

COVID-19 Update

Talbot County Emergency Services
Clay Stamp, Director, Asst. County Manager
www.talbotdes.org



Talbot County Health Department
Dr. Fredia Wadley, Health Officer
<https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/>

Key Points for April 13

- ✓ Maryland reported 711 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, bringing the statewide total to 8,936.
- ✓ In the past 24 hours, 27 Marylanders died from COVID-19 for a total of 262 deaths.
- ✓ Talbot County has 13 confirmed COVID-19 cases.
- ✓ The World Health Organization added loss of taste and smell as symptoms of a COVID-19 infection.
- ✓ Governor Larry Hogan amended an [executive order](#) on April 3, 2020 regarding the prohibition of evictions.
- ✓ COVID-19 testing continues at Chesapeake College this week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- ✓ Area grocery stores have taken additional measures to implement social distancing plans, winning praise from government and health officials.
- ✓ The Maryland Department of Health's COVID-19 web portal keeps a running tab of the number of confirmed cases in the state, including tabs for number of tests administered and reporting by zip code. A zip code must have eight or more cases before a number is registered.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2020

Construction Industry Adapts to the Age of Social Distancing

A stay-at-home order is still in effect in the state of Maryland, but that hasn't stopped the area's booming construction industry. Work on new homes, renovations, and municipal projects around Talbot County continues, even as some residents express concern about construction workers being on job sites as COVID-19 cases increase.

"In most cases, we are not going into people's homes to work right now," says Talbot County Council Vice President Chuck Callahan, who also works as a custom builder. "Even for outdoor work, we divide into small teams so that we are limiting the number of people gathering in one spot."

Though construction workers are listed as essential employees in Gov. Larry Hogan's executive orders, it is important that companies implement social distancing plans. "Safety is the most important thing on any job site," Callahan continues. "We always worry about injuries. Now, we as business owners must do our part to help protect our workers, our customers, and our community from the COVID-19 virus."

While the pace of building has slowed in Talbot County, officials are doing everything possible to help keep the county's building projects moving forward. In its emergency declaration, the Talbot County Council extended the expiration date of licenses, permits, registrations, and professional licenses to May 31 or 30 days after the termination of the governor's state of emergency.

Talbot County's Office of Permits and Inspections continues to accept new permit applications and conduct inspections, though the office remains closed to the public and in-office staffing has been reduced. New applications are submitted

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via a drop box outside the office's front door, and materials are quarantined for at least 24 hours. Fees are only accepted via mail after approval by staff.

"We remain committed to serving the citizens, contractors, and trades people doing work in our county," says Talbot County Building Official Brent Garner. "Someone is always available to answer phone calls during regular business hours, and all staff is available via e-mail."

Though inspections are still being scheduled for outdoor structures, County Inspectors have been instructed not to enter buildings that are occupied. "For the safety of everyone, we are not entering any occupied residences at this time," Garner notes. "For new construction, decks, outbuildings, and similar projects, we only ask the job site be cleared while the County Inspector is onsite. This system allows everyone to remain safe and work to continue."

Office staff and inspectors are working rotating shifts. Only one Inspector is on duty each day, which means some inspections may be delayed. Still, staff members are doing everything they can to maintain a reasonable schedule. "As always, we are here to work with our partners in the community, and together, we will keep construction going strong in Talbot County," says Garner.

The construction industry is an economic driver on the Eastern Shore, Callahan says, but each person has to assess his or her own level of comfort with the health risks of continuing to work. "Our people want to work and most of them need to work," he says. "But we are educating our workers and are asking them to do all they can to minimize the risk to themselves and others."

Construction workers should abide by the same CDC guidelines as other employees, notes Talbot County Health Officer Dr. Fredia Wadley. "Social distancing is still the best defense we have against the COVID-19 virus," she says. "Even if you are working outside, you should be at least six feet apart and wash your hands often."

Talbot County Library

Would you like to read or listen to a good book? Borrow an eBook or audiobook at the Talbot County Free Library:

1. Go to <http://www.tcfl.org/eresources/?view=1&sid=3> to access digital audiobooks, eBooks and videos.
 2. Click on [Overdrive/Libby](#)
 3. Sign in, select Talbot County Free Library in the drop down menu and enter your card number. (If you do not have a card, go to <http://www.tcfl.org/find/?content=getacard> to get a temporary online library card).
 4. Start searching for a good eBook to read.
 5. You may also download an eBook or audiobook directly to your smart device by downloading the Libby app from your device's app store, finding our library, and entering your library card number.
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You may also contact us by email at askus@tcfl.org to get assistance with your eBook questions.

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Talbot County Public Schools

This week's TCPS meal distribution will be on Tuesday, April 14 and Friday, April 17 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. at all school sites.

The TCPS Instructional Technology Help Desk will be open this week on Tuesday, April 14 from 9:00 a.m. - noon and Friday, April 17 from noon - 3:00 p.m. at Easton High School and St. Michaels Elementary School. Please email helpdesk@talbotschools.org for virtual support or to schedule a help desk appointment for iPads or laptops.

A TCPS Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 15th at 6:00 pm and can be viewed through Granicus on our website at www.talbotschools.org.

"We appreciate everyone's patience, engagement, and support! Stay Tuned! Stay Healthy! Stay Hopeful!" - Kelly Griffith

Talbot County Sheriff's Office – Child Exploitation

Investigators at the Talbot County Sheriff's Office is seeing an increase in online child exploitation cases during the past few weeks. Children are coerced into sending inappropriate pictures to persons posing to be young persons, only to find out they are adults who then threaten to "release" the pictures to others in the community if the victim doesn't send money or more pictures. We are asking parents to educate themselves and their children about the dangers of online communications. Check out these links to help educate your family." <https://www.missingkids.org/NetSmartz>
<https://smartsocial.com/>

Where to Find More Information

- **CDC COVID-2019 Website:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- **Talbot County COVID-19 Information** www.talbotcovid19.org
- **Shore Regional Health COVID Information** <https://www.umms.org/shore/patients-visitors/coronavirus>
- **Maryland Department of Health Website:** <https://health.maryland.gov/pages/home.aspx>
- **Talbot County Health Department Website:** <https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/Pages/home.aspx>
- **Talbot County Health Department Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/TalbotHealthMaryland/>
- **Talbot County Department of Emergency Services Website:** <http://www.talbotdes.org/default.asp>
- **Talbot County Department of Emergency Services Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/talbotdes>