

## OPERATIONAL POLICIES – EFFECTIVE 3/24/2021

Our top priority is to serve members of the public efficiently and promptly while protecting the health and safety of our guests and staff during the current COVID-19 crisis. While our office has fully re-opened, we encourage members of the public to schedule appointments for in-person assistance or to conduct business with our office remotely, through ordinary postal mail.

- **Services**

- Our office is open from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Most services provided by this office can be fulfilled by telephone (410.313.2133), email ([HowardCountyROW@registers.maryland.gov](mailto:HowardCountyROW@registers.maryland.gov)), online chat (<http://registers.maryland.gov/main/howard.html>), fax (410.313.3409), mail, use of our secure drop-box, or our online services ([www.registers.maryland.gov](http://www.registers.maryland.gov)) and we strongly encourage you to utilize these services.
- We are happy to answer your questions and assist you with the necessary forms.

- **Appointments**

- If you would like to meet with a staff member in person or you believe your needs cannot be met remotely, please contact our office to schedule an appointment.
  - We will schedule appointments for 30-minute and 1-hour timeframes starting at 9:00 AM and the last appointment beginning at 3:00 PM.
  - We will allow only two visitors at a time due to limited space.

- **Pleadings**

- **Per orders of the Maryland Judiciary, we cannot accept filings by e-mail or fax.**
- You must file all pleadings and papers by mail or in person.
- A secure, locked drop box for our office is located at the entrance to the courthouse if you do not want to enter the building itself.

- **Public Workstation and Research Area**

- Available during normal business hours but scheduling an appointment is recommended.

- **Security**

- The Sheriff's deputies will ask you a few brief questions, require that you wear a facial covering, and use a contactless video camera to check your temperature. You will then proceed through a metal detector.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet from other individuals in the building will be enforced.

- **Website**

- Please visit our website for current updates and for further information including publications, FAQ, Forms, Legal Notices, Estate Search, Claims Search and Invoice Payment.

- **Orphans' Court**

- The Orphans' Court for Howard County is meeting remotely on a weekly basis to consider matters before it. Remote court proceedings are being scheduled to be conducted using the Zoom meeting platform. As space is severely limited in our courtroom, it is logistically impossible to hold in-person hearings for the foreseeable future.