



Maryland  
Hospital Association

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **MHA SEEKS LIMITED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DECLARATION**

**Elkridge, Md.** – Maryland hospitals are nearly full, and emergency departments are stretched incredibly thin. Hospitals are seeing a spike in COVID-19 cases and have fewer clinicians ready to care for all patients.

The statewide number of COVID inpatients at Maryland hospitals is now more than 2,000—surpassing the previous all-time high of 1,952 COVID inpatients reached nearly one year ago, Jan. 11, 2021.

Four Maryland hospitals are operating under crisis standards of care, and others are under contingency care protocols. Other hospitals and health systems may take similar steps in the coming days and weeks during an anticipated post-holiday surge.

Maryland hospitals have been using pandemic plans to address COVID-19 throughout the past two years. They have paused or delayed surgeries that can be safely put off and worked with insurers, skilled nursing facilities, behavioral health providers, and others to quickly find treatment for patients that no longer require acute care.

The main concern currently is workforce. Hospital personnel are stretched to their limits and we cannot demand more from them.

### **Limited Public Health Emergency**

Maryland hospitals and the Maryland Hospital Association continue to work closely with Gov. Larry Hogan's administration to ensure the best possible protection for the health of Marylanders.

On Tuesday, Dec. 28, MHA President & CEO Bob Atlas asked the administration to reinstate a *limited* public health emergency declaration for health care, health care services, and health care staffing.

Maryland had a PHE in place for a year and a half, when conditions were not as dire as they are now.

“We respectfully ask the Governor and Secretary of Health to help the hospitals by offering the flexibilities and protections that a limited PHE affords,” Mr. Atlas says.

### **Help Support Hospitals**

MHA and Maryland hospitals also are asking for the public’s support.

Most of the people being treated for COVID in our hospitals are unvaccinated. Get vaccinated and boosted. Wear masks, keep social distance, and wash your hands.

We also ask that Marylanders not visit a hospital emergency room for a COVID test or vaccine. See your doctor or use urgent care for health concerns that are not life- or limb-threatening.

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### **About the Maryland Hospital Association**

*The Maryland Hospital Association serves Maryland’s 60 nonprofit hospitals and health systems through collective action to shape policies, practices, financing and performance to advance health care and the health of all Marylanders. For more information, visit [www.mhaonline.org](http://www.mhaonline.org).*