



October 27, 2020

To: Governor Larry Hogan

COVID-19 has created a pandemic in which many Marylanders have experienced the negative effects financially, emotionally, spiritually, occupationally, and environmentally. These effects have caused unequal outcomes throughout the eight domains of wellness: physical/health, relational, occupational, mental/emotional, intellectual, spiritual, environmental, and financial (as recognized by SAMHSA).

While Maryland is continuing to move forward with protocols to safely reopen in phases, many residents of our state remain without work, significantly less hours, or even reduced pay. Households have been stretched to care for members in new ways, increasing costs, which may not have been budgeted for or unable to be included in the household budget. Some examples of added costs are:

- In-home medical care has increased
- Increased food costs for those who previously relied on school or other programs
- New supplies for virtual learning, including enhanced internet service
- Increased electric and gas bills from Stay At Home protocols
- Securing supplies, modalities, and manipulatives needed for varying abilities to continue learning outcomes
- Reduction in benefits

As members of MCA, we service Maryland residents in mental health counseling, schools, prisons, careers, as well as shelters. There has been an increase in client calls for depression, anxiety, occupational uncertainty, difficulty adjusting to virtual learning, as well as hopelessness to secure food and maintain shelter. October is National Depression Education and Awareness Month. September was Suicide Awareness Month, and as we honor this focus to save lives, we recognize the current factors, which contribute to suicidal ideation and attempts. These factors include but are not limited to: hopelessness, helplessness, depression, immense stress, loss of job, as well as caregiver fatigue.

Evictions create a trifecta of environmental stress, public health concerns, and financial burden on our judicial, social services, and health systems all functioning with limiting capacities. Additionally, evictions involve law enforcement during the removal of property; this is an inefficient use of resources during the economic crisis and pandemic.

The protocols in place to effectively address the pandemic have forced many out of work or significantly reduced hours, which decreased earnings. The current unemployment rate in Maryland is 6.9%, which

is double from last year. During the beginning months of the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown, you thoughtfully and exigently instituted a moratorium on evictions in the state of Maryland in March 2020. Unfortunately, the moratorium expired in July. MCA stands with Maryland residents in need as well as with Attorney General Brian E. Frosh imploring you, Governor Hogan to reinstate the moratorium on evictions, which expired July 2020 and to extend the moratorium until the Maryland economy has fully recovered.

Sincerely,



Carol ZA McGinnis PhD, SIP, BC-TMH, NCC, LCPC

MCA President



Roni K. White, NCC, LCPC

MCA Advocacy Chair

A testimonials from MD residents:

Dear Gov. Larry Hogan,

The threat of evictions during the current pandemic affects me because I currently have HOC and I had a job that required me to be a ten month employee. And when Covid-19 took its place in March my job as a Montgomery County Public Schools bus driver officially ended in June of this year. Covid put me in the state of fear of not paying my bills and being evicted from my home and HOC could not help me at all. I was forced to pay a rent of 1000 dollars in which I didn't have. And being high risk it was not recommended to get a job but I was forced to get a part time job anyway. The moratorium on evictions needs to be reinstated for people like me down on their luck and trying to recover from being out of work and keeping a roof over my family's head. As an African American female resident I can take the initiative to say that this has had an effect on my mental state, my physical state, and other medical issues. Preventing evictions will not only help me but would help other individuals and families. Just imagine if you were in a situation where you were about to be forcefully taken out of the place you call home and you have nowhere else to go. Please take this personal message into consideration it would mean a lot to me, my family, and my fellow residents.

Dear Gov. Larry Hogan,

Sheriff Deputies went to a home to execute a court ordered eviction. Upon arrival, the Deputies and their Supervisor found the residents in the home and they were not prepared and in disbelief that they were actually being evicted. There were several adults in the home. The most shocking and upsetting

for the Deputies and Supervisor, on scene, was the presence of an elementary school aged student who was sitting at a table on the floor, using a laptop taking part in live instruction. Due to the location of the student, and the direction the screen was facing the presence of the Deputies and the screams of the adults could be heard and viewed by the entire class.

The Deputies and Supervisor were super upset that the student and family faced the predicament of being evicted and the harm that it caused the student.