

Covid-19 Resource Guide

The past few weeks have brought unprecedented change to our area -- and our world. At presstime, many of the state and county mandated sanctions were to cease at the end of March. But as these will likely be extended into the unknown future, we wanted to include a section for Garrett County, State and Federal resources for our readers to have in one spot as well as phone numbers for those with limited access to the internet.

In the following pages you will find press releases from Garrett Medical Regional Center (GMRC); Garrett County Health Department, Garrett County Commissioners and more. We have also included some information for our local restaurants, many of whom remain open for carry-out and delivery to better serve their customers.

Chelsea Stuck of Craeve and Company, a well-known small business advocate, has also put together a list of suggestions for business owners who may be wondering what the future holds for them.

One thing we have learned in just these few short weeks: our community has come together in an outstanding way, our state and county government is doing their best to keep us informed and updated, and small business is the lifeblood of our economy. Please support them as you can.

Stay safe and healthy and please don't hesitate to contact us should you need further information.

Skip & Linda

Do You Know Someone Who Is Hungry? Help Is Available!

Guide to Free Food Resources in Garrett Co.

FOOD PANTRIES

Food Connect 240-321-5919

Oakland Location:

- St. Peter the Apostle Parish
- 208 S. Fourth St., Oakland, MD 21550
- Second Wed of the month, 10am-12pm

Grantsville Location:

- St. Ann's Catholic Church
- 12814 New Germany Rd, Grantsville, MD
- Last Thursday of the month, 10am-12pm
- No income guidelines; register ahead of time

House of Hope 301-334-2357

- 202 South Fourth St., Oakland, MD 21550
- Crisis/Emergency only
- Call before noon to set up an appointment
- Oakland, Deer Park, Hoyes, and Grantsville

Garrett County Community Action

- Emergency Only 301-334-9431
- 104 East Center St, Oakland, MD 21550
- Call for appointment / non-perishable

Free Food Distributions Maryland

Food Bank 301-533-3300 ext 3042

- Mt. Laurel Medical Center Drop offs in the Grantsville Town Park Monthly at 1pm
- One per household; No income guidelines

Mt. Top Food Pantry 301-334-3588

Food, Clothing, Furniture, Canned Goods, Baked Goods, etc.

301-616-8666

- 447 Old Crellin Road, Oakland, MD 21550
- Mainly benefits seniors and veterans but will help others if needed
- By appointment

Oak Park Church of the Brethren Monthly
301-334-2243

- 110 Church Lane, Oakland, MD 21550
- Open Monday – Thursday 9am-2pm
- Call for income guidelines (by family size)

**New Hope Christian Fellowship
Church Free Food & Clothing**

301-895-5300

- 176 Springs Road, Grantsville, MD 21536
- Every Saturday, 10am-2pm, all welcome

Loch Lynn Church of God

301-334-3221

- 8649 Gorman Rd, Oakland, MD 21550
- Non-perishable food, open to community
- Call to make an appointment

S.I.N.G Food Pantry

SING@garrettcollege.edu

- Garrett College
- 687 Mosser Rd, McHenry, MD 21541
- Every Thursday 2pm-5pm, beginning at midterm, Open to the community
- Also provides transportation to medical services, school supplies, toiletries, winter clothing

Senior Citizen Food Project

301-334-4242 or 301-334-5684

- 318 East Oak St, Oakland, MD 21550
- Call to make an appointment
- Serving senior citizens

It's in the Bag! 301-334-2510

- St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
- 126 Liberty St, Oakland, MD 21550
- Serving Garrett County Public schools, program fills backpacks with food to send home with children on the weekends

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Countywide Agencies:

Garrett County Health Department

Providing Daily updates online at www.garretthealth.org

Local Covid-19 Hotline: 301-334-7698

This number is being manned 24/7 but as calls are forwarded after 5:00 PM, it may ring a few minutes before somebody picks up. Please be patient.

The Health Department Building is Closed but other questions can be directed to **301-334-7777** during regular operating hours.

Garrett County Commissioners Office - Visit county website, <https://www.garrettcountry.org/covid-19>, for the latest information.

Garrett County Community Action -- Remains open although committee seeing people by appointment only.

Oakland Hours: Mon - Fri, 8:30 to 4:30; *Phone ahead at 301-334-9431*

Grantsville Hours: Monday & Thursday: 8:30 - 4:30

Call 301-334-9431, ask for Extension 6116

Website: www.garrettcac.org

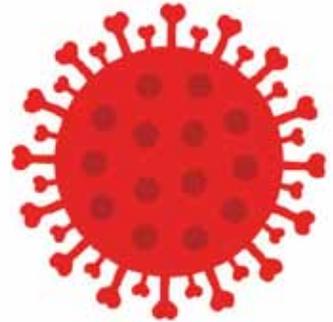
Senior Centers and Meal Sites are currently closed by Meals on Wheels will still be delivered. For more information, contact the local Maryland Access Point team at 301-533-9000.

Coronavirus testing site is open at GRMC. Patients must bring doctor's order to access drive thru clinic. Call your healthcare provider for more information.

Garrett County Public Schools are providing free meals to students at various locations throughout the county. Call 301-334-7652 or 1-888-262-2792 for updated information.

WKHJ, WKTQ, WKTZ and WMSG are important community resource on all things Garrett County, especially during a state of emergency. They are providing listeners with the latest local and national news updates on the the Corona Virus. You will also hear community event cancellations and press release information from Garrett Regional Medical Center and the Garrett County Health Department on a daily basis. Find them on your radio dial at 104.5 FM (WKHJ), 92.3 FM (WKTQ); 95.9 FM (WKTZ) and 1050 AM (WMSG).

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CORONAVIRUS

Continued...

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State of Maryland

Governor Hogan has been giving frequent updates throughout this crisis. You can watch live on his Facebook page or at governor.maryland.gov/coronavirus. You can also dial 2-1-1 for updates.

For impacts on local businesses, visit businessexpress.maryland.gov/

National & International Resources

Centers for Disease Control (CDC): cdc.gov; or call **1-800-232-4636**

Small Business Administration: www.sba.gov

For latest updates from the Trump Administration, go to whitehouse.gov

World Health Organization: www.who.int

Garrett County Declares State of Emergency in Response to COVID-19

The Board of County Commissioners has issued a Declaration of Emergency effective Sunday March 22, 2020 at 5:00 PM local time. This is due to the public health catastrophe and public emergency as cited in the Governor of Maryland's Declaration of Emergency issued on March 5, 2020.

This declaration on the local level provides additional powers and resources to our County Departments to deal with the COVID-19 situation. The Garrett County Health Department is the lead agency in this emergency and is supported by all county departments under the coordination of the Department of Emergency Services.

We request the public heed the orders of our public and health officials to limit social contact to reduce the threat of spreading the COVID-19 virus.

"This is not a response rooted in panic but this a global situation that is now beginning to directly impact our community," said County Administrator Kevin Null. "This declaration will provide access to state and federal resources we will need to manage this situation."

The Garrett County Emergency Operations Center is activated.

Note that the Garrett County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated to offer an inter-agency strategic response to this global pandemic at the local level.

"This EOC team is essential for managing a potential public health emergency and will provide a coordinated effort to mitigate risk and disruption for all Garrett County citizens," said Garrett County Board of County Commissioners Chair Paul Edwards. "We are well prepared here but the reality is that COVID-19 is here and we have to stay diligent in limiting the spread."

In addition to the items listed in the included declaration, the Board of County Commissioners have made the following changes in county government operations to protect the public and employees and to reduce the threat of further spread of the

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COVID-19 virus:

- All county departments will operate with essential services only. All county offices will be closed to the public effective, Monday, March 23, 2020.
- The Garrett County Landfill and collection sites will remain open, with limited hours, to allow for trash removal to continue. Specific operating hours for the Landfill and collection sites are to be determined.

Please do not call 911 for COVID-19 questions. Our health department's COVID-19 call center can be reached at 301-334-7698.

For the video of the briefing, please visit <https://youtu.be/4PKJm2BDTDA>
Please check the county website, <https://www.garrettcounty.org/covid-19>, for the latest information.

Special Enrollment Period for Uninsured Marylanders in effect

In an effort to prioritize health and safety and in response to coronavirus, Maryland Health Connection has opened an emergency special enrollment period for uninsured Marylanders.

You can enroll in a health plan now through Wednesday, April 15, 2020. Coverage will begin April 1, 2020, regardless of when a health plan is selected during that time period.

Visit **MarylandHealthConnection.gov** or download the free “Enroll MHC” mobile app. When enrolling, consumers should request or select “Coronavirus Emergency Special Enrollment Period.” The online application is available daily from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Free consumer assistance is available by calling 855-642-8572 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Deaf and hard of hearing use Relay.

In an effort to help combat the spread of the coronavirus, most in-person help is temporarily unavailable. Please contact locations before visiting or call our call center for assistance.

Coronavirus testing is being covered. Health insurance companies are required to waive cost-sharing, including lab fees, co-payments, coinsurance, and deductibles for any visit to test for coronavirus at a doctor's office, urgent care center, or emergency room.

All eligible, uninsured Marylanders may qualify for this emergency special enrollment period and all residents to closely follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) for all health-related coronavirus questions.

Garrett Regional Medical Center opens testing site

Garrett Regional Medical Center (GRMC) has opened a COVID-19 testing clinic at its location on Pythian Avenue behind the hospital campus. The clinic was established in order to provide coronavirus testing for people throughout GRMC's 8-county service area who may have been exposed to the virus or who are showing symptoms.

The drive-through clinic requires patients to stay in their vehicles for the duration of the short process. In order to be tested, patients must have an order from a physician; people lacking a doctor's order cannot be tested. Patients must bring their doctor's order to the site and stay in their vehicles; hospital staff will come to them to both register them and perform the needed nasal swab test. This is being done to limit exposure for the hospital's health care workers and other staff, and to ensure that patients testing negative are not exposed to patients who have the virus during the testing process.

"It is extremely important that we follow protocol on this," says Kendra Thayer, the hospital's Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Operating Officer. "If you think you may have been exposed to the virus, or you don't feel well, please call your primary care provider or local urgent care provider. Do NOT come to the Emergency Room at the hospital. Your primary or urgent care provider needs to speak with you first, and needs to provide an order for the coronavirus test. Once you have the physician's order, report to our drive-through testing station on Pythian Avenue and stay in your vehicle. Our staff will come to you to complete paperwork and the test itself."

In the northern end of the county, patients may go to the Grantsville Medical Center to be tested. The response of Garrett Regional Medical Center to COVID-19 continues to evolve as new state and federal guidelines are announced and local primary care and other providers refer patients for testing.

The regional medical center has been working with area providers as well as local, state, and federal officials to identify and follow best practices in approaching the health care community's response to what the World Health Organization has designated a pandemic. Clinical protocols and procedures outlined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are in place in order to care for any area residents or visitors who may test positive for the COVID-19 virus.

"To be clear, we want the community to know that GRMC has taken steps to protect the patients we treat, our staff, and the broader community," says Mark Boucot, GRMC President & CEO. "We are strictly limiting visitors, in accordance with Governor Larry Hogan's state of emergency; we've suspended our VIVA and LOAR programs in order to protect our volunteers from any potential exposure to the virus; and we've determined that those employees who can

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work from home should do so. We will do everything we can to contain and mitigate COVID-19 in the region, and we encourage area residents to do their part as well: stay home, only venture out when necessary, and avoid any group gatherings. If we all do our part, we will get through this.”

In an attempt to help mitigate spread of the virus, GRMC has determined that the only visitation allowed will be for patients who are critically ill or who are in OB. These patients will only be allowed one visitor in the hospital at a time; additional visitors may not wait to see these patients in the hospital’s public waiting areas, and will be asked to leave the building.

These rules will also apply to those coming to the hospital’s Emergency Department (ED). Adult ED patients may not have anyone accompany them, though some exceptions may be made for trauma patients or patients who are critically ill, and only one adult will be able to accompany a minor for treatment in the ED. No visitors will be allowed to wait in the ED waiting room.

In order to stay abreast of the latest developments on COVID-19 and to see how best to limit the chance of exposure, GRMC urges area residents to go to www.coronavirus.gov for reliable, fact-based information regarding the virus and developments on addressing it. Do not rely on Facebook or other social media posts for information, Mr. Boucot cautions.

“There are a lot of rumors being spread about both the virus and how to respond to it,” Mr. Boucot notes. “Please do not rely on social media for information about what is going on. The CDC website has very good information about the virus itself, such as symptoms and how to protect against getting it, as well as information on travel, guidance for businesses and employers, and recommendations on cleaning and disinfecting. You can also access accurate information on the number of reported cases. GRMC is committed to helping our community weather this pandemic, and will be issuing information as it becomes available.”

TESTING TODAY FOR COVID-19 IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS IT SOUNDS. TEST KITS AND MATERIALS ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY. LABS ARE UNABLE TO KEEP UP WITH THE NATIONWIDE DEMAND. TEST RESULTS CAN TAKE A WEEK OR LONGER, EVEN FOR HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS. AS A COMMUNITY, WE NEED TO PRIORITIZE TESTING FOR OUR SICKEST MEMBERS AND ALSO FOR THE HEALTHCARE WORKERS ON THE FRONT LINES TAKING CARE OF THE ILL. NOT EVERYONE NEEDS A COVID-19 SPECIMEN COLLECTION. THE SICKER YOU ARE, THE MORE LIKELY YOU SHOULD BE TESTED FOR COVID-19. GET IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOU START TO EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTY BREATHING, PERSISTENT PAIN OR PRESSURE IN THE CHEST, CONFUSION, DIFFICULTY STAYING ALERT OR BLUISH COLOR IN THE LIPS OR FACE. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER. SPEAK TO YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OVER THE PHONE TO DETERMINE IF YOUR CASE REQUIRES COVID-19 TESTING. PLEASE DO YOUR PART TO CONSERVE RESOURCES. YOU CAN ALSO ASSESS YOUR SYMPTOMS USING THE CDC’S CORONAVIRUS SELF-CHECKER AT CORONAVIRUS.GOV.

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Garrett Regional Medical Center provides tips for making the best of the COVID-19 situation.

As those who can continue to work at home do so and “social distancing” and “self-isolation” become the norm, Garrett Regional Medical Center (GRMC) has some supportive tips for making life at home more bearable.

“I think it’s safe to say that socially isolating oneself and one’s family can take a toll, both mentally and physically,” says Linda Danjou, GRMC’s Director of Employee Health and Infection Control. “The Covid-19 pandemic is changing our daily lives in ways most of us have never experienced. We want to share some pointers for making self-isolation and hearing the latest pandemic news somewhat less stressful. Fear and anxiety can become overwhelming in such situations; we want to help our community find ways to remain calm.”

1. Keep connected with others using technology: Plan phone calls, Facetime, or Skype with friends and family to stay connected with people while you self-isolate.

2. Keep up with self-care: Include things like long baths, showers, or skin treatments within your daily routine.

3. Keep a schedule: The schedule should consist of routine, pleasurable, and necessary activities that you can do while at home. This may include cooking, exercising, reading, or getting around to tasks you may have been putting off.

4. Add variety to your day: Try to strike a balance between having a solid routine and a varied day so that every day doesn’t feel the same. Adding variety boosts mood and motivation levels.

5. If possible, get some fresh air: Fresh air and natural light are both helpful for well-being. Spend time in your garden. Planting vegetables or flowers, filling bird feeders, and potting plants are just some outdoor activities you can use to improve your well-being. Planting season is upon us, so make the most of it.

6. Try to remain active: Remember that exercise is beneficial for your physical and mental health. Think creatively about how you can exercise if you are not used to exercising at home; for example, take online classes or work out using exercise DVDs. Take a walk every day when the weather is good, taking care to “social distance” if you see others. Taking a walk outside will definitely boost your mood.

7. Download a relaxation app and practice relaxation: Think of this as taking your mind to the gym. Just 10 minutes of relaxation per day is proven to reduce stress and improve well-being.

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8. **It's OK to feel some anxiety:** It is perfectly normal to feel some stress and anxiety, and you are not the only one experiencing these emotions. When anxious, take a breath and use the relaxation app mentioned above.

9. **Set small goals:** Do some things you wouldn't usually have the time to do. Learn a new skill or hobby, or get that job done that you have been putting off. Clean out the gutters, or clean up the yard.

10. **Take breaks from things you find triggering:** Set limits on how much you engage with anxiety-provoking WhatsApp groups, social media channels, and the news. Too much focus on current events may cause distress and anxiety. Stick to reliable news sources for your COVID-19 updates; locally, that means information shared on the Health Department's website, GRMC's website, or the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website (www.cdc.gov).

"Please remember that this virus is contracted through the droplets of those who are sick and are coughing and sneezing" Ms. Danjou concludes. "The droplets from coughing or sneezing can travel approximately 6 feet from the person who is ill. If you are physically close to the individual you may become infected. You can also



become infected if you touch a surface that has droplets on it and you then touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. This is why social distancing and self-isolation are important, even though they may be hard to do."

GRMC would also like the public to please follow advice from the CDC:

- Frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds
- Clean all surfaces, especially high touch areas such as door knobs and faucet handles, frequently every day
- When cleaning, do not mix cleaning products together; this may result in a chemical reaction that can cause breathing difficulty

For more information on COVID-19 and what you can do to stay healthy, visit www.cdc.gov, www.grmc-wvumedicine.org, or www.garretthealth.org.