-Day Fund. Governor Hogan said that businesses can get help from multiple programs depending on their need and qualifications.

Governor Hogan was asked about the security of the elections. He said that he is continuing to have meetings with other State and federal agencies to make sure that all votes are counted, and the election secured.

To see the program slides, click [here](#).