Maryland

Statewide Customer Service Annual Report FY20

"Marylanders expect the best possible customer service from their state government, and that is exactly what they deserve."

Governor, Larry Hogan
Lt. Governor, Boyd K. Rutherford

CHANGING
Maryland
FOR THE BETTER

Letter from the Governor of Maryland

Dear Marylanders,

I am proud of Marylanders for uniting, never losing hope, and staying Maryland Strong during this incredibly difficult year. We have faced and overcome daunting challenges before, and we will get through this together. In June of 2016, our administration rolled out an ambitious endeavor – to change the culture of state government and drastically improve the citizen experience. Never has this commitment been more important than now.

Even through this unprecedented situation, I am proud of the customer service our state has provided by quickly pivoting to serve Marylanders in need within days or weeks, when these same processes would normally take weeks or months. The job of every state employee is to focus on helping as many people as possible, as fast as possible, and with the best customer service possible. I am grateful to the many state employees who have worked overtime, and with innovative strategies, so that our customers are assisted safely and expeditiously.

Despite the obstacles of 2020, it should come as no surprise that, four years into our Customer Service Initiative, we continue to see improvements and success stories across all state agencies. Key components to our success include the feedback we receive from you, our customers, and the innovative ideas and process improvements provided by our team members. State agencies continued in FY20 to implement their customer service improvement plans, provide training and recognition for our team members, collect customer satisfaction data, and beginning in March of 2020, adapted to meet the virtual or socially-distanced requirements to provide service safely to our customers.

We encourage you to view the details of these customer service accomplishments and COVID19 changes that are highlighted in this FY20 Annual Report. Agency-specific reports are also available on their respective websites. I want to thank all of our hardworking state employees for the service they provide, as well as the members of our Customer Service Workgroup who continue to provide our administration with feedback and ideas for ongoing improvements.

The Hogan-Rutherford administration is committed to providing the best possible customer service to our citizens and so I directed each agency to ensure that we continue to deliver the best customer service to our struggling citizens and small businesses as quickly as possible. Through the hard work of our employees, the state is better equipped to improve the customer service experience and deliver services to all those in need of assistance.

Sincerely,

Larry Hogan

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Customer Service Feedback from Marylanders

The Governor's Customer Feedback Survey provides Marylanders with an opportunity to give feedback about their interactions with state government. In Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20), July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020, the state received 70,762 survey responses with 57,660 respondents indicating they were satisfied with the overall customer service experience. The overall average customer satisfaction rating is 81%. The Hogan-Rutherford Administration has received an overall customer satisfaction rating of 81% or higher every year. We are pleased to share some of the highlights from FY20 efforts to improve the customer service experience.

The State collects feedback from multiple sources including data from survey links in Maryland employee email signature blocks and in various places on agency websites with the "Give the Governor Your Feedback" logo; after customers complete an online transaction; Maryland Business Express, where survey links allow businesses to provide feedback; and after various events to improve the customer experience. In addition, the Department of Transportation utilizes a third-party, independent contractor to collect survey feedback throughout the year; this survey shows a similar customer satisfaction rating, helping to confirm the quality of data.

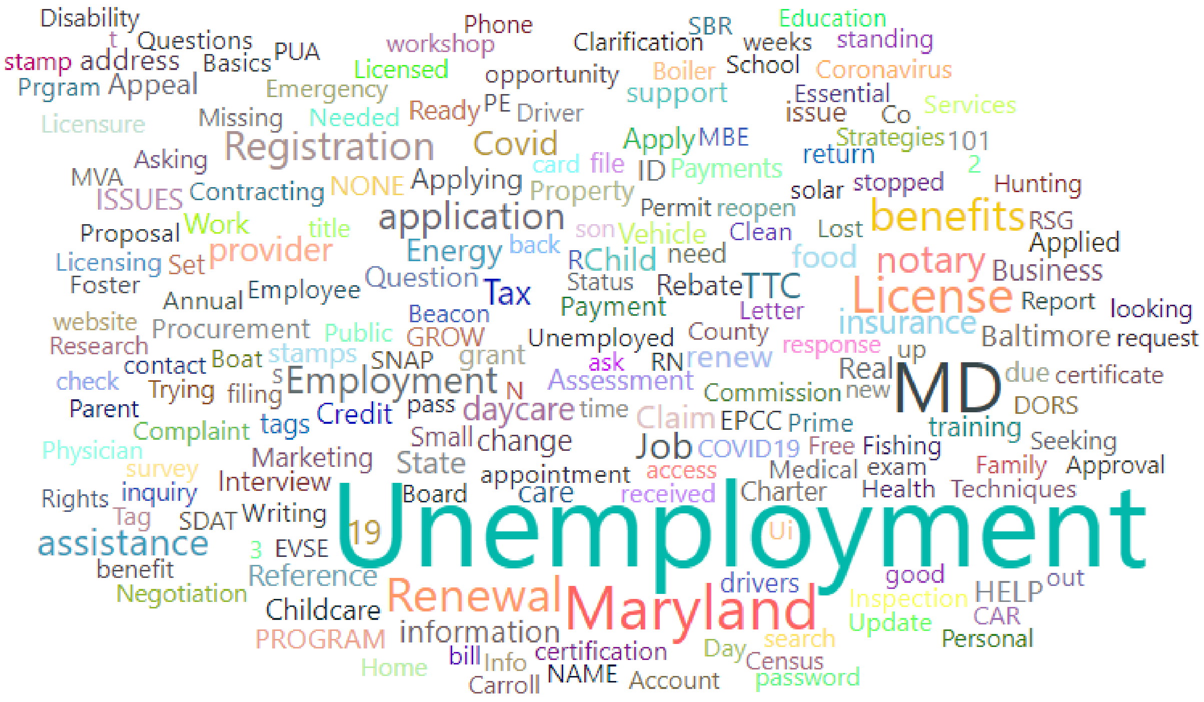
81% Overall Customer Satisfaction Rating

GIVE THE GOVERNOR YOUR FEEDBACK.

Feedback Loop - Take Action & Follow Up

Information provided by Marylanders through the survey is used to improve products and services, and to take action so that state agencies can follow up with customers. For example, the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives and the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women's Business Affairs conducts close to 800 events per year and uses the feedback from these events to adapt in real time and improve programming and the customer experience.

The survey also provides users with a field to voluntarily input Contact Info, Reason for Contact, and Comments; approximately half of all survey respondents complete these fields. Each agency reviews survey responses, either daily or weekly, in order to identify places for change, implement action steps, and to follow up with customers. For example, a survey response from a healthcare provider about the state's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program improved collaboration between two divisions within the Department of Health, making it easier for healthcare providers to comply with state requirements. The graphic below illustrates keywords from the Reason for Contact field, and can be filtered by state agencies to perform topic and sentiment analysis that can be used to pinpoint areas to improve products and services.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Letter
Report
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website
Procurement
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Census
Carroll
NAME
Account
password

Pandemic Related Adjustments to Meet Customer Needs

The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge in 2020. All state agencies were asked to deftly adapt to meet changing customer needs, even as many physical offices were closed. We are proud to highlight some of the initiatives that agencies implemented or modified to make processes run smoother. These include a transition to providing online services, decreasing processing time for customer transactions, adjusting hours to meet customer needs, creating new grant and loan programs to help strengthen Maryland Businesses, and other initiatives.

Maryland Department of Health

Communications Outreach

COVID-19 Pandemic Response

In FY20, the Maryland Department of Health has continued to implement its Constituent Services and controlled correspondence process guidelines on inquiries from the Governor's Office, state, and federal elected officials.

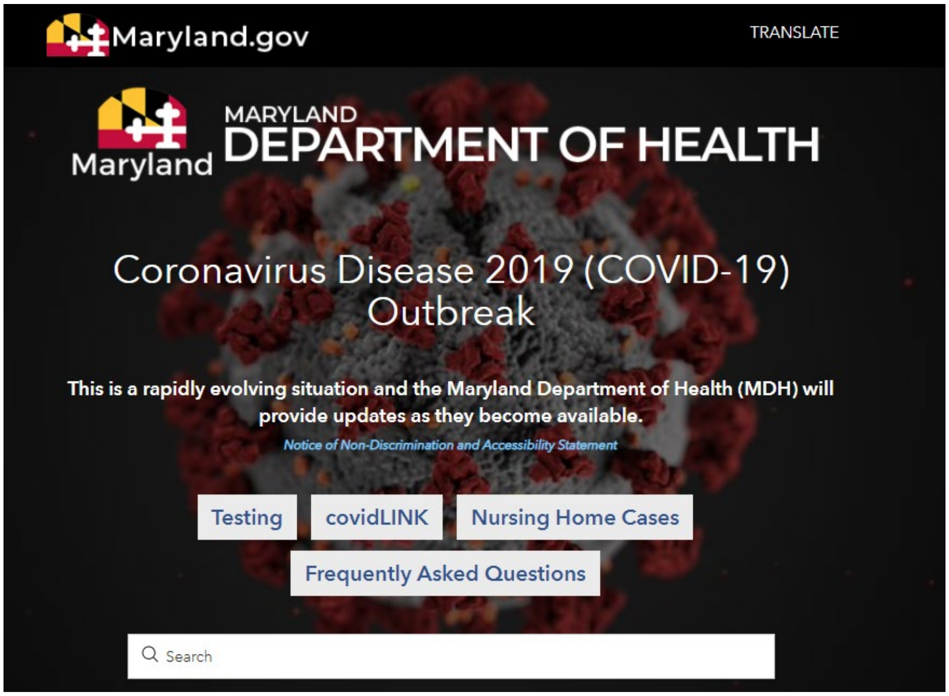
The Office of Constituent Services implemented the "**24/7 Rule**" requiring that each inquiry receive an acknowledgement from the Maryland Department of Health within **24 hours** of receipt. After the acknowledgement has been sent, the clock will then start on a **seven business day** turnaround for case closure. Once the seven business days have elapsed, the case will be considered overdue. Once the case is considered overdue, the Office of Constituent Services maintains daily communication with the Department's relevant subject matter expert to resolve the inquiry and communicate a resolution to the constituent. Additionally, the Office of Constituent Services generates weekly reports for senior leadership at the Department to review overdue inquiries. Since March 1, 2020, the Office of Constituent Services has processed and responded to over 11,100 inquiries related to COVID-19.

Office of Communications

In FY20, the Secretary's Office of Communications has produced or facilitated production of the following COVID-19-specific communications in coordination with multiple Maryland Department of Health administrations, offices, and programs, as well as other state agencies:

- 1,692 media inquiries
- 144 interviews
- 40 press releases
- 303 videos/FAQs/fact sheets
- 459 Maryland Department of Health website updates, memos, general guidance, announcements, newsletters or webinars

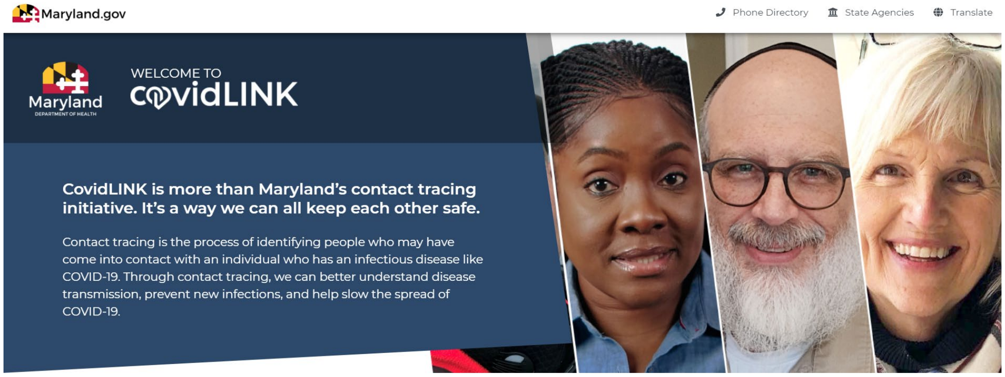
The Maryland Department of Health Communications also developed, awarded, and currently manages contracts with two creative and marketing vendors to produce and place COVID-19 statewide multimedia campaigns for the purpose of creating awareness on crucial health issues. One contract is specific to encouraging awareness and participation in contact tracing efforts; the other encompasses use of behavioral-based messaging (e.g., use of masks, social distancing, etc.), which are likely to change as messaging needs change. The Office of Communications is also working with the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities to develop messaging directed toward especially vulnerable, and at-risk Maryland communities, in both efforts. The Office of Communications also plays a critical coordination role in daily updates and ongoing maintenance for Maryland's three COVID-19 websites including, coronavirus.maryland.gov, covidlink.maryland.gov, and coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing.


Maryland.gov
TRANSLATE
Maryland
MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Testing
covidLINK
Nursing Home Cases
Frequently Asked Questions
Search

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Outbreak

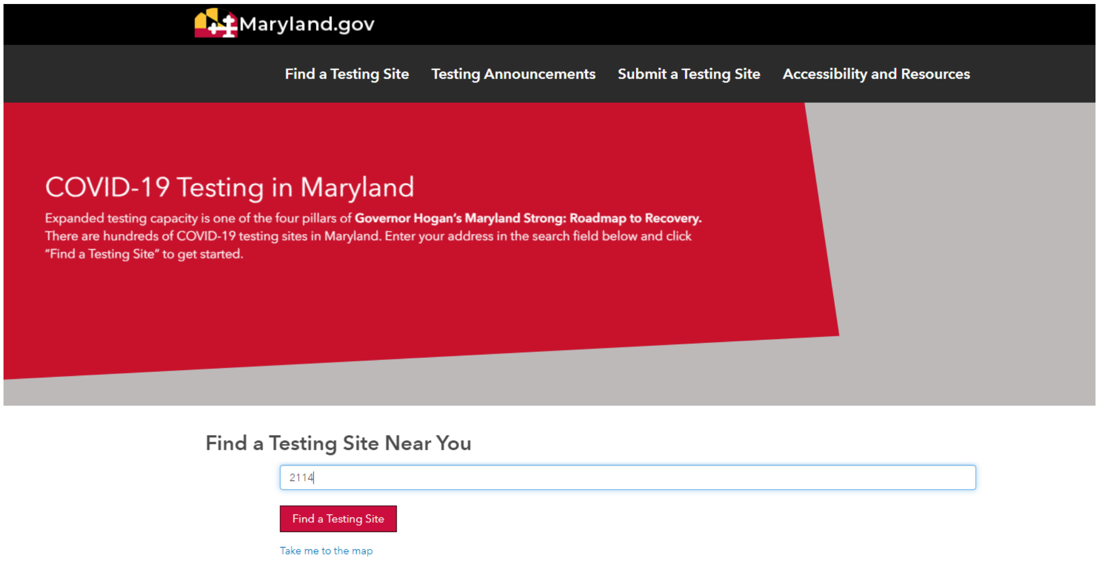
This is a rapidly evolving situation and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) will provide updates as they become available.

Notice of Non-Discrimination and Accessibility Statement


Maryland.gov
Phone Directory
State Agencies
Translate
Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
WELCOME TO
covidLINK

CovidLINK is more than Maryland's contact tracing initiative. It's a way we can all keep each other safe.

Contact tracing is the process of identifying people who may have come into contact with an individual who has an infectious disease like COVID-19. Through contact tracing, we can better understand disease transmission, prevent new infections, and help slow the spread of COVID-19.


Maryland.gov
Find a Testing Site
Testing Announcements
Submit a Testing Site
Accessibility and Resources
Find a Testing Site
Take me to the map

COVID-19 Testing in Maryland

Expanded testing capacity is one of the four pillars of **Governor Hogan's Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery.** There are hundreds of COVID-19 testing sites in Maryland. Enter your address in the search field below and click "Find a Testing Site" to get started.

Find a Testing Site Near You

2114

Department of Housing and Community Development

Neighborhood Revitalization

COVID-19 Pandemic Response

During the last quarter of FY20, the division's primary focus was directed to assisting our many partners affected by COVID-19. In response to the pandemic, the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization:

- Ensured that staff were equipped with the necessary equipment to telework and able to provide our customers with uninterrupted, top-notch service. Additionally, supervisors were in constant contact with staff to ensure that all were functioning well, both professionally and personally.
- Conducted stakeholder surveys of partnering organizations, including small businesses to determine the impact of COVID-19, as well as find out what resources and assistance they need most to sustain their operations.
- For homeless and human services providers, established weekly and bi-weekly check-ins, created a weekly newsletter, and developed a webpage that was specifically focused on COVID-19 related resources.
- Coordinated response efforts with fellow state agencies MDH/BHA, DHS, MEMA, Commerce and Labor.
- Allowed grantees with funding left in their programs to repurpose those funds to address the pandemic; some repurposed funds went directly to small businesses located on Maryland's historic Main Streets.
- Received more than $48 million in federal funds from the Community Development Block Grant, Community Service Block Grant, and Emergency Solutions Grant programs under the CARES Act to assist local governments and non-profit organizations in responding to the pandemic over the next two years. Efforts included activities such as eviction prevention, providing rental assistance, purchasing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), building sanitizing, payroll assistance, etc.
- Received $29 million in CARES Act funding and, under guidance from the Governor, established the Maryland Nonprofit Recovery Initiative to assist hundreds of Maryland nonprofits affected by the pandemic. Funding was distributed to help them stay afloat during these challenging times while also supporting their important work in the community.

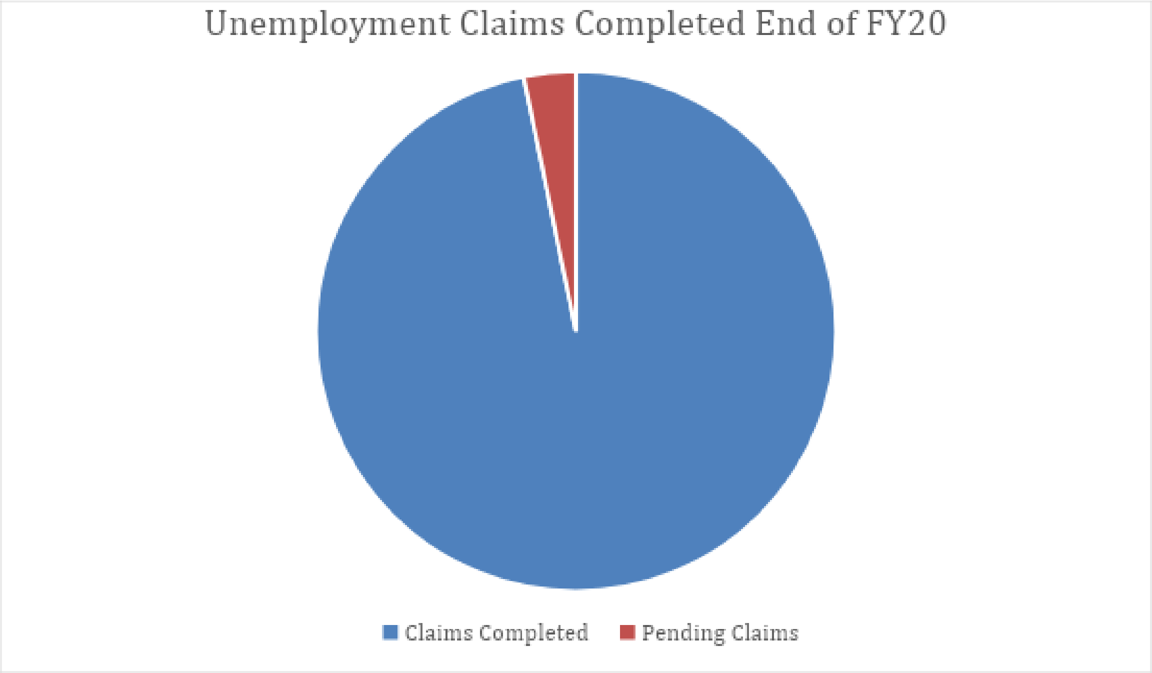
Maryland Department of Labor

Beacon One-Stop

COVID-19 Pandemic Response

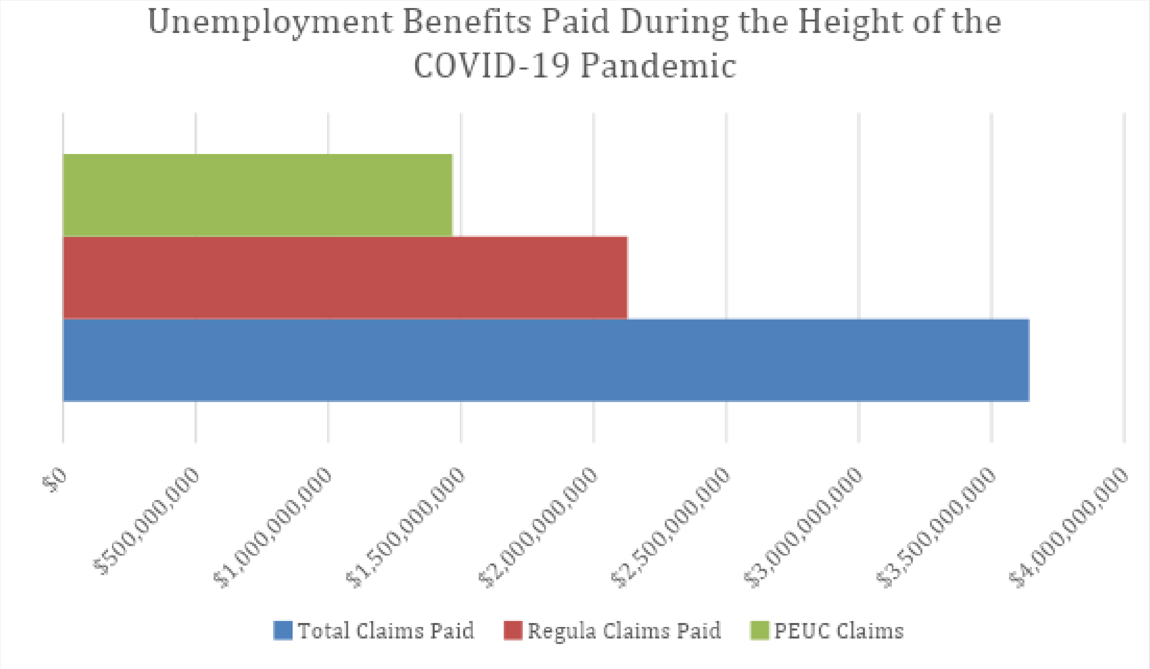
The Maryland Department of Labor (Labor) made agency services available online, including the launch of BEACON One-Stop. Beginning on Friday, April 24, 2020, BEACON One-Stop allowed claimants to file claims for ALL unemployment insurance (UI) benefit programs through a single application, including the most recent federally-enacted unemployment programs, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC). BEACON One-Stop is an application that allows claimants to file claim certifications each week, upload supporting documentation and review their benefit payment history. In addition, the department added weekend hours, extended normal calling hours, and created user-friendly online videos to help people through the application process.

Detailed FY20 Results and FY21 Plans



Of the 624,978 complete claims received from March 9 to June 27 601,208 (96.2%) have been processed with 492,789 (78.8%) receiving benefit payments and 108,419 (17.3%) denied benefits for not meeting state and federal program requirements.

Maryland Department of Labor Released Over $3.6 Billion in Benefits



From March 9 to June 27, the Maryland Department of Labor's Division of Unemployment Insurance paid a total of $3,642,243,364 in all forms of insurance benefits to claimants, including CARES Act unemployment insurance benefits. This total amount includes $2,126,846,214 in issued benefits, $1,468,112,926 in PUA benefits, and $47,284,224 in Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits.

Maryland Department of Commerce

COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund

COVID-19 Pandemic Response

The Department's priority during the pandemic was to ensure that businesses had the guidance and information they needed to reopen and operate safely.

Media & Outreach

Between March and the end of June 2020, Secretary Schulz and the senior leadership team participated in 86 webinars, interviews, and town halls to communicate the Governor's plan to reopen the economy safely to the business community.

Maryland COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund Programs for Businesses

Thus far, the Department has set up three grant and loan programs to assist businesses during the COVID-19 crisis, including:

- *$75 Million Relief Loan Fund* – for for-profit businesses with 50 or fewer employees. This COVID-19 Emergency Relief $75M Loan Fund offers working capital to assist Maryland for-profit small businesses disrupted operations due to COVID-19. Loan assistance is intended to provide interim relief complementing actions with its bank, business interruption insurance, and financial partners.
- *$50 Million Relief Grant Fund* – for business and nonprofits with 50 or fewer employees. This COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grant Fund offers working capital to assist Maryland small businesses and nonprofits with disrupted operations due to COVID-19. Grant assistance is intended to provide interim relief complementing actions with its bank, business interruption insurance, and financial partners.
- *$5 Million PPE Manufacturers Grant Fund* - for assisting Maryland manufacturers to produce personal protective equipment and other items identified as Critical Needs Items by the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Department of General Services (DGS), that are urgently needed by the State of Maryland, Maryland-based hospitals and healthcare facilities, and emergency and first responders.

As of June 30, 2020, the following grant and loans had been awarded to businesses and nonprofit organizations:

- Relief Loans (146), $6,850,695
- Relief Grants (4,154), $40,820,049
- Manufacturing Grants (53), $1,848,997
- MSAC Emergency Grants: (125), $1,000,000

Business Advisory Groups

The department partnered with a broad range of customers/businesses to organize 13 advisory groups to develop guidance and safety best practices for reopening establishments. The advisory groups included: Tourism, Attractions, Sports, Small Business/Personal Services, Restaurants, Professional and Financial Services, Manufacturing, Lodging, Tourism Transportation, Destinations, Construction and Development, and Arts. The Governor also created a nonprofit and faith-based task force, both coordinated by the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives.

Maryland’s COVID-19 Business Response Web Page

The Department set up Maryland’s COVID-19 Business Response web page (https://govstatus.egov.com/md-coronavirus-business) where businesses could easily find information on:

- Business Closures, Restrictions, and Enforcement
- Employer and Worker Assistance
- Financial Assistance
- Offers, Donations, and Volunteer Resources
- MEMA’s Virtual Business Operations Center

Back to Business Web Page

The Department created the Back-to-Business web page (https://open.maryland.gov/backtobusiness/) for businesses to find information on getting back to business (Governor Hogan’s Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery Plan), best practices for safety, and the Maryland Strong, Back to Business Pledge.

Frequently Asked Questions Web Page

In collaboration with state agency partners**,** the department set up a Frequently Asked Questions web page where businesses could easily find answers to many of their common concerns.

Email Accounts to Handle Multiple Questions

New, targeted email accounts were created and monitored by multiple staff members to handle the numerous questions addressed to the Commerce Secretary, or over 20 partner state agencies, and questions that pertained to the Maryland COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund Programs.

- Secretary.Commerce@maryland.gov
- Covid-19.Application@maryland.gov

With these email accounts, we were able to efficiently respond to hundreds of questions per day.

Assistance from other State Agencies

The Department of Labor sought out assistance from other agencies, utilizing employees who may have been on administrative leave, to support the processing of emergency grant and loan applications to expedite the response time for customers. In addition, approximately 150 employees from other agencies were brought on board to expedite the applications.

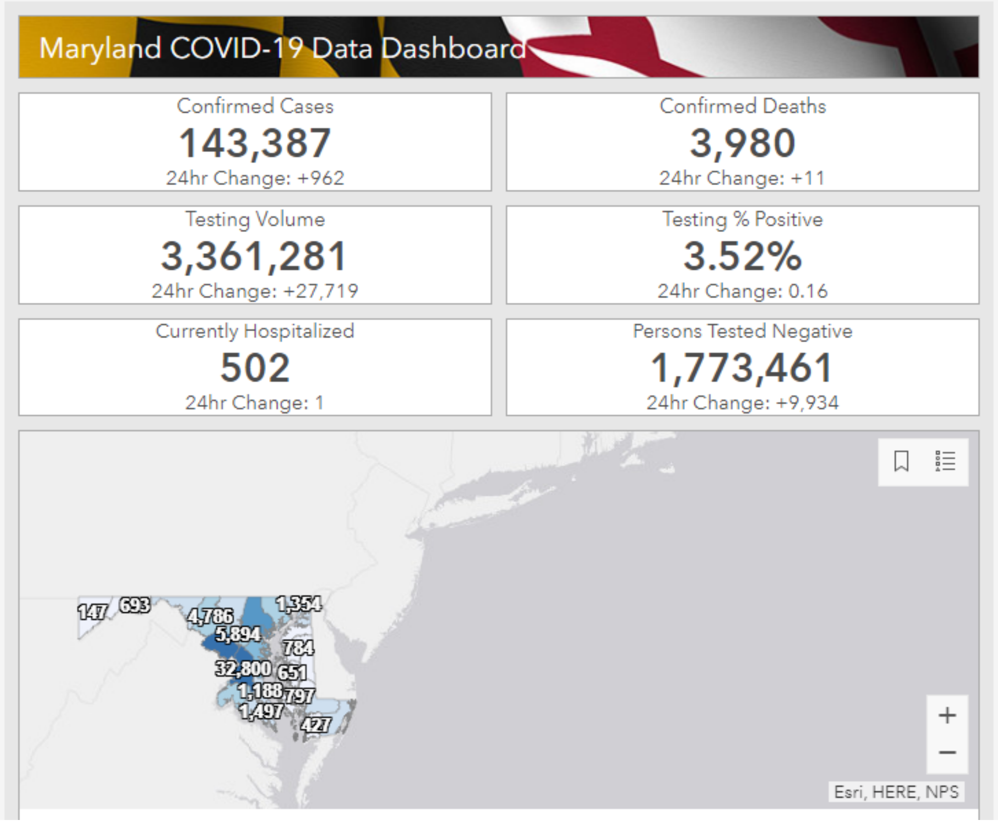
Proud
to be Safely
OPEN
Maryland
OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Maryland Emergency Management Information Portal

Joint Operations Center (MJOC)

Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

One of the most notable efforts that the MEMA's Risk Analysis team undertook to improve the overall customer experience for Maryland residents was the Maryland Coronavirus Dashboard. The Risk Analysis Team, in collaboration with MDH (Maryland Department of Health) and DoIT (Department of Information Technology), created a dashboard of COVID-19 related information and statistics. It went live for public use only a few days after the Public Health State of Emergency was declared. The dashboard quickly became the official State go-to source for COVID-19 infection and testing information, receiving over 50 million visits to date. Risk Analysis Team members worked daily (7 days a week) to maintain, update, and improve the dashboard. The dashboard is located at coronavirus.maryland.gov and represents customer service best practices in efficiency, efficacy, breadth, and transparency.



Maryland COVID-19 Data Dashboard

Confirmed Cases **143,387** 24hr Change: +962	Confirmed Deaths **3,980** 24hr Change: +11
Testing Volume **3,361,281** 24hr Change: +27,719	Testing % Positive **3.52%** 24hr Change: 0.16
Currently Hospitalized **502** 24hr Change: 1	Persons Tested Negative **1,773,461** 24hr Change: +9,934

The Maryland Joint Operations Center (MJOC) serves as a communications hub for MEMA's operational partners. MJOC distributes alert and warning messages throughout the state. In addition to supporting the needs of local and state emergency management customers, the MJOC provides dispatching and after hours answering service for several agencies. Below are MJOC's FY20 statistics:

Total MJOC Phone Calls:	**10,178**
Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE):	1210
Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM):	4272
Maryland Occupational Safety & Health (MOSH):	510
Baltimore City Environmental Police Department (BCEPD):	231
CodeRed Pages:	3146
Hotline Pages:	809

NOTE: Four hotlines were created during the COVID-19 response. The hotlines included MDH, Pleasant View, Ventilator, and Bridge Team.

Total MJOC Alert Messages:	**499**
MDSSTL (Maryland School Safety Tip Line) alerts:	429
Silver (older adults) alerts:	69
Amber (child) alerts:	3

Maryland Department of the Environment

Expanding the Online Environment

Technical Services and Operations Program

- Began using EPA's Industry Application software, allowing customers to submit more information electronically. This software allows facilities to submit requests to obtain, update, or deactivate an EPA ID number electronically. Between December 1, 2019 and June 31, 2020, 198 requests were submitted online versus 42 requests on paper. This made it easier for the applicants to submit to the state and allowed for a quicker review. In addition, EPA's Biennial Report software went live on January 1, 2020, with a due date of March 1, 2020. The program received 872 reports submitted via the Biennial Report software versus 151 submitted on paper.

- Made several updates to the online Lead Rental Registry Portal to provide customers with a more user-friendly platform to renew their property registrations online. Additional updates are scheduled throughout the year. As part of enhanced customer service efforts, the program's Lead Rental Registry staff implemented daily meetings to help improve and streamline the communication of key points for the day and better manage the distribution of and completion of assigned tasks.

Oil Control Program

- Expanded electronic record-keeping practices with respect to oil operations permits, which are issued for aboveground oil storage and transfer operations. This allows staff to more quickly answer permittees' questions regarding process permits.

- Improved database search tools to provide quick information and to answer questions for customers about specific facilities and environmental cases.

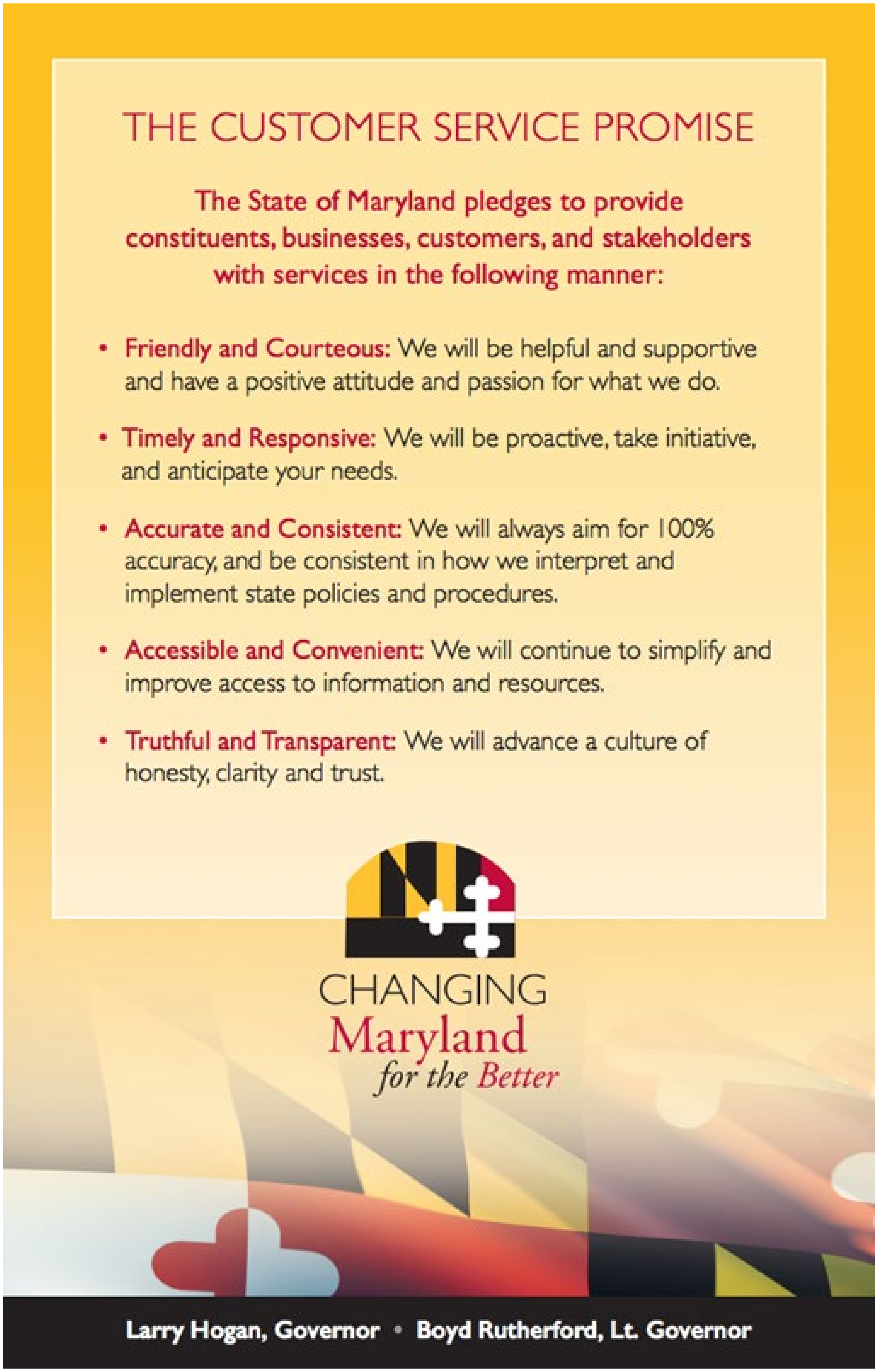
- Program staff developed an internal search application that searches the program's multiple databases in real time to provide fast information for customers. This search tool is frequently used to serve the many customers who request public information from this program.

- Began issuing certain permits electronically to help customers get new business operations started and to facilitate continued operations. These permits have allowed aboveground storage tank operations and certain contaminant treatment systems to begin or continue operations during the pandemic even while certain businesses were temporarily shut down and staff were working remotely.

Future Plans

Governor Hogan has made customer service a priority since the beginning of his administration, and this mission has become even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic as evidenced throughout this report. Since the beginning of the Governor's Customer Service Initiative, all state agencies have been required to produce a customer service report and have a liaison dedicated to customer service. This liaison reports to regular meetings to discuss benchmarking and best practices. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Maryland now has a record number of services and information available online which increases transparency and accessibility for the public. Meanwhile, state agencies utilize multiple social media outreach platforms where the numbers of followers, and those who engage, are rapidly increasing. The Hogan-Rutherford Administration will continue to strive to improve the overall customer experience through innovation and by providing unencumbered, more efficient paths that align with the Governor's priority for excellent customer service.

GIVE THE GOVERNOR
YOUR FEEDBACK.



THE CUSTOMER SERVICE PROMISE

The State of Maryland pledges to provide constituents, businesses, customers, and stakeholders with services in the following manner:

- **Friendly and Courteous:** We will be helpful and supportive and have a positive attitude and passion for what we do.
- **Timely and Responsive:** We will be proactive, take initiative, and anticipate your needs.
- **Accurate and Consistent:** We will always aim for 100% accuracy, and be consistent in how we interpret and implement state policies and procedures.
- **Accessible and Convenient:** We will continue to simplify and improve access to information and resources.
- **Truthful and Transparent:** We will advance a culture of honesty, clarity and trust.

CHANGING
Maryland
for the Better

Larry Hogan, Governor • Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor

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