



**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**  
*Tiffany Robinson, Secretary*

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
*Russell Strickland, Executive Director*

August 9, 2021

Dear County Leaders:

Maryland has set specific safety standards to ensure that buildings are designed, maintained, and operated in a way that ensures those who live in them, work in them, or visit them are safe. Building owners and managers have certain responsibilities to ensure building safety, and counties are the primary entity with jurisdiction over building codes.

In light of the recent tragedy in Surfside, Florida, the Maryland Department of Labor is underscoring the guidelines and measures that exist today in Maryland to ensure the safety and integrity of multiple-story buildings:

- Maryland has had a Model Performance Building Code for new construction since 1971, based upon national building code standards.
- Since 1993, counties have been required to adopt and enforce the codes using the same model codes.
- Maryland adopts the most current version of the building codes. The International Building Code (IBC), International Residential Code (IRC), and International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) are adopted in state regulation when each new code version is released every three years.
- Counties and municipalities are the “authority having jurisdiction” (AHJ) for building codes.
  - Counties adopt and enforce the building codes for projects constructed in their jurisdiction.
  - Local inspectors are knowledgeable and well trained, and they inspect each building project throughout the construction process to ensure compliance with adopted codes.
  - Building owners are required to maintain their buildings to standards set by livability codes adopted and enforced by the local counties and municipalities.
  - For existing buildings, counties and municipalities enforce minimum livability codes based upon the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).

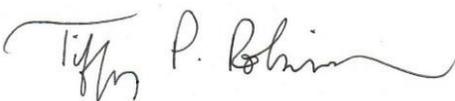
Collectively, these and other safety measures are part of the foundation of infrastructure resilience in Maryland. Building collapses like the one that occurred in Surfside are rare because new buildings are required to comply with strict building codes in Maryland, however it is incumbent upon all parties with jurisdiction over these matters to uphold their responsibilities to ensure safety to the highest degree possible.

It is important that the building owners, operators, and managers are aware of building code regulations and safety requirements in order to promote the safety of their residents and visitors. Additionally, it is important that they and residents are aware of risks in their area. Maryland is susceptible to a wide range of natural hazards, including flooding, tropical storms, and even earthquakes, that can affect buildings and homes.

Some coastal counties in Florida enforce reinspection and recertification requirements for high-rise buildings over a certain age. As with other code enforcement, this authority rests at the county and municipal level. We at the Maryland Department of Labor and MEMA are ready to work with local building officials on code related matters and are available for collaboration.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tiffany P. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Tiffany Robinson  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Labor

Russell Strickland  
Executive Director  
Maryland Emergency Management Agency