

SUMMARY OF STATE-SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN THE US 2020/2021

MARYLAND

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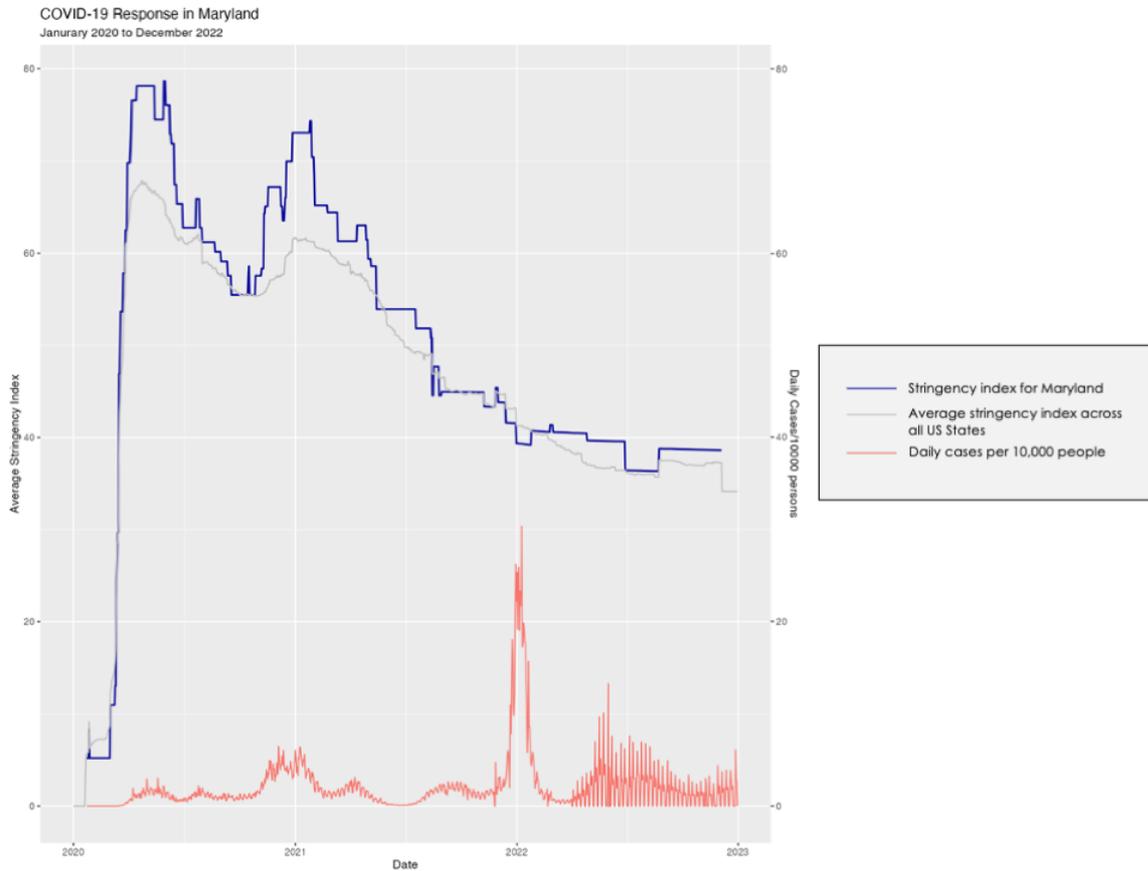
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Maryland

Summary of Government Response to COVID-19



COVID-19 Response in Maryland: Using the OxCGRT Stringency Index for Maryland (blue) and the average OxCGRT Stringency Index across all US states, the above shows the overall government response to COVID-19 in Maryland in comparison to the average US state response from January 2020 to December 2022. This also displays the number of daily cases per 10,000 people in Maryland (red).

Summary

The State of Maryland first responded on March 2, 2020, preceding its first case on March 6, 2020 and death on March 19, 2020. The first government response was recorded in H1 that measures public information campaigns.

Closure and Containment

The indicators for closure and containment are measured on an ordinal scale and encompass government responses that required or recommended temporary closures of institutions, limitations on travel, and restrictions of gatherings or events. The measurement of these indicators included a binary flag that indicated the geographic scope of the government responses coded. Differentiated policies, or policies that were specifically directed at those vaccinated or unvaccinated, are indicated when flagged as 'Vaccinated' or 'Non-Vaccinated'.

C1: School closures

C1 records closings of schools and universities and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend closing or all schools open with alterations resulting in significant differences compared to non-Covid-19 operations), 2 (require closing only some levels or categories, e.g., just high school, or just public schools), or 3 (require closing all levels).

The first school closure policies became active on March 16, 2020, when State Superintendent of Schools, Karen Salmon, closed public and publicly funded schools and recommended the closure of private schools. School closures escalated to the closure of all levels of education on March 19, 2020 and were extended until June 9, 2020.

During the summer months in 2020, small groups of 10-15 were allowed to meet for summer school. For the 2020-2021 school year, all identified school districts were closed until October 17, 2020, when recommended closures in some counties became the strictest policy in Maryland.

Dorchester County resumed online classes due to a spike in cases beginning on October 27, 2020 and continuing through March 1, 2021. Other counties resumed online instruction for brief periods of time depending on case counts in their respective counties. All schools were not fully open until August 13, 2021.

C2: Workplace closures

C2 records closings of workplaces and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend closing or recommend work from home or all businesses open with alterations resulting in significant differences compared to non-Covid-19 operations), 2 (require closing or work from home for some sectors or categories of workers), or 3 (require closing or work from home for all-but-essential workplaces, e.g., grocery stores, doctors).

First business closure policies became active on March 16, 2020, as restaurants and bars were ordered to close except for carryout business. Fitness centers, bingo halls, and theaters were also ordered to close. This continued until March 23, 2020, when all non-essential businesses were also required to close. On May 14, 2020, Maryland re-opened retail, manufacturing, and religious facilities, and certain personal services, at 50% capacity.

However, businesses Montgomery and Prince George's Counties remained closed. On June 15, 2020, Prince George's County entered Phase 2 of their reopening and allowed 50% capacity for retail stores, barbershops, hair and nail salons, and restaurants. On June 29, 2020, Prince George's County allowed all businesses to reopen at 50% capacity.

On November 10, 2020, Governor Hogan ordered all state offices to return to work from home procedures except for public facing personnel and essential services. Restrictions were loosened again on February 1, 2021.

All restrictions were removed May 1, 2021.

C3: Cancel public events

C3 records cancelling public events and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend cancelling), or 2 (require cancelling).

First public event cancellation policies were active on March 12, 2020, in the form of the prohibition of any events with 250 or more people in attendance. This continued until June 15, 2020, when the Maryland Department of Health allowed for sports gatherings, community, recreational, leisure, and cultural events to take place without spectators.

On September 4, 2020, Governor Hogan allowed for 50% capacity or a maximum of 100 people for indoor entertainment venues and 250 people for outdoor venues. On January 28, 2021, Governor Hogan signed a new executive order allowing public events to resume. On March 12, 2021, large outdoor and indoor venues were allowed to resume operation at 50% capacity, including theatres, concert, convention, and wedding venues, racing facilities, and outdoor entertainment and sporting venues. On May 15, 2022, large indoor and outdoor venues were allowed to resume operation with no restrictions.

At the county level, Prince George's County maintained restrictions on gatherings of 10 or more people, which effectively is a prohibition on public events. On June 29, 2020, Prince George's County allowed events of up to 100 people with mandatory social distancing. On August 1, 2020, Prince George's County required all public events to be cancelled or postponed. On September 4, 2020, Prince George's and Montgomery Counties allowed gatherings of up to 50 people.

C4: Restrictions on gatherings

C4 records limits on gathering and is measured as 0 (no restrictions), 1 (restrictions on very large gatherings where the limit is above 1000 people), 2 (restrictions on gatherings between 101-1000 people), 3 (restrictions on gatherings between 11-100 people), or 4 (restrictions on gatherings of 10 people or less).

First restriction on gathering became active on March 12, 2020, and restricted gatherings of 250 or more people. This continued until replaced on March 16, 2020, with a prohibition on gatherings of 50 or more people.

On March 19, 2020, Governor Hogan ordered the prohibition of gatherings of 10 or more people. This prohibition was extended several times before being lifted on June 15, 2020. On November 10, 2020, Maryland restricted gatherings of more than 25 people. On December 17, 2020, Maryland restricted gatherings of more than 10 people.

On January 28, 2021, Governor Hogan released an executive order removing explicit restrictions; however, restrictions on capacity for individual establishments meant that gathering restrictions were effectively still in place. On March 12, 2021, capacity limits were lifted on outdoor and indoor dining at restaurants and bars, retail businesses, religious facilities, fitness centres, casinos, personal services, and indoor recreational establishments. In addition, large indoor and outdoor venues were allowed to operate at 50% capacity. On May 15, 2021, Governor Hogan lifted all capacity restrictions.

On June 15, 2020, Prince George's County extended the prohibition on gatherings of 10 or more people despite this prohibition having been lifted state-wide. On June 19, 2020, Montgomery County began restricting gatherings of more than 50 people. On June 29, 2020, Prince George's County reduced this prohibition to gatherings of more than 100 people. On August 1, 2020, Prince George's County reimposed restrictions on gatherings of 50 or more people due to a rise in cases.

On November 12, 2020, the City of Baltimore began restricting gatherings of more than 10 people. On November 15, 2020, Prince George's County restricted gatherings of more than 10 people. This remained under a Mayoral Executive Order, effective December 11, 2020. Indoor gatherings were limited to up to 10 and must have had proper distancing. Outdoor gatherings could have up to 25 people. Sports gatherings at facilities controlled by the Baltimore City Department of Parks and Recreation are prohibited. On January 22, 2021, Executive Order No. 01-22-21 limited indoor gathering sizes to no more than 10 people at public and private gatherings, and 25 people at outdoor gatherings. Although not explicitly established, this seems to have ended by the end of February 2021.

Effective March 12, 2021, capacity limits were lifted on outdoor and indoor dining at restaurants and bars, retail businesses, religious facilities, fitness centers, casinos, personal services, and indoor recreational

establishments. Bars and restaurants were open for seated and distanced service only and patrons could not stand at a crowded bar. Masking and distancing rules remained in place. Executive Order 21-04-21-01, passed on April 21, 2021, confirming that maximum occupancy of venues continued to be set at 50% capacity.

As of May 15, 2021, Governor Hogan announced the lifting of all capacity restrictions on outdoor entertainment, art, and sports venues and indoor entertainment venues and conventions, and all remaining restrictions on indoor and outdoor dining. No further restrictions were implemented past this point.

C5: Public transport closures

C5 records the closing of public transport and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend closing or significantly reduce volume/route/means of transport available), or 2 (require closing or prohibit most citizens from using it).

First public transport closure policies were active on March 18, 2020 in the form of reduced service for all public transport in Maryland. This continued until the closure of all Express BusLink routes on April 6, 2020.

On April 14, 2020, the Maryland Department of Transportation increased the service schedule for some buses to serve essential workers. On April 15, 2020, Governor Hogan mandated the use of face coverings or masks while on public transport.

On April 27, 2020, the Maryland Department of Transportation increased trips for some buses. On June 8, 2020, the Maryland Department of Transportation increased service for the metro. On July 13, 2020, the Maryland Department of Transportation further increased service for all public transport. On July 27, 2020, the Maryland Department of Transportation ordered the remaining Commuter Bus routes to operate in regular full service.

C6: Stay-at-home requirements

C6 records orders to "shelter-in-place" and otherwise confine to the home and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend not leaving house), 2 (require not leaving house with exceptions for daily exercise, grocery shopping, and 'essential' trips), or 3 (require not leaving house with minimal exceptions, e.g., allowed to leave once a week, or only one person can leave at a time, etc).

The first stay-at-home order was active on March 30, 2020, and required that Maryland citizens stay-at-home except to conduct essential business. This continued until it was rescinded on May 15, 2020, and replaced with a less stringent "safer at home" order. On August 21, 2020, the safer at home message was removed.

On February 2, 2021, Maryland urged all citizens to limit travel to essential movement only. These recommendations were removed on July 19, 2021.

On February 1, 2022, the government of Maryland announced that fully vaccinated individuals did not need to quarantine if exposed to COVID-19.

On May 14, 2020, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties extended the stay-at-home order previously issued by Governor Hogan. On June 1, 2020, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties lifted the stay-at-home order and replaced it with a safer-at-home order. On October 16, 2020, Prince George County removed the "safer at home" message from its website.

C7: Restrictions on internal movement

C7 records restrictions on internal movement between states and is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommend not to travel between states), or 2 (internal movement restrictions in place).

The first travel restrictions were active on March 30, 2020 and required all citizens to restrict movement to essential activities. On May 15, 2020, Governor Hogan replaced the stay-at-home order with a safer at home recommendation. On November 10, 2020, Maryland required its citizens to refrain from non-essential travel outside of Maryland. Citizens returning from outside Maryland were required to test and isolate. On March 12, 2021, Governor Hogan lifted these restrictions. On May 28, 2021, Governor Hogan began encouraging out-of-state travellers to visit Maryland.

On May 14, 2020, Montgomery and Prince George's counties extended Governor Hogan's stay-at-home order. On June 1, 2020, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties lifted the stay-at-home order and replaced it with a safer-at-home order.

C8: International travel controls

C8 records restrictions on international travel for foreign travellers (not citizens) and is measured as 0 (no restrictions), 1 (screening arrivals), 2 (quarantine arrivals from some or all regions), 3 (ban arrivals from some regions), or 4 (ban on all regions or total border closure).

The first international travel restrictions were implemented on March 12, 2020 and required that no passenger or crew member was allowed to disembark at any terminal or port facility in the ports and harbours of Maryland from a passenger vessel that has made a call at any port outside the United States since January 31, 2020. This order was removed January 1, 2021.

Economic Response

The indicators for economic policies measured the policies that provided economic support from the state government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic indicators recorded at the subnational level in the US were E1 and E2, which are measured on an ordinal scale without a flag indicating the geographic scope.

E1: Income support

E1 records if the government is providing direct cash payments to people who lose their jobs or cannot work and is measured as 0 (no income support), 1 (government is replacing less than 50% of lost salary or if a flat sum, that is less than 50% median salary), or 2 (government is replacing 50% or more of lost salary or if a flat sum, that is greater than 50% median salary).

On February 15, 2021, the Maryland RELIEF Act provided direct stimulus payments to low- and middle-income Maryland families. As these stimulus payments comprise of \$500 for families and \$300 for individuals who filed for the Earned Income Tax Credit. As of May 18th, 2021, the Relief Act of 2021 continued to provide tax relief and economic stimulus for struggling families. As of July 2022, the Relief Act is still in effect.

E2: Debt/contract relief

E2 records if the government is freezing financial obligations for households (e.g., stopping loan repayments, preventing services like water from stopping, or banning evictions) and is measured as 0 (no debt/contract relief), 1 (narrow relief, specific to one kind of contract), or 2 (broad debt/contract relief).

On March 16, 2020, Governor Hogan prohibited the eviction of people suffering substantial income loss due to COVID-19. He also ordered that “no electric, gas, sewage disposal, telegraph, telephone, water, or cable television company, or internet service provider, or any company providing a combination of such services (a “Residential Service Company”), shall terminate the service of a customer if the service is used, in whole or in part, in a dwelling unit or residence.”

On March 31, 2020, Governor Hogan extended the deadline for tax returns to July 15. On April 3, 2020, Governor Hogan extended the ban of evictions issued on March 16, while he also prohibited certain repossessions, the initiation of residential mortgage foreclosures, and commercial evictions. He additionally allowed for the suspension of certain lending limits. This order was extended several times until it was allowed to expire on September 1, 2020.

On September 1, 2021, the Maryland Public Service Commission prohibited on August 31, 2021 utility service terminations through November

15, 2021. On September 28, 2020, Governor Hogan extended the homeowners' and renters' property tax credit deadlines from October 1 to October 31, 2021. Maryland's moratorium on evictions terminated August 15, 2021.

Public Health Responses

The public health response indicators recorded health system responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The indicators recorded at the subnational level in the US were H1, H2, H3, H6, H7, and H8. The geographic scope of these policies was marked by an ordinal flag for indicators H1, H6, and H8. Differentiated policies, or policies that were specifically directed at those vaccinated or unvaccinated, are indicated when flagged as 'Vaccinated' or 'Non-Vaccinated' for indicators H6 and H8.

H1: Public information campaigns

H1 records the presence of public info campaigns and is measured as 0 (no Covid-19 public information campaign), 1 (public officials urging caution about Covid-19), or 2 (coordinated public information campaign, e.g., across traditional and social media).

The first public information came on March 2, 2020, as an announcement of the state-wide response to coronavirus.

The first coordinated campaign appeared on March 14, 2020. This continues until present day.

H2: Testing policy

H2 records government policy on who has access to testing and is measured as 0 (no testing policy), 1 (only those who both have symptoms AND meet specific criteria, e.g., key workers, admitted to hospital, encountered a known case, returned from overseas), 2 (testing of anyone showing Covid-19 symptoms), or 3 (open public testing, e.g., "drive through" testing available to asymptomatic people).

Tests became available on March 23, 2020. Tests were reserved for hospitalised patients, symptomatic EMS workers, healthcare workers, and law enforcement personnel, symptomatic patients in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, and symptomatic high-risk patients.

On May 6, 2020, testing criteria were expanded to include persons identified through public health contact tracing investigations and persons who were prioritised by the Maryland Department of Health. On May 29, 2020, Maryland expanded availability of testing to exposed people who were not showing symptoms.

On June 12, 2020, Maryland began prioritising symptomatic individuals, contacts of confirmed cases, residents and staff of congregate and long-term care facilities, healthcare workers and first responders, patients at risk

for complications from COVID-19, individuals employed in close-contact settings, and individuals previously in a large gathering. On July 1, 2020, Maryland Department of Health expanded testing availability to any individual who believed they needed one. On August 27, 2020, Maryland Department of Health encouraged anyone who wanted a test to get tested regardless of symptoms or exposure status.

On September 17, 2020, Maryland updated their testing guidance to only include people who are symptomatic or have been exposed. On October 15, 2020, Maryland re-expanded their guidance to include people who are symptomatic, people who have been exposed, people who are at risk of exposure, people who have been in large gatherings, and people who have travelled recently. On November 10, 2020, Maryland updated its guidance to allow any provider to order a COVID-19 test for any patient.

H3: Contact tracing

H3 records government policy on contact tracing after a positive diagnosis and is measured as 0 (no contact tracing), 1 (limited contact tracing; not done for all cases), or 2 (comprehensive contact tracing; done for all identified cases).

The first contact tracing policy was implemented on May 18, 2020. On August 14, 2020, Maryland was reaching more than 90% of new COVID cases within 24 hours of identification. By February 2, 2021, contact tracing had become very limited, with only 1,500 contact tracers employed by the state of Maryland when over 1,500 new cases of COVID were being identified daily.

H6: Facial Coverings

H6 records policies on the use of facial coverings outside the home and is measured as 0 (no policy), 1 (recommended mask wearing), 2 (required in some specified shared/public spaces outside the home with other people present, or some situations when social distancing not possible), 3 (required in all shared/public spaces outside the home with other people present or all situations when social distancing not possible), or 4 (required outside the home at all times regardless of location or presence of other people).

On April 14, 2020, the first mask policy was active, and it required the mandatory use of face coverings or masks in public transportation and inside the enclosed area of any retail establishment or foodservice establishment. On July 31, 2020, Governor Hogan ordered the mandatory use of face coverings or masks in public transportation, indoors “at any location where members of the public are generally permitted,” and outdoors when there is no possibility of social distancing. On April 28, 2021, Governor Larry Hogan lifted the requirement for facial coverings to be worn in outdoor public spaces. On July 1, 2022, all masking requirements were lifted state-wide.

On May 6, 2021, Prince George's County announced that "if you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you do not need to wear a mask when outdoors walking, running, hiking or biking, or in small outdoor gatherings with members of your household or with other fully vaccinated people... [but] masks are still required for everyone in crowded outdoor venues, indoor buildings and while on public transportation." On August 8, 2021, Prince George's County reinstated a universal mask mandate regardless of vaccination status. On October 6, 2021, Prince George's County expanded this mandate to include children ages 2-5. On February 25, 2022, the State of Maryland no longer required any masks to be worn by the fully vaccinated.

On November 6, 2020, the City of Baltimore mandated face coverings to be always worn outside the home with very minimal exceptions. On November 11, 2021, Prince George's County announced that they would extend their mask mandate until January.

H7: Vaccination policy

H7 records policies for vaccine delivery for different groups 0 (no availability), 1 (availability for ONE of following: key workers/clinically vulnerable groups that are non elderly/ elderly groups), 2 (availability for TWO of following: key workers/clinically vulnerable groups that are non elderly/elderly groups), 3 (availability for ALL of following: key workers/clinically vulnerable groups that are non-elderly/elderly groups), 4 (availability for all three plus partial additional availability for select broad groups/ages), or 5 (universal availability).

The first Pfizer vaccines were available on December 14, 2020, to select healthcare workers. On December 15, 2020, the vaccine became available to long-term care residents and staff, front-line healthcare workers, and first responders. On December 28, 2020, Maryland announced that first responders were receiving both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. On January 18, 2021, vaccines became available to people over 75, people in assisted living, independent living, or with developmental disabilities or behavioural health group homes, high-risk incarcerated people, government employees, and education staff.

On January 25, 2021, vaccines became available to people over 65, including Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. On February 22, 2021, vaccinations became available to workers in lab services, manufacturing, agriculture, and the postal service, including Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

On March 4, 2021, Governor Larry Hogan announced the Maryland Vaccine Equity Task Force (VETF) – a first of its kind task force to focus COVID-19 vaccination efforts on underserved, vulnerable, and hard-to-reach populations to ensure the equitable delivery of vaccines. On April 1, 2021, Governor Larry Hogan announced that all Marylanders aged 16 and older can now pre-register for an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccine at a mass vaccination site.

H8: Protection of elderly people

H8 records policies for protecting elderly people (as defined locally) in Long Term Care Facilities and/or the community and home setting. This is measured as 0 (no measures), 1 (recommended isolation, hygiene, and visitor restriction measures in LTCFs and/or elderly people to stay-at-home), 2 (narrow restrictions for isolation, hygiene in LTCFs, some limitations on external visitors and/or restrictions protecting elderly people at home), or 3 (extensive restrictions for isolation and hygiene in LTCFs, all non-essential external visitors prohibited, and/or all elderly people required to stay-at-home and not leave the home with minimal exceptions, and receive no external visitors).

The first policy to protect elderly persons was active on March 10, 2020, and required that long-term care facilities screen all visitors and staff, and restrict entry if the individual was to fail the screening. Additionally, the state advised facilities to limit movement within the building and advised on disinfecting and hand washing.

On March 16, 2020, this was strengthened to require that care facilities restrict access to essential visits only, restrict activities and visitors with potential for exposure, actively screen individuals entering the building and restrict entry to those with respiratory symptoms or possible exposure to COVID-19, require all individuals entering the building to wash their hands at entry, establish processes to allow remote communication for residents and others, and prohibit all staff from international travel.

On April 5, 2020, Governor Hogan ordered that all staff who are in close contact with residents must wear PPE (including a face mask, appropriate eye protection, gloves, and gown), symptomatic residents must have access to expedited COVID-19 testing, and residents who are hospitalised due to COVID-19 have the right to return to the nursing home.

On April 29, 2020, Governor Hogan ordered universal testing of all residents and staff at all Maryland nursing homes, regardless of whether they are symptomatic, prioritisation of nursing homes based on an imminent outbreak or a current rising threat risk, and isolation of staff who test positive. The order also called for mandatory compliance and cooperation with state strike teams, daily evaluation of residents by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or registered nurse, the development of surge staffing plans to ensure continuity of care in the event of an outbreak, and regular informational updates for residents, resident representatives, and staff regarding COVID-19 infections. On June 19, 2020, the Governor announced that outdoor visitations were now permitted for nursing home residents with some restrictions. On July 29, 2020, it was announced that Maryland would stop paying for weekly staff testing on August 15, 2020.

On October 1, 2020, Governor Hogan announced that under new federal and state guidelines, nursing homes and assisted living facilities could begin allowing limited indoor visitation, as well as compassionate care visits to support residents who may require emotional and spiritual support. To qualify, facilities had to have no active cases in the last 14 days and no outbreak testing in progress. On November 10, 2020, the Governor

announced updated guidance for nursing home settings. On November 17, 2020, Governor Hogan announced new limitations on nursing home visitation and mandatory twice-weekly testing for staff.

On February 11, 2021, Governor Hogan announced that limited visitation at hospitals and nursing homes “will resume as early as March 1, provided facilities do not have active cases and follow proper testing protocols”.

Vaccine Policies

The vaccine indicators record vaccination policies regarding the distribution of vaccines and vaccine mandates. This is recorded as V1-V4 and includes a state's prioritisation list, eligible groups, cost of vaccination to the individual, and the presence of a vaccine mandate. These indicators do not include a flag for geographic scope.

V1: Vaccine Prioritisation

V1 records the ranked position for different groups within a state's prioritisation plan when vaccines resources were too scarce for universal availability. Groups are ranked on an ordinal scale, the number represents the rank of prioritisation, and equal-ranked categories share the same number.

The groups initially prioritised were police and first responders, people at risk of complications, healthcare workers, staff and residents of long-term care facilities, and essential workers in the plan first published October 20, 2020.

This plan was further altered on December 8, 2020 to include educators. The plan was altered on January 5, 2021 to include crowded living conditions, disabled people, and factory workers. The plan was altered on January 25, 2021 to include religious and spiritual leaders.

Vaccine availability shifted from prioritised to universal on April 10, 2021.

V2: Vaccine Availability

V2 records when categories of people – regardless of their position in a prioritised rollout plan – receive vaccines. This is measured as 0 (vaccines are not being made available to this category) or 1 (vaccines are being made available to this category).

Vaccine administration began on December 15, 2020, with healthcare workers, police and first responders, and residents and staff of long-term care facilities. The expansion of availability then included crowded or communal living conditions, essential workers, disabled people, government officials, and people aged 75+ on January 18, 2021. The expansion of availability then included people aged 60-75 on March 23, 2021. The next expansion of availability on March 30, 2021, included at-risk people aged 16-60, people in

high-contact professions, and religious and spiritual leaders. On April 10, 2021, Maryland expanded vaccine access to those aged 16 and over.

V3: Vaccine Financial Support

All vaccines were government-funded at the federal-level across the US.

V4: Mandatory Vaccination

V4 measures the existence of a requirement to be vaccinated and is measured as 0 (no requirement to be vaccinated) or 1 (requirement to be vaccinated).

The first vaccine mandate was active on September 1, 2021, and mandated that government officials, healthcare workers, and staff of long-term care facilities be vaccinated. This was in addition to the requirement by the federal government to have all employees of Medicare and Medicaid reimbursed facilities to be vaccinated if they are to be reimbursed. The general public was not mandated to be vaccinated at any given point.