

# Baltimore

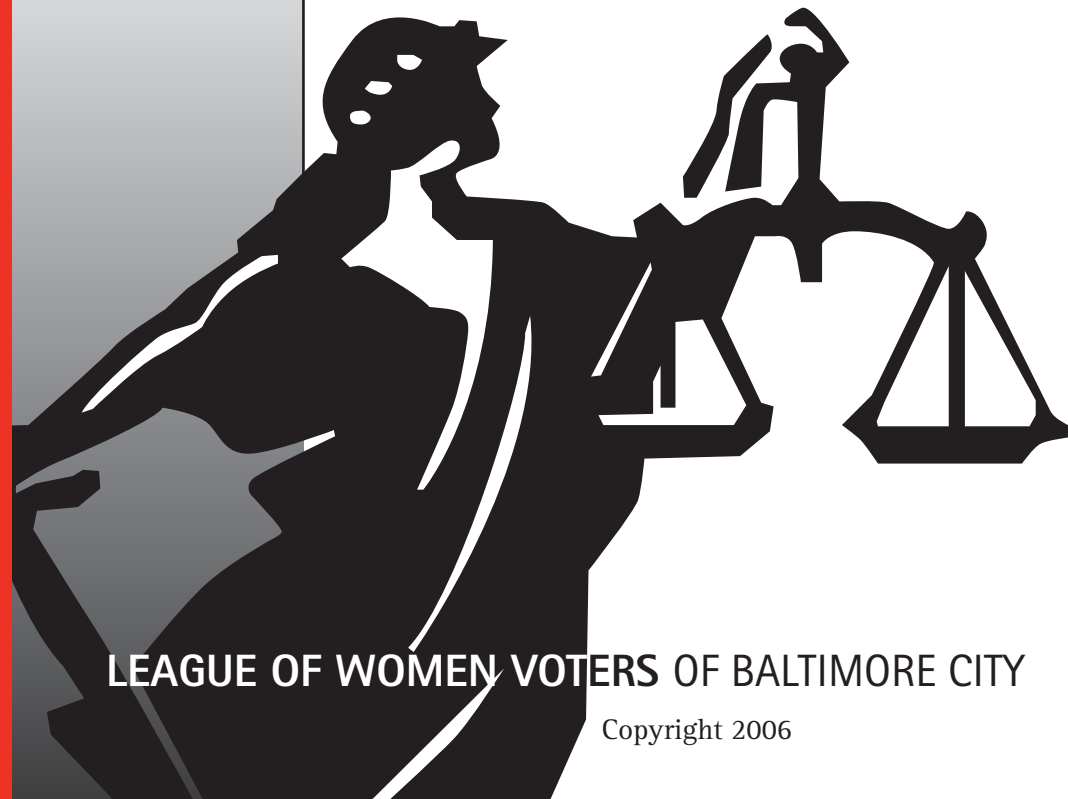
A GUIDE TO CITY GOVERNMENT



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BALTIMORE CITY

# Baltimore

A GUIDE TO CITY GOVERNMENT



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BALTIMORE CITY

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## About this Guide

“...government of the people, by the people, and for the people...”

– *President Abraham Lincoln, in the address at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863.*

Active participation of the public is essential to democratic government. Individuals elect the office holders, serve on government committees and boards, monitor meetings, and analyze and advocate on issues, pro and con. These activities provide input from the community, and increase public awareness about the policies and processes of government.

Community input needs to be based on knowledge of the facts and available options. The League of Women Voters of Baltimore City offers this Guide as a resource about the structure of Baltimore City government and the responsibilities of its many agencies. We hope it will be a useful tool for schools, adult literacy programs, citizenship classes, community organizations, and others to increase knowledge of city government and spur citizen participation.

We owe deepest thanks to the many city officials and employees of all levels and ranks who generously answered our questions, offered suggestions, and provided us with information about their agencies.

We are especially grateful to the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Baltimore Community Foundation for their generous financial support of this project.

### City Government Guide Committee

Sally Grant, Chair; Anne Blumenberg, Mary Gardner, Judith Lipman, Joanne Nathans, Lu Pierson, Gail Sunderman

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# History of Baltimore Government

In Maryland as in other states in the United States, local jurisdictions are created and given their powers by the state government. Baltimore Towne, with a handful of households and 60 acres of land, was created by an Act of the General Assembly (the state legislature) in 1729. One hundred years earlier, in 1632, King Charles I established Maryland as an English colony in a grant to George Calvert and his descendants. As the colony grew, its economy and the livelihood of most of its inhabitants were based largely on agriculture, with a few towns providing commercial services and the trades.

By 1796 when the American Revolution freed the colonies from British rule, Baltimore had 3,500 households. The city adopted a new charter that established a government structure with a mayor and a two-chamber city council, giving it the beginnings of modern self-government.

During the next 100 years, as the city's population continued to grow, the General Assembly enlarged its area to include parts of Baltimore County. In addition to the authority to pave streets and safeguard public health and the harbor, Baltimore City gained the power to tax and borrow money, establish free public schools, a court system and a clean water system, and provide fire and police protection.

Increasing government mismanagement and corruption resulted in the adoption of a new city charter in 1898 that restructured city government and gave more power to the mayor. Three important additional developments were the granting of “home rule” by the General Assembly to the city (1918), the final annexations of land to the city from Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties (1918), and the change from a two-chamber to a one-chamber city council (1922).

The grant of home rule was especially important since prior to 1918 all local laws affecting Baltimore City were enacted by the General Assembly. With the grant of home rule, the General Assembly transferred to the city the right to exercise a broad range of specific powers. These powers are specified in Article 2 of the Charter of Baltimore City. To this day, only the General Assembly can expand, reduce, or in any way change the powers granted in Article 2. The other articles of the Charter can be amended by procedures that involve the City Council and the voters of Baltimore City. The last major revision of the Charter occurred in 1964.

A unique aspect of Baltimore’s status in Maryland is that it is not part of a county. For local government purposes, the 1796 Charter separated Baltimore City from Baltimore County. Since that time, the state has been divided into 23 counties and Baltimore City. This independent status of the city has important consequences for policies and programs relating to government revenues and expenditures and the taxable resources available to the city. Nevertheless, under certain provisions of state law Baltimore is considered a county rather than a municipality, and thus has the power to impose admission and amusement, transfer, and recordation taxes, and selected and limited sales taxes.

Despite economic progress in the Baltimore region and the technological advances of the early twentieth century, by the 1930’s the inner core of the city was decaying, racial ghettos still existed, and racial prejudice and discrimination influenced many policies at all levels of government. After World War II (1941-1945), federal programs encouraged the construction of suburban housing and highways, resulting throughout the country in large-scale migrations of urban populations to suburban and rural areas. This left many cities without the necessary tax base to raise enough funds to provide for the needs of their residents. For several decades, the federal government provided assistance through various urban renewal grants and other programs, especially for housing and social services. However, beginning in the late 1990’s these funds were severely reduced. In Maryland, state government restructured and began financing on a state-wide basis certain government services, such as the courts and social services, that were formerly locally funded.

With its vital responsibilities for public education, public safety, sanitation, health, housing standards and neighborhood development, Baltimore City government continues to be the central player in addressing the needs of city residents and planning for the healthy future of the city.

# Structure

The City Charter, the Maryland Constitution, and state laws provide the basic structure of Baltimore City government. It is a three-branch structure: legislative, executive, and judicial. The legislative branch enacts the laws of city government. The executive branch is responsible for administering the laws and providing municipal services and functions. The judicial branch renders judgments in civil and criminal cases. City departments and agencies, and the officials and other employees who carry out their institutional responsibilities, are the backbone of the city's ability to serve its citizens.

## Executive Branch

The executive branch of Baltimore City government consists of the Mayor's Office, the Comptroller's Office, the Board of Estimates, and the municipal boards and commissions that provide guidance and oversight in many areas of city life.

### MAYOR'S OFFICE

The mayor is elected by the city voters every four years. Eligibility requirements are set forth in the City Charter: the mayor must be at least 25 years old, a citizen of the United States, a resident of Baltimore for at least one year immediately preceding the election, and a person of "known integri-

ty, experience and sound judgment". The mayor must remain a resident of the city during his term of office. Baltimore City has a "strong mayor" form of government. The mayor's power is derived from several sources:

- The mayor may veto bills passed by the city council, and a three-fourths vote of the city council is necessary to override the veto. For comparison, the federal requirement to override a presidential veto is a two-thirds vote of the U.S. Senate and of the House of Representatives.
- Through the mayor's membership on the Board of Estimates and his power to appoint two of the five members (the city solicitor and the director of public works), he effectively controls the Board of Estimates. The Board of Estimates drafts the yearly budget for the city and approves nearly all city contracts and purchases.
- The mayor makes hundreds of appointments, including the heads of the following city agencies:
  - Department of Finance
  - Board of Finance
  - Department of Law
  - Department of Public Works
  - Fire Department
  - Police Department
  - Department of Planning
  - Health Department
  - Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals
  - Department of Human Resources/Civil Service Commission
  - Board of Ethics
  - Department of Transportation.

Although it is not required by law, Baltimore mayors often convene a cabinet that usually includes city department heads as well as the heads of the various quasi-government entities.

### COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE

The comptroller is elected on a citywide basis to a four-year term. The qualifications for this office are the same as those for the mayor. The position was created by the City Charter, which provides that the comptroller:

- Appoints the city auditor and has general supervision over the Department of Audits and the city auditor
- Heads the Department of Real Estate
- Serves on the Board of Estimates and the Board of Finance

The Department of Audits examines the accounts and financial situation of municipal agencies, and reviews the fiscal aspects of federal grants and other grant programs administered by the city. The Department of Audits also reviews proposed city contracts and must approve them prior to their submission to the Board of Estimates.

The Department of Real Estate inventories and manages city-owned real estate, although practical management is often delegated to an appropriate city agency. The Department of Real Estate is also responsible for acquisition, leasing, and disposition of city property. While this function is often shared with other entities such as the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Baltimore Development Corporation, the City Charter gives the Real Estate Department final authority over these decisions.

The Office of the Comptroller serves as the administrative office of the Board of Estimates.

### BOARD OF ESTIMATES

The Board of Estimates was created by the city charter. It is composed of five voting members: the mayor, the president of city council; the comptroller; the city solicitor; and the director of public works. The president of the city council serves as president of the Board of Estimates and the comptroller serves as secretary. Because the mayor appoints the city solicitor and the director of public works, this effectively gives him control of the Board of Estimates.

The board is responsible for developing and executing the fiscal policy of the city. Each year it submits an annual budget, called the Ordinance of Estimates, to the city council. The budget includes the city's operating budget and the capital budget. In developing the budget, the board receives recommendations for the operating budget from the director of finance, and receives recommendations for the capital budget and long-range capital improvement program from the planning commission.

The Board of Estimates is also responsible for awarding city contracts and supervising all purchasing by city agencies. Its regular meetings, held each Wednesday at 9 a.m. in City Hall, are open to the public.

### COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS

There are many opportunities for city residents to contribute oversight and guidance on a wide variety of local issues through service on city commissions and boards. Inquiries about appointment and responsibilities should be directed to the Mayor's Office. Below is a partial list of the city's boards and commissions.

**Animal Control Advisory Board:** Advises the health commissioner on animal control matters. Appoints the members of the Vicious Dog Hearing Board.

**Baltimore Workforce Investment Board:** Spurs development of a comprehensive workforce strategy and advises local elected officials on workforce policy issues. A majority of the members must represent local businesses. Other members represent education, labor organizations, economic development, community-based organizations, and social service agencies.

**Board of Fire Commissioners:** Advises the fire chief, reviews disciplinary policies and practices, and hears administrative appeals under the Fire Prevention Code.

**Board of Ethics:** Implements the city's compliance with state and city ethics laws, which are enacted "to guard against undue influence or the appearance of improper influence, and insure public trust in the government." The board regulates lobbyists, issues advisory opinions, and investigates alleged violations of the law. The financial disclosure statements that city officials and high-level employees are required to file are open to public inspection.

**Board of School Commissioners:** Provides oversight and guidance to the Baltimore City Public School System. The nine voting members must be residents of Baltimore City and are appointed jointly by the mayor and governor from a list submitted by the Maryland State Board of Education. The tenth member, non-voting, is a student.

**Board of Recreation and Parks:** Advises the director of the Department of Recreation and Parks and performs other duties as required.

**Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA):** Reviews zoning and land use appeals from administrative decisions. Appeals from the BMZA go to the Circuit Court.

**Board of Finance:** Oversees the city's investments and trust funds and the sale of city bonds; selects the depository for city funds; reviews proposals for Industrial Revenue Bonds financing.

**Board of Liquor License Commissioners:** Oversees the issuance of licenses to and the conduct of establishments selling alcoholic beverages. Impose fines and suspends and revokes liquor licenses. Appeals from this board go to the Circuit Court.

**Cable Communications Advisory Commission:** Advises the Board of Estimates about awarding the city's cable television franchise; monitors the performance of franchisees; responds to consumer issues.

**Civil Service Commission:** Advises the mayor and the director of human resources on personnel matters; reviews job classifications; hears claims of city employees about demotion, suspension, or dismissal; investigates alleged improper actions.

**Commission on Homelessness:** Develops and monitors implementation of a strategic plan to end homelessness in the city; coordinates public and private efforts on behalf of the homeless; ensures regular evaluation of the adequacy and quality of services for Baltimore's homeless people.

**Commission on Disabilities:** Advises the city on accessibility of facilities and services for persons with disabilities; undertakes research and educational programs relating to the needs of persons with disabilities.

**Commission on Aging and Retirement Education:** Works with other city agencies to implement and coordinate services for the elderly.

**Community Relations Commission:** Investigates and addresses complaints of discrimination against persons in legally protected categories in the areas of education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and health and welfare services. The commission also undertakes educational and other programs and facilitates the resolution of community disputes. Protected categories under city law include: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental disability, physical disability, and age.

**Environmental Control Board:** Enforces city laws relating to sanitation, health, safety, the environment; imposes civil penalties. Appeals from this board go to the Circuit Court.

**Planning Commission:** Oversees development of capital improvement budgets and a master plan for the physical development of the city; investigates land use in the city; recommends changes in the zoning laws.

**Civilian Review Board:** Addresses complaints of abusive language, harassment, or excessive force by members of the Baltimore City Police Department, Baltimore City School Police, Housing Authority Police, or the Sheriff's Department; reviews policies of the Police Department and makes recommendations.

## Legislative Branch

Baltimore's law-making body is the 15-member City Council. For representation in the City Council, the city is divided into 14 councilmanic districts. The voters of each district elect one member of the City Council. The 15<sup>th</sup> member, the council president, is elected citywide, and the vice-president is chosen by the council from among its members. All members are elected to a four-year term. If a position becomes vacant between elections, the vacancy is filled by the remaining members of the council.

To be eligible for election from a councilmanic district, a person must be over 21 years of age, a registered voter, a U.S. citizen, and must have resided in the councilmanic district he or she will represent for at least one year immediately preceding the election. A council member must continue to reside in the district during the term of office. If the city council district boundaries are changed as a result of a 10-year national census, a candidate for city council in the election immediately following the redistricting need reside in the district he or she seeks to represent only since the preceding July 1.

Candidates for president of the council must meet the same qualifications as for mayor.

*The primary responsibilities of the City Council are:*

- Enact ordinances (laws) and resolutions of the city, consistent with the powers and duties provided in the City Charter and state law.
- Review and enact the annual Ordinance of Estimates, which provides the operating and capital budgets of the city. The City Council cannot increase any amounts proposed in the

Ordinance of Estimates, but may, with certain exceptions, reduce or eliminate proposed amounts.

- Enact revenue ordinances necessary to meet the anticipated expenses of the budget.

Much of the work of the council is done through committees, whose members are appointed by the council president. These committees may change over time. In 2005, the committees and subcommittees were:

- **BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS**

Subcommittee: Labor

- **EDUCATION, HOUSING, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

- **TAXATION AND FINANCE**

Subcommittee: Economic Development and Public Financing

- **EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS**

- **JUDICIARY AND LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATIONS**

Subcommittee: Public Safety

- **URBAN AFFAIRS**

Subcommittee: Aging

- **LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION**

Subcommittee: Highways and Franchises

An unofficial role of City Council members is to serve their constituents as advocates with city government agencies.

## Judicial Branch

In Maryland, the judicial branch, represented by the courts, is a state system. With the exception of the federal courts, all the courts that serve Baltimore City are part of the state system. There are four layers of courts in the state system: District Courts, Circuit Courts, the Court of Special Appeals, and the Court of Appeals. In addition, Baltimore City and several counties have an Orphan's Court to administer the wills and estates of deceased persons. Maryland is divided into twelve District Court districts. Baltimore City comprises District 1.

Judges for all the courts are appointed by the governor from lists of names submitted by various judicial selection committees. Judges at the Circuit Court, Court of Special Appeals, and Court of Appeals levels subsequently run for election.

The qualifications, duties, and salaries of judges and court personnel are set by the state.

### DISTRICT COURT OF BALTIMORE CITY

District Court has jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases. It has *exclusive* jurisdiction over tenant/landlord cases, replevin (recovery of property), motor vehicle and boating violations, criminal cases if the penalty is less than three years' imprisonment or a fine less than \$2,500, and civil cases involving amounts not more than \$5,000. District Court has *concurrent* jurisdiction with the Circuit Court in civil cases involving \$5,000–\$20,000.

District Court does not provide jury trials. If a person entitled to a jury trial chooses to have one, the case is moved to Circuit Court.

Appeals from the District Court go to the Circuit Court.

*The four locations of District Court in Baltimore City are:*

- 5800 Wabash Avenue (21215) 410-878-8000
- 1400 E. North Avenue (21213) 410-878-8500
- 501 E. Fayette Street (21202) 410-878-8900
- 700 E. Patapsco Avenue 410-878-8300

Court Commissioners are the first point of contact with the District Court. These judicial officers have the primary responsibility for reviewing “Applications of Statement of Charges” and determining probable cause for issuing charging documents.

*The commissioners are located at:*

- 500 N. Calvert Street (21202)
- 5800 Wabash Avenue (21215)
- 700 E. Patapsco Avenue (21225)
- 300 E. Madison Street (21202)

**CIRCUIT COURT OF BALTIMORE CITY**

100 and 111 North Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

- Civil Division 410-333-3722
- Criminal Division 410-333-3750
- Family Division 410-333-3709
- Register of Wills/Orphan’s Court 410-752-5131
- Juvenile Division *(Located at 300 N. Gay Street, 21202)* 443-263-6300

At the Circuit Court level, Maryland is divided into eight circuits. Baltimore City comprises the eighth circuit, with 32 judges presiding over serious criminal cases, probate matters (wills), civil cases in which the amount involved is more than \$20,000, appeals from the District Court, the Orphan’s Court, and administrative agencies, and all jury trials. Circuit Court also handles family law matters such as divorce, custody, guardianship, and juvenile cases.

The Register of Wills and Orphan’s Court are in Courthouse East, 111 N. Calvert Street. The Land Records Office where deeds and mortgages are recorded, and the business and marriage license division, are in the Clarence Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse, 100 N. Calvert Street.

Jurors are called to serve on “petits juries”, which consist of 12 individuals for criminal trials and six for civil trials. Baltimore City residents over 18 years of age are selected at random from the lists of registered voters and licensed drivers.

Court Administrators assist the judges with case management and act as contact persons between the court and litigants. They also develop and coordinate services for litigants that strive to make the court more user-friendly.

- Civil Case Management Coordinator 410-396-3045
- Criminal Division Associate Administrator 410-545-9091
- Family Division Associate Administrator 410-396-3648
- Juvenile Division Associate Administrator 443-263-2786

**COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS**

Courts of Appeal Building  
Rowe Boulevard and Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-260-1400

The Court of Special Appeals is Maryland's statewide intermediate appellate court. It was created in 1966 in response to the rapidly growing caseload of the Court of Appeals. Its jurisdiction includes any reviewable judgment, decree, order, or other action of the Circuit Courts and Orphan's Courts, civil (including family and juvenile cases) or criminal, unless otherwise provided by law. Judges on the Court of Special Appeals generally hear and decide cases in panels of three. In some instances, however, all 13 judges may hear a case. It is then called an 'en banc' hearing.

**COURT OF APPEALS**

Courts of Appeal Building  
Rowe Boulevard and Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-260-1400

The Court of Appeals is the highest state court in Maryland. (At the federal level and in most other states, the highest court is called the Supreme Court.) The Court of Appeals hears cases chiefly by way of certiorari, a process that gives the court discretion to decide which cases to hear. However, the Court of Appeals is required by law to hear cases involving the death penalty, legislative redistricting, removal of certain officials from their elected or appointed office, and certain other questions of law.

The Chief Judge and six additional judges comprise the Court of Appeals. All seven hear oral arguments on each case, unless a judge removes him/herself from a case because of a conflict of interest or other reason. In that event, a judge from another court, or a retired appellate judge, may be assigned to sit in place of the recused judge.

**Related Agencies****BALTIMORE CITY STATE'S ATTORNEY OFFICE**

Clarence Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse, Room 208  
100 N. Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-296-4000

The Baltimore City State's Attorney Office represents the State of Maryland in all criminal prosecutions that result from crimes that occur in Baltimore and are investigated and charged by local law enforcement agencies. This office is mandated by the Maryland Constitution and is managed by a locally elected State's Attorney who serves a four-year term.

In addition to criminal prosecutions, the State's Attorney Office enforces child support orders, prosecutes serious traffic and other violations of state law, conducts juvenile adjudications, reviews arrests for legal sufficiency, and provides information, assistance, and support to crime victims and witnesses.

The State's Attorney Office is also responsible for convening and making presentations to the Grand Jury. The Grand Jury is a body of 23 citizens selected at random three times a year from the lists of registered voters and licensed drivers. Each Grand Jury serves for four months, and is called to determine

if there is enough evidence against persons arrested to sustain a felony charge.

The State's Attorney Office uses a three-pronged approach to crime: prevention, early intervention/treatment, and law enforcement. Examples include talking to youth and adults about the criminal justice system and how to avoid and prevent crime; offering alternatives to incarceration, such as substance abuse treatment programs for non-violent offenders, in order to attack the causes of crime; and incarceration of the most violent offenders.

#### OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

201 St. Paul Place  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-333-4900

The Office of the Public Defender was created by state law in 1971 in response to a series of decisions of the United State Supreme Court which established that under the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, "no person may be imprisoned for any offense, whether classified as petty, misdemeanor, or felony, unless he was represented by counsel at his trial."

Before those decisions were handed down by the Supreme Court, only defendants in serious and complex cases had the right to counsel, and indigent defendants in those cases relied primarily on volunteer private attorneys to represent them. Since 1971, Maryland and other states have established statewide public defender offices that provide attorneys for all indigent defendants in criminal cases involving a felony or misdemeanor.

Legal representation provided by the Office of the Public De-

fender includes necessary investigative and support services. If expert witnesses are needed, they are hired and paid for by the Public Defender. In addition, the office includes the following divisions:

- The Appellate Division handles all public defender appeals in the Maryland appellate courts and the U.S. Supreme Court.
- The Capital Defense Division is responsible for implementing the right to counsel in death penalty cases.
- The Collateral Review Division represents indigent inmates in parole revocations, habeas corpus writs, and other post-conviction proceedings where there is a right to counsel.
- The Involuntary Institutionalization Division represents patients in mental health facilities in civil commitments and in other proceedings, where there is a constitutional right to counsel.
- The Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) Division provides attorneys in CINA cases and in Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) cases.
- The Juvenile Court Division provides representation to persons appearing before the court charged with delinquent acts.

To provide local service, Maryland is divided into twelve public defender districts, conforming to the boundaries of the state district courts. Applicants for service are interviewed by an intake specialist and must provide information about income and assets. Guidelines to determine indigency are provided in the Code of Maryland Regulations.

If there is an ethical conflict for the office to represent a person, such as in cases with multiple co-defendants, a private attorney will be selected to represent the client.

#### LEGAL AID BUREAU

500 E. Lexington Street  
Baltimore MD 21202  
410-951-7777

The Legal Aid Bureau, Inc. is a private, nonprofit law firm with 13 offices across the state that provide free legal services to low-income persons in Baltimore City and Maryland's 23 counties. Services include family/domestic, housing, income maintenance (public benefits), consumer/finance, and representation of children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings. Vulnerable populations such as senior citizens, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and residents in nursing homes and assisted living dwellings, receive specialized representation.

Legal Aid represents persons involved in civil cases only, not criminal cases.

#### JAILS

Jails are locally operated facilities that confine persons after they have been arrested and before they have been formally charged with a crime. Jails also house individuals charged with a crime who cannot afford bail or were denied approval to be released on bail. For these persons, jail is a place of confinement, not a place of punishment, since they have not been found guilty of a crime. Jails often house other individuals who have been tried and convicted of violating a local law and sentenced to a year or less of imprisonment.

In Baltimore City, because of the very large number of arrests, approximately 100,000 each year, the jail is filled with arrestees and individuals who have been charged with a crime and were denied bail or could not pay the cost of bail. As a result, the jail is overcrowded, and some individuals sentenced to less than one year may be sent to serve their sentence in a state prison.

In 1991 the state of Maryland took over responsibility for the Baltimore City Jail and renamed it the Baltimore City Detention Center (BCDC). The BCDC is managed by the state Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and is located at 401 E. Eager Street.

#### PRISONS

Prisons are state or federal facilities where individuals convicted of violating state or federal laws are sent to serve their sentence. Maryland operates 21 correctional institutions (state prisons) located across the state, with a total inmate population of about 22,000. The state prisons have three levels of security: minimum, medium, and maximum. There are separate facilities for women, men, juveniles, and the mentally ill.

Maryland has one federal prison, the Federal Correctional Institution located in Cumberland in Allegany County. It has an inmate population of approximately 1,500, including 200 held at the nearby Federal Prison Camp. The inmates in these facilities have been convicted of violating federal laws.

## Civic Participation

The participation of residents in their community is an important part of life in a democracy. Baltimore provides a variety of ways to be active.

For many, involvement begins on the neighborhood level, with the more than 500 neighborhood associations in the city. These associations work to improve the well being of their neighborhoods, addressing issues such as public safety, zoning, schools, recreation facilities, environmental quality, and traffic. Most members of the City Council began their political involvement by being active in their local community. Information about city neighborhoods and neighborhood associations can be obtained from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods at 410-396-4735.

Another opportunity for residents to participate and contribute to good city government is by serving on one of the boards and commissions that support and oversee city agencies and perform other responsibilities requested by the mayor. For a representative list of boards and commissions see page 11 of this Guide. For information about boards and commissions, call the Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office, 410-545-7987.

## Voting

### BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

417 E. Fayette Street, First Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-5550.

Perhaps the most important action a citizen can take to participate in government is to vote in elections. The Baltimore City Board of Elections administers elections and conducts voter registration in Baltimore.

To vote, citizens must register. U.S. citizens who reside in Baltimore, who will be 18 years old by the date of the next general election, and who are not disqualified by a criminal record or under guardianship for mental disability are eligible to register to vote. For information on how to register and for other election information, including the location of polling places, call the Board of Elections at 410-396-5550, or visit the website at: <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/elections>.

When registering to vote, citizens may choose to affiliate with a political party or may register as an independent. Only the Republican and Democratic political parties presently hold "primary" elections to choose candidates who will represent their party in the general election. Any citizen who affiliates with another political party or who registers as an independent without a party affiliation will not be able to vote in the Democratic or Republican primaries. A list of political parties recognized in Maryland can be obtained from the State Board of Elections by calling 410-269-2840 or viewing the website at [http://www.elections.state.md.us/citizens/md\\_parties.html](http://www.elections.state.md.us/citizens/md_parties.html). Party affiliation may be changed up to

twelve weeks before an election by writing to the Board of Election Supervisors.

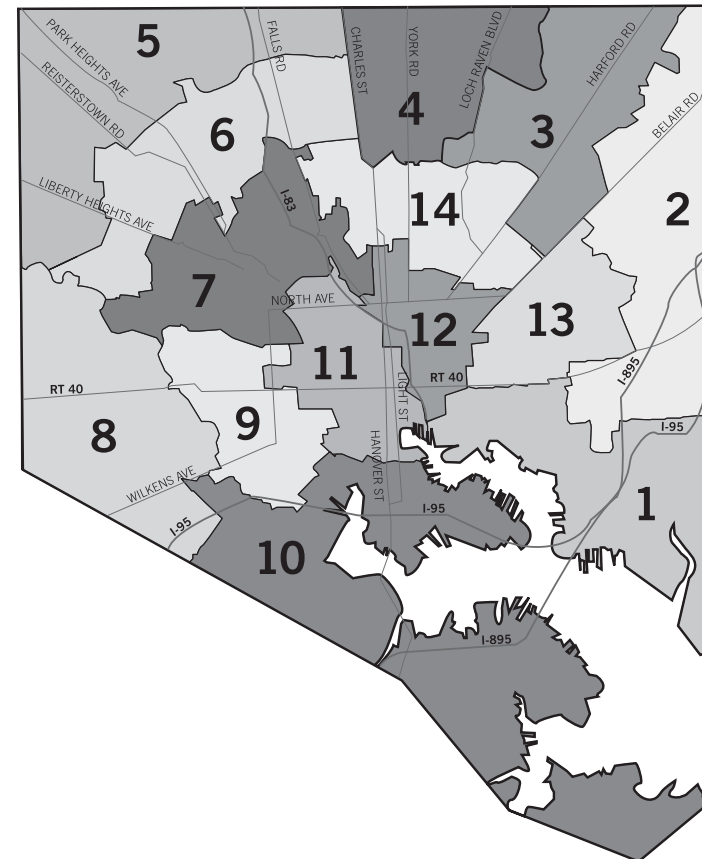
Registered voters will receive by mail a voter registration card, which shows the precinct number and the location of the polling place for that precinct. Voters must always vote in their designated polling place. It is the responsibility of the voter to notify the election board within 30 days of a change of name or address. A new voter's card will then be issued.

As of 2006, any person eligible to vote in the state of Maryland may elect to vote by absentee ballot. To vote by absentee ballot you must first request and return an absentee ballot application. Voters can call the Board of Elections at 410-396-5574 to request an application or they can download an application from the website. The request for an application can be made well in advance of an election but must be made no later than seven days before the election.

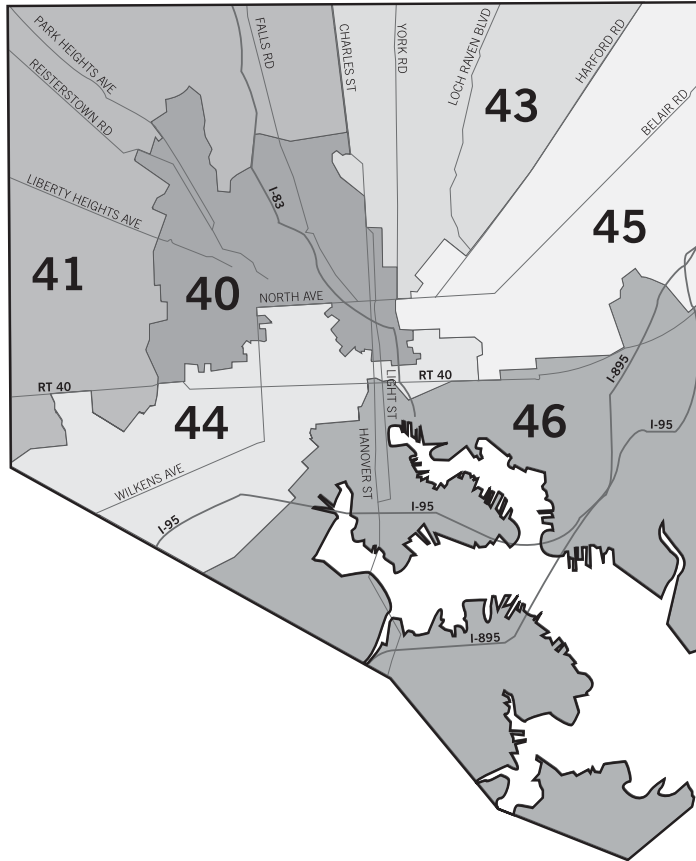
City elected officials include the mayor, president of the City Council, comptroller, state's attorney, sheriff, and City Council members (by district). Elections for these city offices occur every four years in the year preceeding each U.S. presidential election.

For the purposes of elections, the city is divided into various districts, with different boundaries for city councilmanic, state legislative, and federal congressional elections. Maps of the various districts are included in this guide. Information about voting districts can be obtained from the Board of Elections by calling 410-396-5550 or from the League of Women Voters of Baltimore City at 410-377-7738.

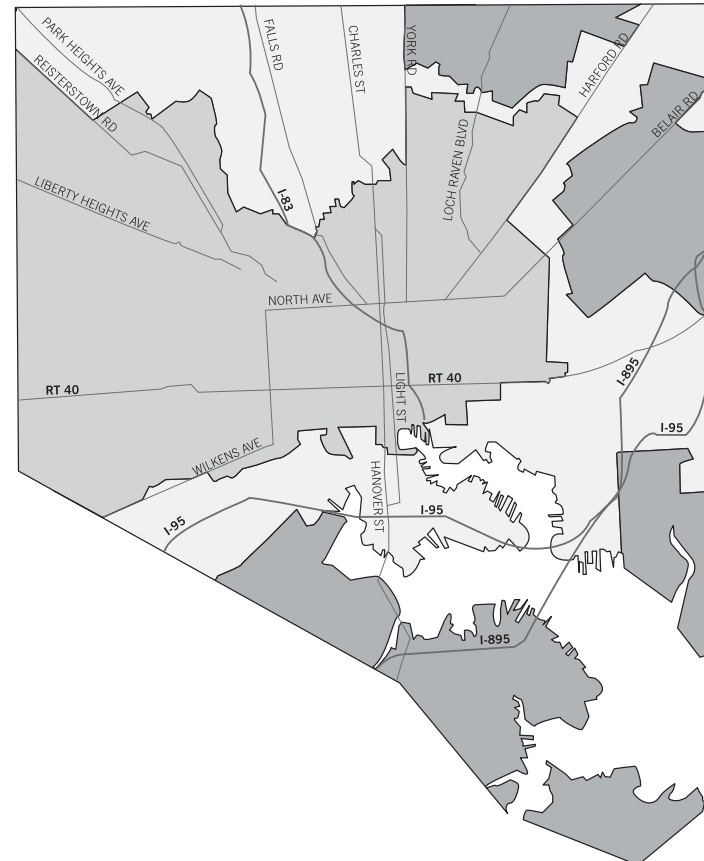
## City Council Districts






## Maryland General Assembly Districts



## U.S. Congressional Districts



-  3RD DISTRICT
-  7TH DISTRICT
-  2ND DISTRICT

# Financing Local Government

## Department Of Finance

469 City Hall  
100 North Holliday Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-4940  
<http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/finance/>

The Department of Finance is responsible for safeguarding the fiscal integrity of the city through the development and implementation of sound financial policies and practices.

*The department has eight major functions:*

- Billing and collecting all funds owed to the city
- Investing and managing the city's surplus cash and funds held in trust
- Allocating available funds and monitoring city expenditures through the budget process
- Disbursing funds for services and goods rendered to the city
- Accounting for and reporting of all funds
- Debt management, including policy development and issuing and servicing city bonds
- Advising city agencies on risk management issues and, in certain cases, obtaining and monitoring insurance policies

- Procuring supplies, services, and equipment for most city agencies, and providing printing and graphics

*The department has the following four bureaus:*

### BUREAU OF THE BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

The Bureau of the Budget and Management Research develops the city's annual operating budget and recommends annual capital expenditures to the director of finance. It prepares fiscal notes for all local legislation, and provides policy and fiscal research and analysis on a variety of administrative, departmental, and citywide issues. The bureau provides oversight of all budget expenditures. The Government Finance Officers Association, a professional association of state/provincial and local finance officers in the United States and Canada, has awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation to the City of Baltimore for its annual budget for each year since fiscal year 1987. This is the highest recognition for governmental budgeting. Budget publications are available for reference at the Enoch Pratt Free Library and the Department of Legislative Reference in City Hall.

### BUREAU OF PURCHASES

The primary responsibility of the Bureau of Purchases is to ensure that city agencies and quasi-government agencies acquire the needed material, equipment, and services at the right time and at the desired price, quality, and quantity.

### BUREAU OF ACCOUNTING AND PAYROLL

The Bureau of Accounting and Payroll manages all accounting and payroll operations for the city. Bureau staff prepare the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), monthly financial reports, and payroll reporting for over 40,000 city employees and retirees.

**BUREAU OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

The Bureau of Treasury Management is composed of the Treasury and Collections Divisions. The Treasury Division manages the city's investment portfolio, issues bonds, evaluates loan requests, and has responsibility for day-to-day cash management. The Collection Division collects all taxes, fees, fines, penalties, and other moneys owed to the city.

# Education

## Baltimore City Public School System

200 E. North Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21202

410-396-8700

<http://www.bcps.k12.md.us/>

The mission of the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS), in concert with students, their families, and the broader community, is to prepare students to be responsible citizens and give them the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to make informed decisions that lead to meaningful and productive lives. To this end, improving student achievement and supporting high quality instruction are the two overarching goals of the school system.

As a large urban education system, BCPSS consist of a variety of schools and centers, including the following:

- Elementary: pre-K through grade 5
- Elementary/middle: pre-K – grade 8
- Middle schools: generally grades 6 – 8
- High Schools: grades 9-12

As part of the High School Reform Initiative, BCPSS is moving to a citywide choice system that eliminates zones for schools and allows students to choose among high schools that have academic and technical entrance criteria

and schools that are theme-based and without entrance criteria. In addition, new innovative and restructured schools of less than 600 students are replacing the large neighborhood high schools. We also have schools for special education students and alternative centers for students with special circumstances who have not been successful in more traditional high schools.

- Charter: public schools with substantial independence to hire staff and determine curriculum

In the 2005-2006 school year, the system's 184 schools enrolled approximately 86,000 students in grades K-12 and employed about 4,700 teachers. Total revenues for Fiscal Year 2006 were just over \$1 billion. The chief sources of funds were the federal government (13%), Baltimore City (20%), and state government (66%).

A major reorganization of the city school system took place in 1997, following approval of a consent decree by the Baltimore City Circuit Court and legislation enacted by the General Assembly establishing the Baltimore City-State Partnership. The partnership was created to improve the system through state oversight, an additional state contribution of \$254 million over 5 years (1997 – 2002), and \$20 million for renovation and construction of school facilities. The school system was made answerable to a new Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City appointed jointly by the mayor and the governor. The board has ten members, including one non-voting student member. It appoints the chief executive officer, chief academic officer, and chief financial officer, and is charged with creating a master plan to improve the management of the schools and the performance of students. Board meetings are open to the public.

The school system requires each public school to develop a Home-School-Parent Compact that identifies the responsibilities of school staff, parents, families, and students to ensure the academic achievement of all students.

Priorities of the school system are to initiate and expand strategies to improve the quality of instruction and student achievement, early childhood development, expansion of pre-K- grade 8, and continued reform at elementary, middle, and high school levels.

The school system encourages parent and community involvement in the education of the children. For more information about schools and the education system, and for opportunities to become involved, contact the following parent/community groups:

#### **PARENT AND COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (PCAB)**

The Parent and Community Advisory Board (PCAB) is a 14-member board mandated by state law. It functions as a pipeline of information between parents and community on one hand and the school board, the CEO, and school administrators on the other hand. Members of the PCAB serve terms of two years and are selected to represent specific constituencies, with a majority of the members being parents of children attending Baltimore City public schools. Tel. 410-396-3138.

#### **THE PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA) OF EACH SCHOOL AND THE BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL OF PTAs**

The school system encourages the creation of an organized parent group, a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), at each school. Each PTA should have at least 10 active members,

including one representative of the special education population and one representative of the largest Limited English Proficient (LEP) population in schools where LEP populations exist. The Baltimore City Council of PTAs represents all the PTAs.

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS TEAMS (SITs)

The school system requires each school to have a School Improvement Team (SIT) that develops and monitors a school improvement plan. SIT members are elected and must represent specific constituencies such as the teachers, parents, community members, students, and the principal.

#### BALTIMORE EDUCATION NETWORK (BEN)

Baltimore Education Network (BEN) is an independent non-profit organization of parents of school children and other community residents concerned about the quality of public education and other school issues. BEN convenes public meetings and workshops on education issues, provides leadership training for parents and students, and advocates on relevant issues. See [www.baltdnet.org](http://www.baltdnet.org).

## Baltimore City Community College

410-462-8000 (information)

410-462-8300 (admissions)

[www.bccc.edu](http://www.bccc.edu)

#### MAIN CAMPUSES

##### Harbor Campus

600 East Lombard Street

Baltimore, MD 21202

##### Business and Continuing Education Center

710 East Lombard Street

Baltimore, MD 21202

##### Liberty Campus

2901 Liberty Heights Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21215

#### OFF-CAMPUS SITE

##### Northwest – Reisterstown Plaza Center

6764A Reisterstown Road

Baltimore, MD 21215

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC), established in 1947, is a state sponsored, comprehensive, two-year degree granting institution of higher education. It is the largest provider of post-secondary education in Baltimore, serving more than 25,000 credit and non-credit students each year.

BCCC is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, meets the standards set by the

Maryland Higher Education Commission, and is authorized to grant the associate degrees, including associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of applied science degrees.

#### DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, NONCREDIT PROGRAMS, AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) offers both associate degree and certificate programs, with special emphasis in health, human services, and business and information technology. It also offers courses in arts and sciences and general studies.

The Business and Continuing Education Center (BCEC) offers noncredit programs in basic adult literacy, General Education Development (GED) and citizenship test preparation, and English as a Second Language training. The BCEC also contracts with businesses, health-care providers, and government agencies to provide credit and noncredit customized training in health care, childcare, information technology, real estate, and business.

BCCC offers more than 60 on-line courses, with approximately 1,500 enrolled students. BCCC was awarded top honors by the Maryland Distance Learning Association for its online Law Enforcement Program and its Food Service Management Program.

BCCC has an open admissions policy. All high school graduates and holders of high school equivalency diplomas or certificates are eligible for admission. Adults not holding a high school diploma or its equivalency are eligible for degree and certificate programs after successfully completing 15 college-level credits.

#### FINANCIAL AID

The Financial Aid Office helps students and their families meet the financial challenges of attending college. Student financial assistance includes grants, scholarships, loans, and employment opportunities designed to help students meet education-related expenses. Aid is usually provided by private foundations, federal and state governments, and by the college. BCCC participates in most major federal and state financial aid programs. The BCCC *Scholarship Matrix* publication lists various scholarships along with application criteria and deadlines. For further information about financial aid, call 410-462-8500 or see [www.bccc.edu](http://www.bccc.edu). For information about specific scholarships, call 410-986-5450.

### Enoch Pratt Free Library

400 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
410-396-5430  
[www.epfl.net](http://www.epfl.net)

In 1884, Enoch Pratt, a wealthy New England businessman who made his fortune in Baltimore, made a study of the city's needs and decided to make a substantial gift to the community. He offered the mayor and City Council enough money to build a central library with branches in the four quarters of the city. His gift required that the libraries would be open to all citizens without regard to race or creed. Mr. Pratt gave the funds to the city with the condition that the library management would be entrusted to a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees, which is responsible for the control and management of the library, appoints a Board of Directors to carry out the management and affairs of the library. The trustees are lifetime members, and the members of the Board of Directors serve three-year terms. A majority of the directors must also be trustees. The Board of Trustees appoints the library's executive director, with the approval of the mayor.

The central library on Cathedral Street, the 22 branches located throughout the city, and traveling bookmobiles provide books, recordings, movies, information, internet access, and a variety of special programs for young children, youth, adults, and seniors. In 1971 the central library was designated as the State Library Resource Center to work with regional, local public, school, and academic libraries in sharing materials and information state-wide.

The Enoch Pratt Free Library offers extensive electronic resources through its web site ([www.epfl.net](http://www.epfl.net)) and through Sailor, the Maryland Public Information Network ([www.sailor.lib.md.us](http://www.sailor.lib.md.us)).

# Public Safety

## Police Department

601 E. Fayette Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-2525

[www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/police](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/police)

**EMERGENCY CALLS: 911**

**NON-EMERGENCY CALLS: 311**

The Baltimore City Police Department (BCPD) is the 13<sup>th</sup> largest police department in the country. In 2005 there were over 3,200 officers operating in nine district station houses located throughout the city. The department's mission is to protect and preserve life and property, understand and serve the needs of the city's neighborhoods, and to improve the quality of life by maintaining order, recognizing and resolving community problems, and apprehending criminals. In recent years, a primary focus of BCPD has been on reducing violent crime. Each district has a district commander and an officer in charge of Community Affairs, who holds monthly meetings with residents to address community concerns.

*Services are provided through four operational divisions:*

### **PATROL DIVISION**

The Patrol Division includes the uniformed officers seen on the streets. These officers operate out of the nine district station houses. Special units include the School Police, the Public Housing Section and Housing Enforcement, and Adult and Juvenile Booking.

**DETECTIVE DIVISION**

The Detective Division conducts special investigations by type of activity or crime, such as homicide, arson, escape and apprehension, sex offenses, and child abuse. This division houses the central police laboratory, which has its own DNA lab.

**ORGANIZED CRIME DIVISION**

The Organized Crime Division investigates and monitors organized drug activity and arrests those involved. In addition, this division investigates issues related to gangs, liquor board violations, illegal handguns, gambling, prostitution, narcotics, any violent crime that has a narcotics connection, and computer crimes.

**HOMELAND SECURITY DIVISION**

The Homeland Security Division is comprised of the Special Operations Section and the Criminal Intelligence Section. The Special Operations Section consists of several units including the Emergency Services Unit, K-9 Unit, Inner Harbor Unit, Quick Response Team, Aviation Unit, Marine Unit, and Traffic Unit. Special Operations also supports the daily operations of the police department. The Criminal Intelligence Section is responsible for supplying the Police Commissioner and Command with accurate, timely intelligence on a wide range of issues including Homeland Security and terrorism.

To better share information throughout the criminal justice system and target resources on preventing violent crime and monitoring known violent offenders, the BCPD created the "War Room", or Violent Offender Comprehensive Case Management, which brings together the resources of the BCPD, Maryland Parole and Probation, Pre-Trial Services, Central Booking and Intake Services, and the Maryland Department

of Juvenile Justice. This coordination enables the police and others to quickly know a suspect's criminal history and parole or probation status and to communicate this information to the court commissioners who set bail. In addition, parole and probation agents are located in each police district station house to improve coordination.

For quality of life offences such as littering, dumping, loitering, and ticket scalping, the BCPD issues "civil citations," which are non-criminal citations similar to traffic tickets. Civil citations are not part of a criminal record and normally do not require the resources of the police, courts or State's Attorney's Office.

Finally, the BCPD operates the Police Athletic League (PAL), which was established in 1995 to provide after-school and summer activities for youth ages 7 – 17. PAL's four major program components are academic enrichment, character development, arts and culture, and physical activities. Youth can participate in supervised sports leagues, cooking classes, computer classes, special interest clubs, gardening, field trips, and community service projects and can receive help from mentors and tutors. Each of the nine police districts has two PAL centers. A team of police officers, community service officers, and community volunteers staffs each PAL center.

*Location and phone numbers for the nine police districts:*

**Central District**

500 E. Baltimore Street 21202  
410-396-2411

**Southeastern District**

5710 Eastern Avenue 21224  
410-396-2422

**Eastern District**

1620 Edison Highway 21213  
410-396-2433

**Northeastern District**

1900 Argonne Drive 21218  
410-396-2444

**Northern District**

2201 W. Coldspring Lane 21215  
410-396-2455

**Northwestern District**

5271 Reisterstown Road 21215  
410-396-2466

**Western District**

1034 N. Mount Street 21217  
410-396-2477

**Southwestern District**

424 Font Hill Avenue 21223  
410-396-2488

**Southern District**

10 Cherry Hill Road 21225  
410-396-2499

## Fire Department

414 N. Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-5684  
[www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/fire](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/fire)

The mission of the Fire Department is to protect lives, property, and the environment by preventing and suppressing fires and providing rescue and emergency medical services. The Chief of the Fire Department, who is appointed by the mayor and receives advice and guidance from the Board of Fire Commissioners, heads the department.

The department has 39 fire stations located throughout the city. Emergency medical ambulances are located in 17 of these stations. Specialized units, such as those handling hazardous materials, are located in the larger fire stations.

The Fire Communications Bureau and the Office of the Fire Marshal provide additional services described below.

### FIRE COMMUNICATIONS BUREAU

The Fire Communications Bureau houses the city's Consolidated Communications Center. This bureau began in 1858 with 30 fire alarm boxes located on street corners. Today, it provides high-tech emergency information systems for the police, fire, and public works departments.

### OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

The Office of the Fire Marshal is organized around three issues—arson, fire prevention, and safety and health—listed below.

**Joint Agency Arson Task Force**

The Joint Agency Arson Task Force is composed of relevant city agencies with a focus on ending arson. Within its jurisdiction are:

- The Fire Investigation Bureau
- Community Services, which does outreach
- The Juvenile Fire Setters Program
- The Public Education Program

**Fire Prevention Bureau**

The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for:

- Inspections and code enforcement
- Public education programs
- Reviewing renovation and architectural plans for compliance with the city's Life Safety Code
- Investigating citizen complaints

**Safety and Health Office**

- Monitors fire hydrants
- Promotes fire fighter safety and reviews internal rules and regulations
- Investigates motor vehicle accidents involving fire trucks and other Fire Department vehicles

**Animal Care and Control**

301 Stockholm Street  
Baltimore, MD 21230  
410-396-4688

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

Animal drop-off: 7 a.m. – 10 p.m., 7 days a week

**Office hours:**

Tuesday – Friday: 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Saturday: Noon – 4 p.m.

Sunday and Monday: closed

*Animal enforcement officers are on the street 24 hours every day.*

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

- To obtain a pet license 410-396-4688
- To file an animal complaint, including animal bites 311
- To request pickup of dead animals 311
- Unwanted animals 311
- To obtain assistance with rodent problems 311

The Bureau of Animal Control enforces the animal control and protection provisions of the Baltimore City Health Code. Animal enforcement officers are authorized to issue civil citations to anyone who fails to comply with the code. Penalties range from \$25 to \$1,000.

The bureau's responsibilities include ensuring that all pets are licensed and properly vaccinated; apprehending dangerous and vicious animals; saving hurt and endangered animals; and preventing the spread of diseases that can be transmitted from other animals to humans.

**Requirements under the City Code:**

- The owner or keeper of any dog or cat must obtain and annually renew a license for that dog or cat.
- No person may own three or more dogs or cats without a multi-pet permit.
- No person may own or keep a dog or cat over four months old without a current rabies vaccination certificate.
- Any person who has knowledge of any animal susceptible to rabies that has bitten or scratched any human must immediately call 311 and must also call 911 and report it to the Baltimore City Police Department.
- When walked, all dogs must be on a leash and the owner or keeper must carry a device to immediately remove all feces from public and private property.
- Every owner or keeper of an animal must provide the animal with:
  - Humane care and treatment
  - Sufficient and wholesome food and water
  - Proper shelter and protection from the weather
  - Sufficient exercise space
  - Veterinary care when needed

**BALTIMORE ANIMAL RESCUE AND CARE SHELTER, INC. (BARCS)**

301 Stockholm Street  
 Baltimore, MD 21230  
 410-396-4695

[www.baltimoreanimalshelter.org](http://www.baltimoreanimalshelter.org)

*BARCS' cat and dog orphans are also available at [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com)*

**OFFICE AND ADOPTION HOURS OF OPERATION**

Tuesday – Friday: 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Saturday: Noon – 4 p.m.

Sunday and Monday: closed

In February 2005 the city's animal shelter became an independent nonprofit agency. Its responsibilities include: rescuing animals; finding homes for neglected and abandoned animals; promoting the health and welfare of animals through education, advocacy, and pet population control; and working cooperatively with other animal advocacy groups, shelters, and community organizations to improve the lives of animals.

**ADOPTION**

Anyone interested in adopting a cat or dog may visit the shelter during its business hours to look at the available pets. Once an animal is chosen, the interested person will be notified of the time and date of the mandatory adoption class. Classes are held frequently and last about one hour. During the class the adopter is issued a city license (city residents only), a rabies certificate, and an adoption package. If the animal has been spayed/neutered, it may leave that day. Otherwise, the new owner must wait until after the surgery has been performed.

**Adoption fees:**

	Male	Female
Cats	\$37	\$50
Dogs	\$50	\$62

The fees include distemper, rabies, and bordatella (for dogs) vaccines, de-worming, and spaying/neutering.

# Health and Social Services

## Health Department

210 Guilford Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21202

410-396-4398

[www.baltimorecity.gov/government/health](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/health)

The Health Department is responsible for the health and well being of city residents. It provides direct services and health education including:

- Child health
- Community health nursing
- Environmental health
- Geriatric health
- Adult reproductive health services
- Mental health
- Addiction services
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Health care access
- Substance abuse treatment and counseling

The department was created in 1793 when the General Assembly provided for a quarantine physician for the port. In 1898 the City Charter placed the department under the Department of Public Safety. It became an independent agency in 1946. The commissioner of health is head of the department and is appointed by the mayor.

Since 1946, the services offered by the department have greatly expanded in order to meet the changing needs of city residents and to respond to the challenges of AIDS, lead paint poisoning, adolescent pregnancy, and drug abuse.

The department has two health centers that house specific clinics such as adolescent health, family planning, hearing, dentistry, tuberculosis, and venereal diseases:

### Druid Family Health Center

1515 W. North Avenue

410-396-4398

### Eastern Health District Center

620 N. Caroline Street

410-396-4398

*Below is a list of the major services offered by the department:*

AIDS Hotline	410-945-2437
Air Pollution	410-396-4428
Alcoholism	410-637-1900
Animal Services	410-396-4688
Drug Abuse Services	410-637-1900
Food Control	410-396-4424
Geriatric Health	410-396-4494
Immunizations	410-396-4454

Infants and Toddlers	410-396-1666
Lead Poisoning Prevention	443-484-2460
School Health Services	410-396-3185
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	410-396-4448
Tuberculosis Information	410-396-4444
Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)	410-396-9427
Other information	410-396-4398

## Department Of Social Services

1510 Guilford Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
443-423-6300  
[www.dhr.state.md.us/baltocity.htm](http://www.dhr.state.md.us/baltocity.htm)

The Baltimore City Department of Social Services (BCDSS) delivers services to children, families, and vulnerable adults through the Adult, Family, and Children's Services Bureau and the Family Investment Bureau.

### ADULT, FAMILY, AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUREAU

The Adult, Family, and Children's Services Bureau provides supportive services to adults and families to assist them in overcoming barriers to independence. The bureau also assists in crisis situations through counseling, financial assistance and identifying resources for those in need.

*Contact information for specific services:*

Adoptions/ Foster Care Services	410-685-8231
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Adult Services	
<i>Includes Adult Protective Services, Social Services to Adults, and Project HOME, which provides group homes for disabled adults</i>	
	410-361-5000
Day Care Services	443-423-5000
Intake Assessment	
<i>Includes Child Protective Services 24 hour number to report child abuse and neglect</i>	
	410-361-2235
Information and Referral Services	443-423-6300
TDD (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf)	443-423-6502

*For other family related services see the Community Action Centers listed on page 63.*

### FAMILY INVESTMENT BUREAU

The Family Investment Bureau is responsible for programs that provide families and individuals with temporary and emergency financial assistance, food stamps, and medical assistance. The bureau assists families and individuals to become economically independent by helping them develop marketable work skills and resolve barriers to employment. The location and telephone number of centers serving Baltimore City are below.

Clifton-Johnson Square Center	
2000 N. Broadway 21213	443-423-6200
Dunbar-Orangeville Center	
2919 E. Biddle Street 21213	443-423-5200
Harbor View Center	
18 Reedbird Avenue 21225	443-423-4700

<b>Harford–North Center</b>		
2000 N. Broadway 21213		443-423-6400
<b>Hilton Heights Center</b>		
500 N. Hilton Street 21229		410-361-5313, ext. 300
<b>Northwest Center</b>		
5818 Reisterstown Road 21215		410-361-6400, ext. 400
<b>Southwest Center</b>		
1223 W. Pratt Street 21223		443-423-7800
<b>Penn–North Center</b>		
2500 Pennsylvania Avenue 21217		443-423-7600
<b>Centralized Medical Assistance Unit Institutional Care</b>		
2000 N. Broadway 21213		443-423-6161
<b>Homeless Emergency Environmental Services Unit</b>		
2000 N. Broadway 21213		443-423-6000
<b>Purchase of Care/Daycare</b>		
3031 E. Biddle Street 21213		443-423-5000

# Public Works

## Department Of Public Works

600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-5198  
[www.baltimorecity.gov/government/dpw](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/dpw)

The Department of Public Works (DPW) provides a variety of municipal services, including:

- Collecting and disposing of solid waste
- Recycling paper, plastic, glass, and metal cans
- Cleaning streets, alleys, and the harbor
- Supplying high quality drinking water
- Treating wastewater
- Managing public buildings
- Servicing the fleet of city-owned vehicles and equipment
- Providing engineering, mapping, contract administration, property identification and maps, permits and plans review, and construction inspection

*The three bureaus of the department of public works are described below.*

#### **BUREAU OF WATER AND WASTEWATER**

410-396-3500

[water@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:water@baltimorecity.gov)

The Bureau of Water and Wastewater is responsible for operating and maintaining the water supply for the 1.8 million people living in the Baltimore metropolitan region. The bureau oversees three reservoirs and the surrounding city-owned watershed areas (Prettyboy, Loch Raven, and Liberty), provides a minimum of 265 million gallons of clean water a day, operates and maintains three water filtration plants (Montebello I and II, and Ashburton), and maintains 3,400 miles of water mains in the city and Baltimore County.

The bureau collects and treats 250 million gallons of wastewater daily through its 3,100 miles of sanitary sewers, eight major pumping stations, and two wastewater treatment plants (Back River and Patapsco). It also maintains 1,000 miles of storm drains, 33,000 storm inlets, and four storm-water pumping stations.

#### **BUREAU OF GENERAL SERVICES**

410-396-3704

[generalservices@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:generalservices@baltimorecity.gov)

The Bureau of General Services provides maintenance and repair services for more than 200 city-owned buildings operated by the Fire, Police, Health, and Recreation and Parks departments and the Enoch Pratt Free Library. The bureau maintains the city's vehicles and motorized equipment and operates the Central Repair

Facility, nine substations, and twenty-four refueling facilities. The bureau maintains and provides property location and property ownership information and maps; issues rights-of-way permits, developer agreements, and minor privilege permits; reviews and approves stormwater management plans; and monitors compliance with sediment and erosion control requirements.

#### **BUREAU OF SOLID WASTE**

410-395-5134

[solidwaste@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:solidwaste@baltimorecity.gov)

The Bureau of Solid Waste provides trash and recycling services and is responsible for cleaning the public streets and alleys. Services include:

- Twice-weekly trash collection from 233,000 city households; disposing of 750 tons daily
- Curbside/alley recycling; collecting 1,300 tons of mixed paper and 350 tons of glass, plastics, and cans each month
- Monthly collection and disposal of bulk waste
- Disposing of an additional 1,300 tons of debris received daily at the Quarantine Road Sanitary Landfill and the Northwest Transfer Station
- Collecting 6.5 tons of debris weekly from the harbor
- Maintaining 3,600 corner trash baskets throughout the city
- Providing special recycling programs for building materials, used motor oil and antifreeze, household hazardous waste, leaves, and Christmas trees
- Supporting more than 1,000 community cleanups annually

The Solid Waste Bureau provides residents with five locations around the city for free disposal of waste materials:

- Quarantine Road Sanitary Landfill  
6100 Quarantine Road
- Northwest Transfer Station  
5030 Reisterstown Road
- Western Sanitation Yard  
701 Reedbird Street
- Eastern Sanitation Yard  
6101 Bowleys Lane
- Northwest Sanitation Yard  
2840 Sisson Street

# Housing and Community Development

## Baltimore Housing

417 East Fayette Street, Suite 1339  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
[www.baltimorehousing.org](http://www.baltimorehousing.org)

In 2002, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City and the Department of Housing and Community Development were restructured into one agency. This collaboration, known as Baltimore Housing, coordinates traditional community services with the city's public housing program. The new structure maintains the financial, legal and programmatic integrity of each agency while unifying their strategic functions.

### HOUSING AUTHORITY OF BALTIMORE CITY

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) was established in 1937 to provide public housing programs and related services for Baltimore's low-income residents. HABC is the fifth largest public housing authority in the country, with more than 1,000 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$200 million. The agency currently serves over 40,000 residents in more than 14,500 units of multi-family housing and 2,796 scattered-site units located throughout the city. HABC's inventory includes 11 family housing develop-

ments and 21 mixed-income high-rises. Baltimore's Housing Choice Voucher program provides an additional 12,000 families with rental housing subsidies each year. HABC is entirely federally funded.

#### **BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) was created in 1968 to combine community development efforts and enforcement of the city's building and housing codes. With over 500 employees, HCD strives to strengthen city neighborhoods by attracting investors, developers, and homebuyers. Through the Community Development Block Grant Program, HOME Investment Partnership, city bond funds, and other financing mechanisms, the department helps to finance and guide development projects designed to meet housing and neighborhood needs. HCD issues building permits, monitors construction activity, and enforces the housing, building and zoning codes. The department also provides an array of community services at six Community Action Centers citywide, administers the Head Start program, operates three daycare centers, and administers energy assistance programs for residents in need. Head Start is a pre-school child and family development program that provides comprehensive services to low-income children and their families. Services include early childhood literacy, physical and mental health education, adult literacy, substance abuse treatment, and good parenting. Approximately 3,300 young children in the city are enrolled.

*The addresses and telephone numbers of the Community Action Centers are listed below.*

All centers are open Monday – Friday, 8:30a.m. to 4:30p.m.

#### **Southeast Community Action Center**

3411 Bank Street, 21224 410-545-6512

#### **Western Community Action Center**

1133 Pennsylvania Avenue, 21201 410-396-0893

#### **Eastern Community Action Center**

1400 Orleans Street, 21231 410-396-7744  
(Dunbar High School)

#### **Northwest Community Action Center**

3939 Reisterstown Road, 21215 410-396-9468

#### **Northeast Community Action Center**

5225 York Road, 21212 410-396-6084

#### **Southern Community Action Center**

606 Cherry Hill Road, 21225 410-545-0900

# Planning

## Department of Planning

417 East Fayette Street, 8<sup>th</sup> floor

Baltimore, MD 21202

410-396-7526

[www.baltimorecity.gov/government/planning](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/planning)

The Department of Planning, in collaboration with the Planning Commission, guides planning and development for the city. It has responsibilities for historical and architectural preservation, land use (zoning), building design, and developing the city's capital budget. The Department of Planning is headed by the Director of Planning and has four divisions:

- Land Use and Urban Design
- Comprehensive Planning
- Research and Strategic Planning
- Historical and Architectural Preservation

The department staff provide research, analysis and policy recommendations to the Planning Commission and the Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation. The Director of Planning works closely with the Mayor's Office, the city's development agencies, and with regional, state, and federal officials to insure coordination, provide policy analysis, and create development plans and a vision of the city's future. Planning staff also is a liaison between community groups and city government, and provides resources and contacts for neighborhood groups and organi-

zations interested in neighborhood planning and revitalization. A few of these resources are listed below.

**Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP):** The Department of Planning periodically solicits proposals from neighborhood groups interested in developing long-range revitalization plans. Neighborhood plans provide a framework for focusing city and private resources around priorities. Currently there are seven Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans and twelve Small Area Plans under development. For more information about individual projects contact the Comprehensive Planning Division, at 410-396-4556.

**Neighborhood Planning Tool Box:** The Neighborhood Planning Tool Box is a list of public and private resources available for communities interested in improving their neighborhood commercial corridors. For more information go to [www.ci.baltimore.md.us/neighborhoods/planning](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/neighborhoods/planning).

**Neighborhood Profiles:** Neighborhood profiles are created from the most recent U.S. census for each Baltimore Neighborhood Statistical Area. The data provide a demographic profile, including changes from the previous census and comparisons with the city as a whole. Maps and data are available at [www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/census](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/planning/census).

A compendium of Baltimore community organizations is available on the department's website.

### PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is a nine-member board composed of the director of public works (or his designee), a member of the city council, the mayor (or his designee), and six citizen members appointed by the mayor for four-year terms. The commission meets regularly throughout the year. Its meetings are open to the public and members of the public may testify on changes in land use. The Planning Commission relies on staff from the Department of Planning to accomplish its responsibilities.

*The Planning Commission's key responsibilities include:*

- Developing a capital budget and a six-year capital improvement plan for consideration by the Board of Estimates. These proposals specify how the city will appropriate money to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- Developing and maintaining a Comprehensive Master Plan. A new Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for release in 2006.
- Preparing and updating smaller area plans for land development in the city.
- Reviewing proposals for the subdivision of land, planned unit developments, and urban renewal plans to ensure conformance with specified standards.
- Reviewing all proposed amendments to the city's Zoning Ordinance and other proposals affecting land use and development, and making recommendations to the City Council.

### COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Baltimore City's Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) works to preserve the city's historic neighborhoods and buildings. Among its goals are preserving historic architecture and monuments, reclaiming deteriorated historic neighborhoods, and recommending buildings and neighborhoods for historic designation. The commission has 11 volunteer commissioners appointed by the mayor, and a professional staff. CHAP's responsibilities are to:

- Promote the culture, character, and economic vitality of Baltimore through the preservation of buildings, structures, sites, and neighborhoods that have aesthetic, historic and architectural value.
- Survey and designate historic districts and landmark structures; review permits and plans for demolition, rehabilitation or alteration of historic structures; administer the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit; support the Baltimore City Heritage Area and Monument Restoration Programs; and manage the Edgar Allen Poe House Museum.

# Zoning

## Office of the Zoning Administrator

417 East Fayette Street – 1<sup>st</sup> floor  
 Baltimore, MD 21202  
 (410) 396-4126

*The Office of the Zoning Administrator performs the following functions:*

- Reviews building plans and applications for construction permits
- Issues use permits and zoning certifications
- Enforces the Zoning Code through violation notices and prosecution
- Maintains the city zoning maps and records
- Provides information about authorized uses of particular properties and permitted uses within each zoning district

## Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals

417 East Fayette Street – 14<sup>th</sup> floor  
 Baltimore, MD 21202  
 (410) 396-4301  
[www.baltimorecity.gov/government/zoning/index.html](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/zoning/index.html)

The Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) consists of five members appointed by the mayor. The BMZA hears and determines the following:

- Appeals from decisions of the zoning administrator
- Applications for a variance
- Applications for a conditional use  
 (Note that some conditional uses require a City Council ordinance rather than approval of the BMZA.)

In addition to the zoning cases listed above, the BMZA hears several other types of cases, including appeals from the Department of Finance regarding tax refunds and reductions, and appeals from the Department of Public Works regarding sidewalk repair and alley paving. The BMZA zoning docket is posted on its website.

Before each hearing, the applicant is required to post a notice on the affected property to inform the community about the requested changes. The Planning Department also sends a notice of pending requests to the affected community associations. Residents of the community may give testimony at the hearing regarding the anticipated impact of the requested use.

# Recreation and Parks

## Department of Recreation and Parks

3001 East Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
Tel. 410-396-7900

The mission of the Department of Recreation and Parks is to enrich the quality of life for residents of the city by providing diverse recreational, environmental, cultural, and educational opportunities. The city's parkland and recreation resources and programs play a central role in making Baltimore a desirable place to live, work, and play.

A director and a seven-member board appointed by the mayor head the department. Its three bureaus are Recreation, Parks, and Music, described below.

### BUREAU OF RECREATION

The Bureau of Recreation operates 46 recreation centers that offer activities for youths and adults:

- Youth activities include athletics, Teen Nights, arts and crafts, performing arts, cooking, exercise, martial arts, swimming, computer technology, SAT Prep classes, roller skating, mentoring, field trips, and life skills.

- The Youth and Adult Sports Division Leagues provide athletic opportunities in basketball, baseball, softball, track and field, soccer, ice skating, indoor and outdoor swimming, rowing, skateboarding, disc golf, biking wrestling, and boxing.
- For senior citizens, the bureau offers fitness programs, skill building, weekday programs, and special events.
- The Therapeutic Division for physically and emotionally challenged individuals provides a variety of programs, including sled hockey, bocce, wheelchair softball, the Metro Wheelchair Basketball League, the Miracle Baseball League, theater, summer camp, and social events.

### BUREAU OF PARKS

The Bureau of Parks takes care of more than 5,827 acres of parkland that include 433 separate park properties, 300,000 street trees, the Rawlings Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, the Cylburn Arboretum, bird and wildlife gardens, outdoor sculpture and statuary, and many flower gardens throughout the city. The properties range from a thousand-acre wilderness park to quarter-acre neighborhood playgrounds. They include a country estate, hiking trails in the woods, a boating lake, and plenty of space for families to play and stroll. The Carrie Murray Nature Center in Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, the Cylburn Arboretum, the Rawlings Conservatory, and other facilities offer a variety of nature activities and educational programs.

The parks contain over 200 playgrounds, 22 swimming pools, 2 skating rinks, 220 tennis courts, 15 miles of bike trails, and over 200 baseball diamonds and soccer fields.

**BUREAU OF MUSIC**

Baltimore was the first city in the United States to sponsor a municipal band and a municipal orchestra. The Bureau of Music currently offers summertime concerts throughout the city, with two bands of professional musicians providing programs of semi-classical and popular music. These concerts are open to the public and free of charge.

# Human Resources

## Department Of Human Resources

201 E. Baltimore Street

Baltimore, Maryland

410-396-3860

[www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/personnel/index.html](http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/personnel/index.html)

The Department of Human Resources is the central personnel authority for city government. The City Charter gives it the responsibility to develop and administer the rules, policies, and procedures that govern the civil service system.

The major responsibilities of the Department of Human Resources include maintaining a job classification system, administering open and promotional examinations, certifying applicants for employment, administering and monitoring the eligibility of city employees and retirees for benefits, processing applications for employment benefits including tuition reimbursement, monitoring and verifying payment of unemployment claims, and administering the employee assistance program. The department also provides general management advice and assistance on personnel policies and rules to city agencies.

*The Department has seven divisions:*

- Executive
- Employee Benefits Administration
- Classification and Compensation
- Examinations and Recruitment
- Data Processing Operations
- Training and Development
- Employee Assistance Program

The Department of Human Resources maintains a list of current job openings on its website.

## Quasi-Government Agencies

In Baltimore City, quasi-government agencies are nonprofit entities created by the executive branch of city government for a specific purpose and governed by boards of directors appointed by the mayor and/or city council. Generally they are not subject to the personnel, procurement, or financial regulations governing public agencies. Quasi-government agencies generate funds through fees for services, memberships, sales, gifts, grant, and public money.

### BALTIMORE AREA CONVENTION AND VISITORS ASSOCIATION

100 Light Street, 12<sup>th</sup> floor

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

410-659-7300 or 1-877-225-8466

[www.baltimore.org](http://www.baltimore.org)

The Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association (BACVA) is the agency responsible for marketing Baltimore to planners of conventions and other meetings and to vacation and leisure time visitors. BACVA operates the Baltimore Visitor Center at 401 Light Street on the west side of the Inner Harbor, where visitors and Baltimore residents can learn about the city, purchase tickets to local attractions, reserve hotel rooms, and more.

**BALTIMORE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

36 S. Charles Street, Suite 1600

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-837-9305

[www.baltimoredevelopment.com](http://www.baltimoredevelopment.com)

The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) is a nonprofit organization contracted by the City of Baltimore to promote economic development. It is designed to promote the interests of the business community and serves as a liaison between city agencies and businesses to retain and expand existing businesses, attract new businesses to Baltimore, and promote job creation. The BDC also operates as a developer and facilitates the reuse of publicly owned property for business purposes.

**BALTIMORE OFFICE OF PROMOTION & THE ARTS**

7 E. Redwood Street, Suite 500

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

410-752-8632

[www.bop.org](http://www.bop.org)

The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA) produces festivals, special events, and promotions such as the Baltimore Book Festival, Waterfront Festival, Baltimore Farmers' Market, Thanksgiving and Preakness parades, Artscape, and the New Year's Eve and July Fourth fireworks shows at the Inner Harbor. BOPA supports the artistic community through many special arts and cultural activities and workshops for children and maintains Baltimore's official calendar of events.

**DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP OF BALTIMORE**

217 N. Charles Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-244-1030

[www.godowntownbaltimore.com](http://www.godowntownbaltimore.com)

Downtown Partnership of Baltimore is a nonprofit corporation working with the public and private sectors to make downtown Baltimore an attractive environment for businesses, employees, residents, and visitors. The Partnership's Public Safety Guides check on local businesses, provide safety escorts, and help individuals in a multitude of ways. The Clean Sweep Ambassadors sweep streets and sidewalks, and in 2004 removed 500 tons of trash. These services are funded through a surcharge on commercial properties within the area bordered roughly by Center Street on the north, President Street on the east, Pratt Street on the south, and Green Street on the west.

Other programs of the partnership are privately funded and have led to an increase in housing and retail opportunities, retention of key businesses, solutions to transportation challenges, and increased public and private investment in the area.

**EMPOWER BALTIMORE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**

111 Water Street, Suite 201

Baltimore, Maryland 21202

410-783-4400

[www.ebmc.org](http://www.ebmc.org)

In the 1990s the federal empowerment zone initiative was created to encourage local redevelopment in selected cities by combining federal seed money, business tax credits, and local public and private investment. Empower Baltimore Management

Corporation (EBMC) is the local managing agency for Baltimore. Operating within designated empowerment zone areas, it supports the development of economic opportunities for zone neighborhoods and residents. Its mission is “to facilitate sustained economic opportunities and build communities in ways that provide residents access to and readiness for those opportunities.” Current priority investments are job training for zone residents, homeownership incentives, and community-based initiatives that improve the quality of life in empowerment zone neighborhoods.

#### PARKING AUTHORITY OF BALTIMORE CITY

200 W. Lombard Street, Suite B

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

443-573-2800

[www.baltimorecity.gov/government/parking](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/parking)

The Parking Authority is responsible for developing and implementing a strategic plan that addresses the parking concerns of the residents and businesses of Baltimore. Its goal is to meet the demand for affordable parking for commuters and visitors in the Central Business District and surrounding neighborhoods.

## Accessing City Services

The city provides many resources and services for individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Government agencies often partner with private and quasi-government agencies in order to link residents to a variety of resources.

### One Call Center

In 2002 the city launched the *One Call Center*, a central telephone intake system designed to process all requests for city services. By dialing 311, residents can access a range of services, from scheduling a bulk trash pickup to reporting potholes, water main breaks, or streetlight outages. Customer service representatives send requests through the CitiTrack computer system to the appropriate city agency. Callers are given a tracking number so they can verify follow-up. The One Call Center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The city also operates the online *CitiTrack Service Request System*, which is available at [www.baltimorecity.gov/services](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/services). This computer system provides individual telephone numbers for specific questions and services as well as direct links for information on licensing fees, electronic bill paying, and permits. Residents can use the *CitiTrack Service Request System* as an alternative to calling 311.

City agencies map and monitor reported problems on the city's *Geographic Information System (GIS)*.

For emergency medical, police or fire assistance, callers should dial 911.

## Where To Call

The following list provides phone numbers for city services and agencies. These numbers are also available at [www.baltimorecity.gov/services/](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/services/). If a service or agency is not listed, call 311.

### ANIMAL MATTERS

- To obtain a dog license 410-396-3993
- Municipal Animal Shelter 410-396-4688
- For all other animal matters CALL 311

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

- BrightSTARTS workshop for children 410-396-4641
- To receive health services at Healthy Teens Young Adult Center 410-396-0353
- For a dropout recovery program that includes GED and diploma classes and employment services 410-396-7454
- To become involved in the City Youth Council 410-396-5411
- For summer jobs and career preparation programs for in-school youth 410-396-5627
- For information about arts and cultural activities for children 410-396-4575  
TTY or voice

- Daycare 410-396-7470
- Head Start 410-396-7415
- To receive a Cultural Resource Guide 410-396-4575  
TTY or voice

### COMMUNITY SERVICES

(see also *Community Action Centers on p.63*):

- To apply for grants for community events or projects, call Baltimore Believe in Your Neighborhood Program 410-752-8632
- BrightSTARTS Program 410-396-4641
- Office of Home Energy 410-396-5555
- Weatherization Assistance Program 443-984-1066

### EDUCATION

- Enoch Pratt Free Library 410-396-5430
- To contact the school superintendent 410-396-8803
- The Ripkin Learning Center (literacy program) 410-752-3595
- To find out about adult literacy or pre-employment training programs 410-576-7323
- To receive a Cultural Resource Guide 410-396-4575  
TTY or voice

**EMERGENCIES**

*Call 911 to receive assistance from medical, fire or police personnel for immediate life-threatening situations.*

- To report child abuse/neglect 410-361-2235
- Homeless and seeking temporary shelter 410-361-4677  
24 hour service: 1-800-817-4358
- Gas leak 410-685-0123
- Poison Control Center 410-528-7701
- Public Assistance 410-361-4600
- Sexual Assault Hotline 410-828-6390
- Domestic Violence Hotline 410-889-7884
- Crisis Center East 410-396-4433
- Crisis Center West 410-396-0260
- Food Assistance 410-396-6606
- Weather-related (including food, shelter, fuel, and medical care) 410-545-6333

**EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

- Mayor's Office of Employment Development 410-396-3009
- Minimum Wage 410-396-4835
- Living Wage 410-396-4839
- Prevailing Wage 410-396-4839
- Baltimore Workforce Investment Board 410-396-1910

**HEALTH**

- AIDS – information 410-945-2437
- For information on drug treatment 410-637-1900
- To obtain lead paint inspection 410-396-8576
- To find out where and when free immunizations for children are given 410-396-4454
- To receive referral for mental health problems 410-837-2647
- For medical information on lead poisoning 410-396-8595
- For information on lead abatement 410-396-4530
- For information on other health services 410-396-4398
- Tobacco Control Hotline (to report violations of the minors' access laws) 410-361-9766

**HOUSING SERVICES**

*(see also Community Action Centers on p.63)*

- Homeownership 410-396-3124
- Housing Application Office (Public Housing, Section 8) 443-984-2222
- Housing for seniors 410-396-3241
- Office of Home Energy 410-396-5555
- Weatherization Assistance Program 443-984-1066
- Owner of Property (Property Location Office) 410-396-3634
- Property Tax Bill 410-396-3987
- Vacant House Loan Program 410-528-8457
- Water Bills 410-396-5398

**LEGAL INFORMATION**

- Marriage License Department 410-333-3780
- Consumer Protection 410-528-8662
- Legal Aid Bureau 410-951-7777
- Parole and Probation 410-585-3500  
TTY 1-800-735-2258

**MOTOR VEHICLES**

- To request information on parking fines 410-396-4080
- Carpooling information 410-396-7665
- To apply for or renew your driver's license 410-768-7000
- To renew vehicle tags 410-768-7000

**PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS:**

- To obtain a listing of recreation services and programs 410-396-7000
- For other information regarding Recreation and Parks 410-396-7459

**PERMITS**

- To obtain city public works permits 410-396-6865
- To obtain food permits or vendor license 410-396-3787
- Housing permits and code enforcement 410-396-3360
- To inquire about residential parking permits 443-573-2800
- To obtain waste hauler permits 410-396-4428
- To apply for ridesharing permits 410-396-7665
- To obtain a permit to use public parks for events 410-396-7946

**PUBLIC SAFETY:**

- To report illegal drug activity 410-685-3784
- To turn in guns to Police Department 410-685-4867
- To learn crime prevention techniques 410-396-2525
- To report crimes NOT in progress and for all *non-emergency* police assistance CALL 311
- To report a crime in progress CALL 911

**SANITATION**

- For assistance with a community clean-up 410-396-4511
- To obtain information or a list of recycling days in your neighborhood 410-396-5916
- Environmental Crimes Unit, to report illegal dumping 410-396-4707
- Bulk trash collection 410-361-9333
- Graffiti removal 410-396-4515
- Rat rubout CALL 311

**SENIOR CITIZEN SERVICES**

- To participate in volunteer activities 410-396-4932
- To obtain a senior companion for a frail elderly person 410-396-4932
- To become a senior aide 410-462-1920
- To report abuse of a senior 410-361-5000
- To report complaints about nursing home care 410-396-4932
- TaxiCard Program 410-664-1123
- Housing for seniors 410-396-4932
- To learn of other services for seniors 410-396-2273

## STREET REPAIRS AND SERVICES

- To report problems with alleys, side-walks, potholes, dislodged/noisy steel plates, snow plowing, street lighting, etc CALL 311

## UTILITIES

- To obtain information about gas and electric bills 410-685-0123
- To request energy assistance 410-396-5555
- To obtain information about weatherization 410-396-6046

## VISITOR INFORMATION

- Baltimore Area Visitors Center 410-837-4636
- Dockmaster (security regulations; visiting by water) 410-396-3174

## VOTER REGISTRATION

- Voter registration and information 410-396-5580
- Absentee ballot request and information 410-396-5574

# How a Bill Becomes a Law

## 1. NEW BILL



Introduction in the City Council

## 2. FIRST READING



## 3. TO COMMITTEE



Referred to one of the standing committees

## 4. HEARING



Committee consideration and public hearing

## 5. SECOND READING



Report of committee

## 6. DEBATE



Debate and amendment by City Council

## 7. THIRD READING



## 8. VOTE



If bill fails to pass, it may be referred to committee or may go no farther.

## 9. TO THE MAYOR



If bill passes

## 10. BILL BECOMES A LAW



If Mayor signs or fails to sign within five regular meetings. If vetoed by the mayor, bill becomes a law if passed in Council by 3/4 vote of the elected membership.

**Notes:**

## The League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization with hundreds of chapters throughout the United States. Its mission is to encourage informed and active participation of residents in the decisions and activities of government. Local leagues achieve the mission through the study of public policy issues, candidates' forums, small and large discussion groups, action alerts, observers' corps, and newsletters, reports, and other publications.

League of Women Voters of Baltimore City

6600 York Road, Suite 211

Baltimore, MD 21212

Tel: 410-377-7738 • Fax: 410-377-7738

Email: [lwvbaltimore@verizon.net](mailto:lwvbaltimore@verizon.net)

[www.lwvmd.org/baltcity](http://www.lwvmd.org/baltcity)