Public health laws are regulations put in place to protect the health of the public. Regulations are published in subject arrangements called codes. You can find regulations in print and online. Maryland State agency regulations are compiled in the **Code of Maryland Regulations** (COMAR). COMAR contains 36 Titles, with each Title corresponding to a department or agency. Each regulation is assigned a unique four-part codification number.

Under the COMAR codification system, every regulation is assigned a unique four-part codification number by which it may be identified. All regulations are arranged by title. Each title is divided into numbered chapters, and each chapter into numbered regulations.

An example of a COMAR regulation number is COMAR 10.06.01.01:

★ 10 Title – Maryland Department of Health

★ 06 Subtitle – Diseases

★ 01 Chapter – Communicable Diseases and Related Conditions of Public Health Importance

★ 01 Regulation – These numbers are expanded when greater detail is required

This reference document outlines public health laws and regulations in the State of Maryland. Acronym Glossary:

- AIDS: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
- CBD: Cannabidiol
- COMAR: Code of Maryland Regulations
- HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- LHD: Local Health Department
- MDE: Maryland Department of Environment
- MDH: Maryland Department of Health
- OSDS: On-Site Sewage Disposal System
- STD: Sexually Transmitted Disease
- STI: Sexually Transmitted Infection

Environmental Health & Protection			
Topic	**Regulation or Law Citation**	**Regulation or Law Description**	**Agency/Department Responsible**
Air-Open Burning	COMAR 26.11.07	Prohibits the start of an open fire without the proper permit and control officer approval.	MDE
Animal-vector control	Local PS2-20	Local public health agency may respond to rodent complaints; mosquito control; investigate animal hoarding, vermin/ insect infestations; West Nile Virus investigations; Lyme Disease awareness	Environmental Health
Animal Bites-rabies control	COMAR 10.06.02	LHD investigates animal attacks involving humans and domestic animals; collects and sends animal specimens; enforces quarantine periods; conducts vaccination clinics	Environmental Health
Animal Bites-Rabies Exposure	COMAR 10.06.02	LHD investigates animal attacks involving humans; collects and sends animal specimens; enforces quarantine periods; conducts vaccination clinics	Environmental Health
Camps - Campgrounds	COMAR 10.16.03	Inspections and investigations, permits for campgrounds.	Environmental Programs
Camps - Youth Camps	COMAR 10.16.06	Certifications for youth camps.	MDH
Food - Bottle Water	COMAR 10.15.01.11	Procedures for obtaining proper permits for bottling and dispersing drinking water from spring construction to unit processing operations.	Division of Food Control

Environmental Health & Protection			
Food - Canning	COMAR 10.15.01	Requirements for operation of canning and acidified food manufacturing plants.	Division of Food Control
Food - Crab Meat	COMAR 10.15.02	Processing regulations to ensure safe and sanitary crab meat and working conditions for employees	Division of Food Control
Food - Food and Drink Processing and Transportation	COMAR 10.15.04	Regulations for processing, producing, transporting and/or storing items for human consumption.	Division of Food Control
Food - Food Service Facilities	COMAR 10.15.03	Assure that food service facilities serve food that is safe for human consumption, that buildings meet proper standards for cleanliness, conduct inspections, provides training, issues food	Environmental Health
Food - Frozen Dairy Foods	COMAR 10.15.05	Manufacture and Sale of Frozen Dairy Foods and Ices Manufactured for Sale in Maryland	MDH
Food - Manufactured Grade Milk	COMAR 10.15.09	Production, Processing, Transportation, Storage, and Distribution of Manufactured Grade Milk.	MDH
Food - Milk	COMAR 10.15.06	Production, Processing, Transportation, Storage, and Distribution of Milk.	MDH
Food - Seafood	COMAR 10.15.10	Procedures for the safe handling and processing of seafood.	MDH

Environmental Health & Protection			
Food - Shellfish	COMAR 10.15.07	Investigating foodborne and water borne illnesses related to food service facilities and within institutional facilities.	Environmental Health/MDH
Food Borne Illness investigations	COMAR 10.06.01 & 10.15.03	LHD investigates foodborne and water borne illnesses related to food service facilities and within institutional facilities; State/local health departments have roles.	Environmental Health/MDH
Hazard investigation PH or EH	Article §10-201	The local Health Officer has the authority to investigate any condition that is dangerous to human health and to inspect schools, places of employment and businesses.	LHD
Hazards - Controlled Dangerous Substances	COMAR 26.13.01	Regulation for the state health agency to control the manufacturing, distributing, and use of controlled, dangerous substances.	MDE
Hazards - Hazardous substances	COMAR 26.13.01	All provisions of 16 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1500 and 1505 apply; State health departments have a role.	MDE
Inspections - Other (Burn Sites, Sludge, etc.)	COMAR 26.04.02 & 26.04.06	Regulation of water supply, sewage disposal, and solid waste. Requirements for permits, construction and design. State and local health departments have roles.	MDE
Lead Paint poisoning investigations	COMAR 26.02.07, 26.16.02 & 26.16.05	Regulations for appropriate techniques for abatement of lead-containing substances from interior and certain exterior surfaces in residential areas and day care properties.	MDE
Mobile Home Park License	COMAR 10.16.02	Perform inspections, investigates complaints and issues permits for mobile home parks.	Environmental Programs

Environmental Health & Protection			
Natural Wood Recycling Facility	COMAR 26.04.09	The Department of the Environment is responsible for issuing permits and enforcing regulations on natural wood waste recycling facilities.	MDE
Nuisance Complaints - Public Health	Health General §20301 Local PH-1101	Investigates dangers to health or safety.	Environmental Programs
Outdoor music festivals	COMAR 10.16.05.05	Evaluates plans and inspects outdoor music festivals.	Environmental Health
Pets - exotic bird permits	Health General §24-101 to 24-110	Public health agency inspects exotic bird records and issues permits.	Environmental Health
Pets - store inspections	COMAR 10.06.01.25.23	Public health agency inspects pet stores for compliance with reptile caution notices, exotic bird records, humane and sanitary conditions.	Environmental Health
Sewage Disposal	COMAR 26.04.02	LHD signs off on plans and issues building permits	Environmental Programs
Sewage/Sludge	COMAR 26.04.06	Investigate complaints; review sewage and sludge applications and sites.	Environmental Programs
Solid Waste - septic systems	COMAR 26.04.02	Review applications; issue permits; provide installation inspection; investigate failing systems.	Environmental Programs
Solid Waste - special medical waste	COMAR 10.06.06	Applies to entities which generate and handle special medical waste or sharps.	MDH
Swimming Pool, Spa	COMAR	Regulations to protect and promote the health and safety of those using public pools	Environmental

Environmental Health & Protection			
Licenses	10.17.01	or spas including standards of construction and disinfecting.	Health
Swimming/ Bathing Beach Licenses	COMAR 26.08.09	Requirements for annual permit of operation of public beaches including sanitation quality of facilities and waters.	Environmental Programs
Tattoo/ body piercing	COMAR 10.06.01.06G &10.06.01.06; Local Law PH-1103 &1-107	Regulations on handling and disposing of sharp waste objects that have come in contact with bodily materials. Also tattoo and body piercing shops should follow requirements of the Health Officer as both procedures carry risks.	Environmental Health
Tobacco - smoking in public	COMAR 10.19.04; Local law PH 1-105	Prohibition of Smoking in Indoor Areas Open to the Public; LHD investigates complaints.	Environmental Health
Water - Certificate of Potability	COMAR 26.04.04	Regulations establishing the standards and procedures applicable to the construction of wells.	Environmental Programs
Water - Emergency Access to Potable Water	COMAR 26.04.01	Water control program; emergency water supply - LHD assures supply of fresh water in an emergency	Environmental Programs
Water - Percolation Testing	COMAR 26.04.02	LHD performs percolation testing and soil analysis; site plan review; ground water monitoring.	Environmental Programs
Water - Well Construction	COMAR 26.04.04	LHD issues permits and conducts inspections.	Environmental Programs
Water Supply	COMAR 26.04.03	LHD reviews site plans for major projects; public water and sewer site plan review; final plat review.	Environmental Programs

Disease Control			
Topic	**Regulation or Law Citation**	**Regulation or Law Description**	**Department Responsible**
Disease Control - AIDS Investigations	COMAR 10.18.03	Lists requirements for reporting a case of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and health officer	MDH
Disease Control - HIV & CD4+Lymphocyte Investigations & Case Reporting	COMAR 10.18.02	Requirements for physician reporting of a case of HIV or AIDS/birth of an infant whose mother has tested positive for HIV; Institution reporting of a case of HIV or AIDS; Laboratory reporting of a test result for HIV infection or CD4+ count; and health officer follow-up of a physician report of AIDS.	MDH
Disease Control - HIV Counseling and Testing for Pregnant Women	COMAR 10.18.09	Requirements for counseling and requirements for informed consent when HIV testing is performed on pregnant women.	LHD
Disease Control - HIV Counseling and Testing Procedures	COMAR 10.18.08	Requirements for pretest and post-test counseling and requirements for informed consent when HIV testing is performed.	MDH
Disease control - reportable diseases	COMAR 10.06.01.03	List of Reportable Diseases and Conditions which health care providers, institutions and others are required to report.	MDH
Disease control - sexually transmitted infections	COMAR 10.09.72	LHD provides STD clinical services for screening, diagnosis, partner identification and treatment.	LHD
Disease control - STI	COMAR	LHD must assure clients and their contacts that have or have been exposed to certain	LHD

testing and contact tracing	10.06.17 & .18	reportable STDs obtain appropriate treatment and follow-up and all info is entered into the state database.	
Disease control - tuberculosis	COMAR 10.06.01.21	LHD must assure that individuals are assessed and treated per protocol and LHD must investigate contacts and treat accordingly - info entered into the State database.	LHD
Emergency - Catastrophic Health Emergency	COMAR 10.59.01	Requirements and standards for isolation and quarantine.	MDH
Emergency - Quarantine	Health General §18-901	Health officials may issue a directive to an individual or a group to go and remain in places of isolation or quarantine.	LHD
Immunizations - Meningococcal Vaccination	COMAR 10.06.05	Requirements for meningococcal vaccination of individuals enrolled in institutions of higher education who are living in on-campus student housing.	LHD
Immunizations - required before entry into school	COMAR 10.06.04	A school may not knowingly admit or retain a student unless the student's parent or guardian has furnished evidence of age-appropriate immunity.	LHD
Quarentine	Health General §18-901	Health official may issue a directive to an individual or a group to go and remain in places of isolation or quarantine.	LHD

Tobacco & Cannabis			
Topic	**Regulation or Law Citation**	**Regulation or Law Description**	**Department Responsible**

Tobacco - youth tobacco sales	Political Subdivisions §15-102.1 Tobacco 21 State of Maryland Regulation	A person may not distribute any tobacco products to a minor, unless the minor is acting solely as the agent of the minor's employer who is engaged in the business of distributing tobacco products.	Law Enforcement
Recreational Cannabis - See Maryland Cannabis Administration	14.17.01 - 14.17.22	Maryland Cannabis laws and regulations for recreational use and sale.	
Clean Indoor Act 2nd Iteration	COMAR 10.19.04	Prohibition of smoking in indoor areas open to the public. Investigates complaints concerning indoor smoking at public facilities, hotels and motels.	Environmental Health
Tobacco Modernization Act	SB1056	Revises the age-verification process and placement of cigarettes, other tobacco products (OTP), and electronic smoking devices (ESD) for Maryland retailers.	

Records			
Topic	**Regulation or Law Citation**	**Regulation or Law Description**	**Department Responsible**
Birth Certificates	Health General § 4-204	Public Health agency provides copies of birth, death, and fetal death certificates.	LHD

General Health			
Topic	**Regulation or Law Citation**	**Regulation or Law Description**	**Agency/Department Responsible**
Facility application - adult day care	COMAR 10.12.04	A person may not establish, operate, or continue the operation of an adult daycare center without first obtaining a license from the State.	Office Health Care Quality
Facility application - assisted living	COMAR 10.07.14	State requirements and licensing procedures for operating an assisted living facility that promotes health, safety and maximizes independence.	Office Health Care Quality
State Funding for Local Health Services	COMAR 10.04.01	Amounts of State General funds to be provided to LHD for Core Public Health Services.	MDH
Hazards - Poison Prevention Packaging	COMAR 10.19.06	All provisions of Code 16 of Federal Regulations Part 1700 apply. State is responsible.	MDH
Transportation safety - Bike helmets	Transportation Article §21-1207.1	Helmets are required for everyone under the age of 16, including passengers, who ride their bicycles on the road, bicycle paths, or any public property.	Law Enforcement
Transportation safety - Bike traffic	Transportation Article §21-1202	Maryland's traffic laws apply to bicycles and motor scooters.	Law Enforcement
Transportation safety - pedestrians	Transportation Article §21, Subtitle 5	Pedestrians rights and rules.	Law Enforcement

Authority			
Topic	**Regulation or Law Citation**	**Regulation or Law Description**	**Agency/Department Responsible**
County Board of Health	Health-General §3-301 - §3-309	County Board of Health powers and duties.	MDH
Local Health Officer	Health-General §3-301 - §3-309	Local Health Officer powers and duties.	MDH