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Public Health
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For immediate release:

Health Department and Commissioners Enforce Hogan's Order to Control or Close Unsafe Retail Facilities

Westminster, MD (April 6, 2020) – The Carroll County Health Department and Board of Commissioners jointly announced their effort to ensure safe social distancing practices at all essential stores open in the county during the current emergency. Under Governor Hogan's stay at home order, people can still go shopping for essential products such as food and medicine. It is critical that these stores adhere to social distancing guidelines to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The Carroll County Health Department provided social distancing guidance to retail establishments throughout the county last week. Strategies include marking floors to ensure at least 6 feet between customers, limiting the number of people at one time in the store, and establishing customer flow patterns to avoid contact between customers. Disinfecting surfaces that customers regularly touch, including shopping carts, door handles, checkout areas, and other high-touch surfaces is also imperative.

However, many retail establishments are still not following this guidance. Therefore, Governor Hogan has given local health officers the authority to require businesses to make changes or even close if they are not complying with social distancing guidelines, by start of the business on Wednesday, April 8, 2020.

If stores are not complying with requirements, the county Health Officer will issue an order to close until a social distancing plan is developed and implemented. Repeated violations of social distancing requirements will result in an order to close for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency.

Carroll County citizens are encouraged to report issues with social distancing in retail establishments, by calling the COVID-19 call center at 410-876-4848, 7 days a week from 8:00am-5:00pm, or contacting the Health Department using the comment form at cchd.maryland.gov/

More information about how stores can comply with guidelines can be found <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html> and local guidance documents are located at <https://cchd.maryland.gov/covid-19-information-for-special-groups/>.

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