

# IMPACTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN?

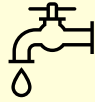


*“Howard County Government has prepared this resource sheet to assist furloughed federal workers avoid utility service interruptions, negotiate with lenders to avoid impact on credit ratings, provide healthy meals for their children, and avoid scams targeting them. Eleven percent of Howard County’s employed residents and their families are directly impacted by the current government shutdown.”*

**Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive**

## HOWARD COUNTY UTILITIES

The Howard County Department of Finance has suspended residential water service disconnections until the federal government shutdown is over. Howard County has nearly 72,000 residential water and sewer customers. The county bills customers for water and sewer service four times a year, with 30 days to pay. Shut-offs would typically occur after two additional notices have been sent and only on residential accounts with more than \$250 past due. Residents need to take no action to prevent interruption of their water service. For questions, contact the Department of Finance at 410-313-2195.



## HOWARD COUNTY RECREATION AND PARKS

For impacted federal workers and contractors, the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks will arrange alternative payment schedules for their fees for recreational classes and access to facilities. To establish an alternate payment schedule, call 410-313-7275.



## HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Howard County families who have lost pay due to the shutdown may immediately apply for the Free and Reduced-Priced Meals (FARMs) program and the Howard County Public School System’s Food and Nutrition Office will determine their eligibility status within 24-48 hours. Families that would not ordinarily qualify for the FARMs program could be eligible for the remainder of the school year because of the current loss of income. Families that are adversely impacted, including those who do not receive FARMs assistance, will have the remainder of the school year to pay off any meal balances incurred during the government shutdown. Families may apply online at <https://www.myschoolapps.com/Application>.



## HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARIES

The Howard County Library System has suspended library fines and fees during the shutdown. No cardholder will be blocked due to fines/fees owed, and fines/fees will not accrue from January 4 through the end of the shutdown. Questions or concerns can be directly to 410-313-7750.



## ACTIVITIES FOR THE FAMILY

Visit Howard County will feature a list of free, or almost free, activities throughout Howard County, which will be updated in real time online at [www.visithowardcounty.com/things-to-do/free-or-almost-free](http://www.visithowardcounty.com/things-to-do/free-or-almost-free).



## ADDITIONAL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ASSISTANCE

Impacted residents in need of additional health or human services to ensure stability during this time, should contact the Department of Community Resources and services at 410-313-6400 or the Maryland Access Point at 410-313-1234. A complete list of resources for lender assistance, payday loans, scam avoidance and services can be found at: [www.howardcountymd.gov/communityresources](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/communityresources).



## ASSISTANCE OFFERED BY BGE

BGE is providing a number of options for customers experiencing challenges paying their BGE bill. These include payment arrangements/installment plans, due date extensions, budget billing and deferred service termination. Customers who need assistance paying their BGE bill should contact BGE as soon as possible at 800-685-0123. Customers can also access BGE’s Community Resource Guide at <https://bit.ly/2QTQVXS> for information about various energy assistance programs.



## BENEFITS OFFERED BY THE STATE OF MARYLAND



The State offers several programs to assist workers affected by the shutdown. These include a Food Supplement Program, Medical Assistance Program, Temporary Disability Program and Temporary Cash Assistance Program. For more information or to apply for benefits, visit <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>.