



CONSUMERISM DURING COVID-19

(Updated 3/24/20)

General Information:

- By order of the governor, no evictions will be carried out until the state of emergency is terminated.
- All utilities have been prohibited from shutting off any residential customers during this state of emergency.
- The courts have postponed all civil cases until at least April 3.
- By order of the governor, vehicles may not be towed solely for having expired tags.

Price Gouging

By order of the governor, during this state of emergency, businesses are prohibited from increasing prices, commonly known as price gouging. If you find a retailer who is increasing prices, please contact the Office of the Attorney General by email at: consumer@oag.state.md.us (include a picture of the item and price sticker for reference), or by phone at 410-528-8662 (voice/relay).

Bogus Products & Online Scams

Beware of coronavirus related scams. Some examples are:

- Robocalls offering test you for free for the coronavirus.
- Someone selling products to cure the virus.
- The offer of a vaccine against the virus. To date there are no approved potions, pills, or treatment products to cure COVID-19. If you get any of these offers by email, do not click on any links. Clicking on these scam messages may allow online viruses or malware access to your computer which will then be used to steal your personal and account information. It is best never to click on unsolicited online offers and only click on COVID-19 news from a trusted source like the CDC, WHO, Howard County's or your local hospital's website, or another authoritative entity.

Reporting Violations

If you come across price gouging, scam products, or other unconscionable behavior, or if you have other consumer related questions, please contact the [Howard County Office of Consumer Protection](https://www.howardcountymd.gov/consumer-protection) at (410) 313-6420 (voice/relay) or consumer@howardcountymd.gov

If you need this information in an alternate format, call 410-313-6420 (voice/relay).