

**County Executive**  
**of**  
**Howard County, Maryland**

**Executive Order: 2021-04**  
**Dated: February 17, 2021**  
**Subject: Exercise of Emergency Powers –**  
**Restating limitations on social gatherings**

**WHEREAS**, on March 5, 2020, Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., declared a state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19, a communicable respiratory disease, and that emergency still exists; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 15, 2020, by Executive Order No. 2020-02, pursuant to the authority granted by Howard County Code sections 6.103 and 6.104, I declared a state of emergency in Howard County and Council Resolution No. 41-2020 continues the state of emergency while the state of emergency and/or the catastrophic health emergency declared by Governor Hogan remains in effect or until terminated by Executive Order issued by the County Executive, whichever is later; and

**WHEREAS**, through successive County Executive Orders, and in compliance with State Executive Orders giving discretion to local jurisdictions, I put into place restrictions on the opening or operation of businesses, organizations, establishments, and facilities that took into account relevant COVID-19 data and its impact in the County and information from public health experts; and

**WHEREAS**, by issuance of Executive Orders No. 2020-19 and 2020-20, limitations were placed on indoor and outdoor social gatherings; and

**WHEREAS**, State Executive Order Number 21-01-28-01 provides that certain types of business organizations, establishments and facilities may open, subject to local orders, and that political subdivisions may issue orders that are more restrictive than those permitted by State Executive Order Number 21-01-28-01, if the political subdivision determines that it is necessary and reasonable to do so to prevent the spread of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, State Executive Order Number 21-01-28-01 allows certain foodservice establishments, which would include wedding receptions at a wedding venue; social and fraternal clubs; and indoor and outdoor recreation facilities to operate at 50% capacity; and

**WHEREAS**, over the past week, the 7 day case average per 100,000 residents and the 7 day average positivity rate have decreased; and

**WHEREAS**, the County’s COVID-19 positivity rate has decreased to under 5%; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the data points set forth above, Howard County can now lift certain restrictions on wedding receptions at a wedding venue, social and fraternal organizations, and recreation sports and programs or events that were put into place by the issuance of Executive Order No. 2020-19, as amended by Executive Order No. 2020-20, and can align with State Executive Order No. 21-01-28-01.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED AND PROCLAIMED** by the County Executive of Howard County, Maryland, that, in accordance with the authority granted by section 6.104(a) of the Howard County Code, the Howard County Charter, and the State Executive Order Number 21-01-28-01, that:

1. Howard County Executive Order No. 2020-19 and Howard County Executive Order No. 2020-20 are rescinded and provisions of State Executive Order Number 21-01-28-01 shall apply to businesses, organizations, establishments, and facilities located in Howard County, Maryland except that effective Friday, February 19, 2021 at 5:00 p.m., social gatherings shall be limited as follows:
  - a. Indoor social gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited; and
  - b. Outdoor social gatherings of more than 25 people are prohibited;
2. For purposes of this Order, a “social gathering”:
  - a. Includes family gatherings, parties, cookouts, parades, festivals, conventions, fundraisers, and other gatherings not associated with operating or patronizing a business that sells merchandise.
  - b. Shall not include retail stores, offices, foodservice establishments, social and fraternal organizations and associations, recreation sports and programs, religious gatherings, wedding receptions at a wedding venue, indoor theaters and outdoor entertainment venues and such entities are subject to the requirements of State Executive Order 21-01-28-01.
3. County businesses, organizations, establishments, or facilities that are required to be closed by State Executive Order 21-01-28-01 shall continue to be closed.
4. For all types of businesses, organizations, establishments, or facilities for which State Executive Order 21-01-28-01 addresses maximum occupancy, the maximum occupancy for Howard County businesses, organizations, establishments, or facilities shall be calculated using guidance for calculation of maximum occupancy issued by the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, Office of the Fire Marshall.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED**, that:

- (1) This Executive Order shall be promptly publicized; and

(2) A copy filed with the Administrator to the County Council of Howard County.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I, Calvin B. Ball, as County Executive of Howard County, Maryland, have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Howard County to be affixed this 17 day of February, 2021.



Calvin Ball  
County Executive