

# Trash and Recycling Collections



IC WORKS BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BALTIMORE



PARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC



January 13, 2022

# Thank You Essential Workers



**Thank you, essential solid waste workers!**

- The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics has consistently listed trash and recycling collections as a **top 10 most dangerous job** in the U.S. due to the number of fatal accidents involving employees.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department consistently provided trash collection and adopted a modified recycling collection service.
- Employees work in all types of weather to get the job done. In the summer, it's 100-degree weather in high humidity. In the winter, it's below-freezing temperatures with ice and snow.
- We are proud of the essential services we provide and are thankful to our essential workers.



# Curbside Collections

- The Routine Services Division manages a total of 260 routes during the week. This consists of 80 recycling routes and 178 trash routes.
- Routes are serviced by crews made up of one driver with a Class B Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and two laborers. Occasionally, routes with heavier tonnage require assistance from a second crew.
- At a minimum, the Division requires 67 CDL drivers and 134 laborers to manage all routes daily.
- During staffing shortages, recycling crews are redirected to assist with trash routes. Trash routes are prioritized to prevent public health and safety issues from accumulating.

## Minimum Number of Employees for Recycling

Day of Week	Min # of CDL Drivers	Min # of Laborers
Tuesday	20	40
Wednesday	18	36
Thursday	22	44
Friday	20	40

## Minimum Number of Employees for Trash

Day of Week	Min # of CDL Drivers	Min # of Laborers
Tuesday	45	90
Wednesday	44	88
Thursday	45	90
Friday	44	88





# Recycling Challenges

## Short-Term Challenges:

- Over the last 7 workdays, DPW averaged 228 (37%) employees out daily (sick, vacation, A-time, COVID, and other leave types).
- At its highest peak, 340 of 610 total employees (55%) were on leave on Dec 30.
- Snow operation limit operational flexibility – DPW crews handle 22 snow routes to support emergency snow operations.
- Many contractors are dealing with their own COVID issues and don't have the capacity to assist.
- Holidays Season – Employees using leave time to be with family combined with increased waste generated during the holidays.

## Long-Term Challenges

- DPW is excited to rollout the new recycling carts to improve waste diversion for Baltimore City. With the new rollout the following challenges are ahead of us:
  - Increased participation = Longer Routes
  - Additional recyclables being collected = Extending Routes (more drop-offs)
  - More time per unit = Extending Routes



# Nationwide Staffing Challenges

The recent Omicron variant has affected staffing shortages locally and nationwide, which has made it very difficult for the City to find additional support.

- **Philadelphia:** Experiencing citywide collection delays this week as COVID-19 infections and quarantines affect its workforce. ([Streets Department](#))
- **New York City:** About 20% to 25% of their workers called out sick, and their solution was to expand shifts and cancel days off. ([CNN](#), [PIX11](#))
- **Atlanta:** COVID-19 impacted half of the department's workforce. In surrounding Gwinnett County, Republic Services has suspended recycling, bulky and yard waste pickup, telling customers that about 20% of its workforce is quarantining. ([WSB-TV](#), [CBS46](#), [Gwinnett Daily Post](#), [The Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#))
- **New Orleans:** After a months-long hiatus from curbside recycling following Hurricane Ida, the city was planning to restart service. That restart was pushed out in light of more than 30% of drivers being unable to work. ([NOLA.com](#), [News Release](#))
- **Jacksonville:** Temporary suspension of curbside recycling after months of delayed collection. ([New York Times](#))



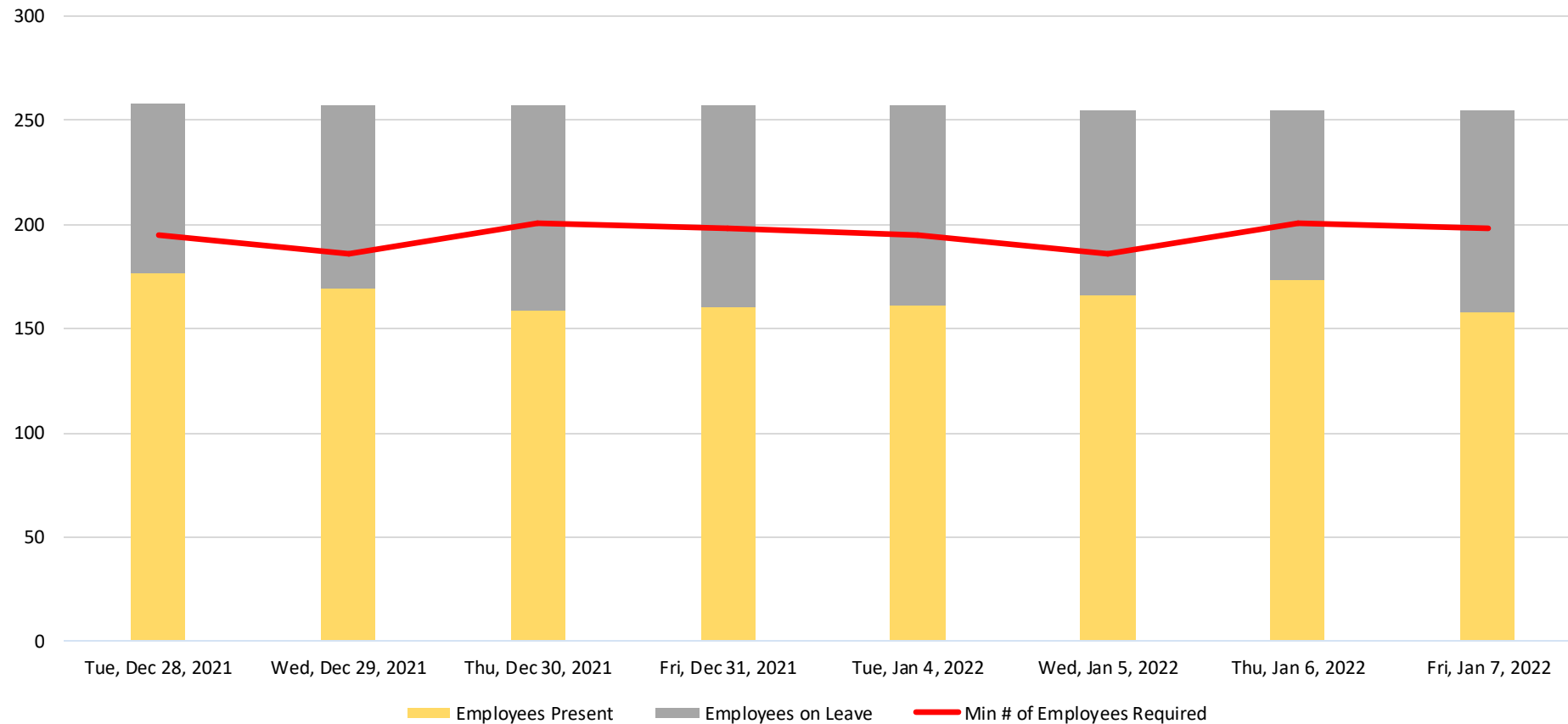
# COVID Summary

- **Vaccine Requirement Compliance:** 414 of 610 (68%) Solid Waste employees submitted their vaccine card.
- In 2021, the Bureau of Solid Waste had a total of 104 positive COVID cases. December 2021 Solid Waste COVID cases account for half of that annual total – there were **50 positive cases** in December. In January 2022, there are already 13 positive COVID cases.
- These positive COVID cases do not include employees in isolation. For every one positive case, there are 2 to 6 employees in isolation due to exposure, per City protocol.
- DPW continues to take the following precautions against COVID outbreaks:
  - Mask mandates
  - Social distancing
  - Sanitizing facilities and vehicles
  - Promoting COVID testing and vaccination sites
  - Setting up a DPW COVID test site for employees
- Staffing shortages place a physical and emotional strain on the employees who are reporting to work. Employees are burnt out and many have experienced trauma from long work hours, injuries while on the job, and illness and death from COVID. Employees are encouraged to utilize the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) when necessary.



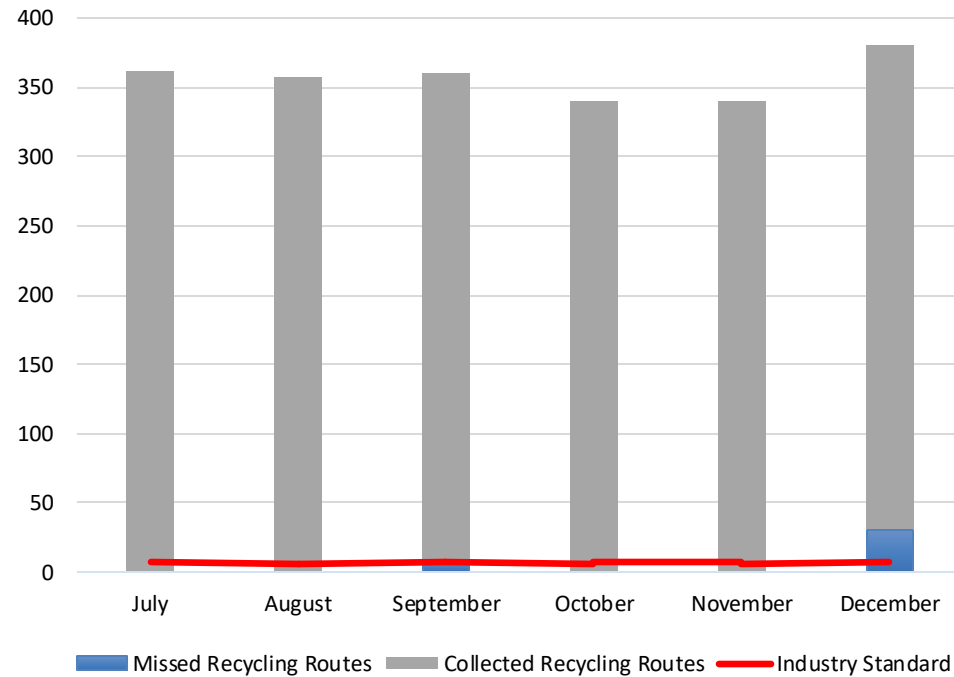
# Staffing Levels for Curbside Collection

Routine Services Attendance Levels Over a Two-Week Period

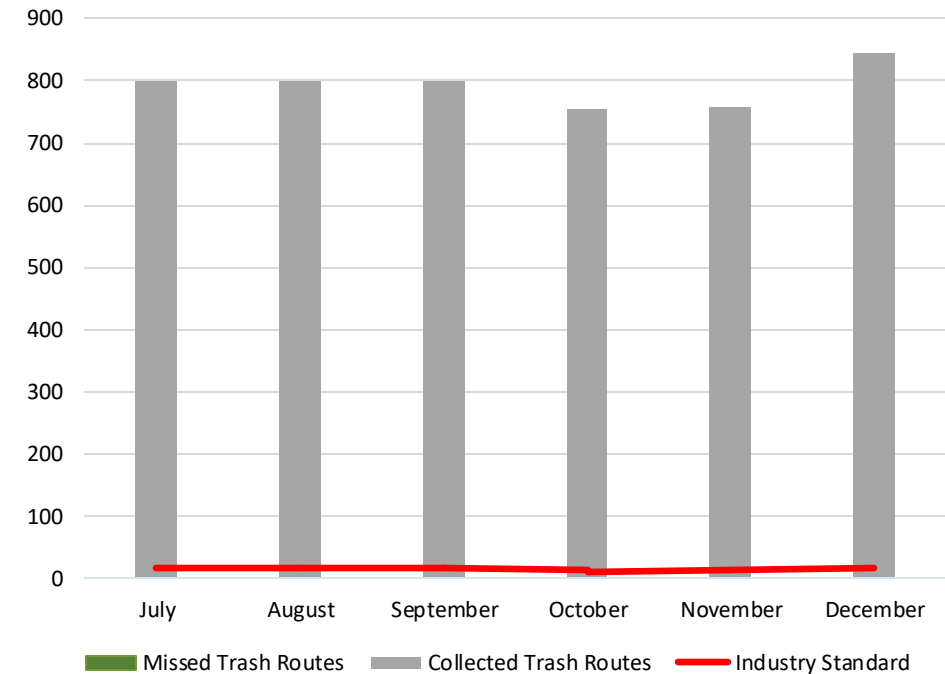


# Summary of Missed Routes

## Missed Recycling Routes July to December 2021



## Missed Trash Routes July to December 2021



The industry standard for missed routes is 2% of all routes.





# Weekly Trash and Recycling Routes

Quadrant	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Northwest	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 32 Total Drivers: 16	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 12 routes Total Workers: 34 Total Drives: 17	Recycling: 7 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 36 Total Drivers: 18	Recycling: 6 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 34 Total Drivers: 17
Southwest	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 12 routes Total Workers: 34 Total Drivers: 17	Recycling 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 32 Total Drivers: 16	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 32 Total Drivers: 16	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 32 Total Workers: 16
Northeast	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 34 Total Drivers 17	Recycling: 4 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 30 Total Drivers: 15	Recycling: 4 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 30 Total Drivers: 15	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 32 Total Drivers: 16
Southeast	Recycling: 5 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 32 Total Drivers: 16	Recycling: 4 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 30 Total Drivers: 15	Recycling: 6 routes Trash: 12 routes Total Workers: 36 Total Drivers: 18	Recycling: 4 routes Trash: 11 routes Total Workers: 30 Total Drivers: 15
<b>Total</b>	<b>Recycling: 20 routes Trash: 45 routes</b>	<b>Recycling: 18 routes Trash: 44 routes</b>	<b>Recycling: 22 routes Trash: 45 routes</b>	<b>Recycling: 20 routes Trash: 44 routes</b>



# Modified Recycling Routes

## Bi-weekly pickup (2 Cycles – A and B)

**NE and NW** (north of North Ave.) will be on Week A of the alternating schedule, which will start on 1/18-1/21

**SE and SW** (south of North Ave.) will be on Week B of the alternating schedule, which will start on 1/25-1/28

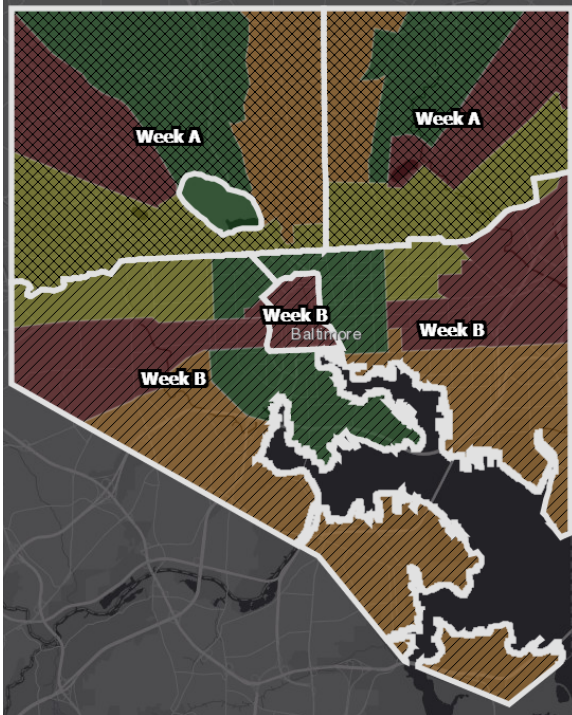
Residents can also bring recycling to one of the five Residential Drop-Off Centers. More information available at: [www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/solid-waste/drop-off](http://www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/solid-waste/drop-off)

Week	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A	Northwest: 5 Northeast: 5  Total: 10	Northwest: 5 Northeast: 4  Total: 9	Northwest: 7 Northeast: 4  Total: 11	Northwest: 6 Northeast: 5  Total: 11
B	Southwest: 5 Southeast: 5  Total: 10	Southwest: 5 Southeast: 4  Total: 9	Southwest: 5 Southeast: 6  Total: 11	Southwest: 5 Southeast: 4  Total: 9
Reduction in Crews Needed	10 crews (20 laborers and 10 drivers)	9 crews (18 laborers and 9 drivers)	11 crews (22 laborers and 11 drivers)	9 crews (18 laborers and 9 drivers)

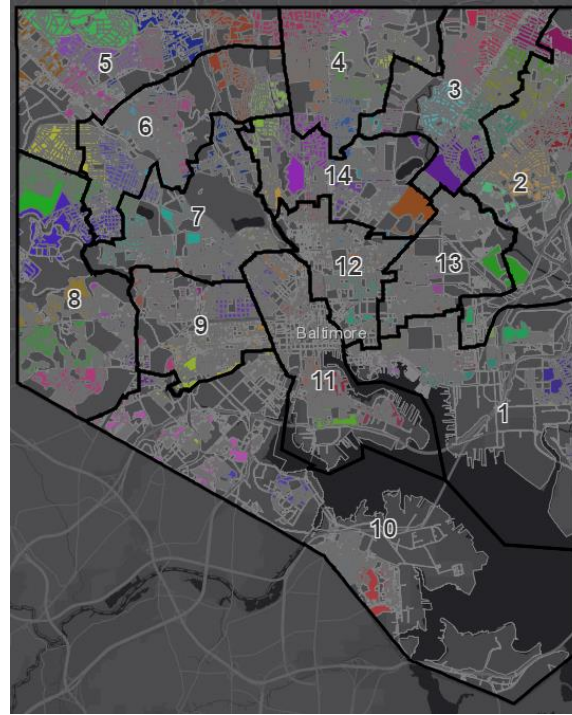
This chart is for modified recycling collection operations only. Curbside trash collection will continue without modifications.



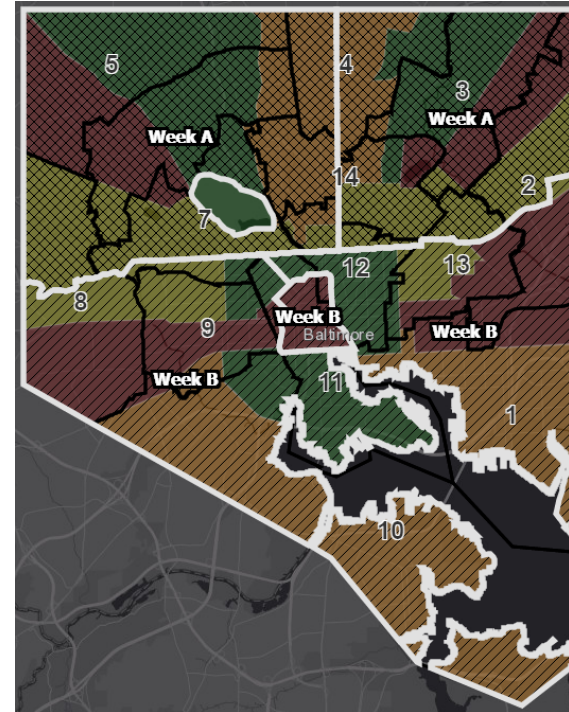
# Recycling Map



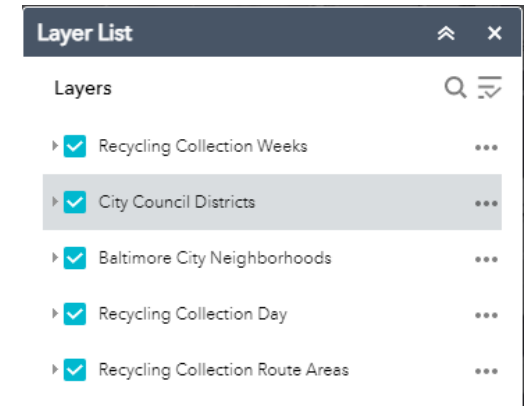
Layer: Recycling Collection Weeks + Recycling Collection Day



Layer: City Council Districts + Recycling Collection Route Areas



Layer: Recycling Collection Day + City Council Districts + Recycling Collection Weeks



Map accessible at:  
[www.bit.ly/3Gq2Ozy](http://www.bit.ly/3Gq2Ozy)



# Outreach Plan

Outreach on modified recycling collections includes the following:

- Press releases
- Infographics
- Weekly social media posts
- Online calendar
- Release of a "Frequently Asked Questions" document
- QR code to quickly access recycling information
- Mailers
- Radio spots
- CharmTV commercials
- Press interviews
- Community meetings

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## Modified Recycling Collection

Due to increased staffing shortages and spike in COVID-19 cases, DPW Recycling is switching to every other week, based on property location, to sustain recycling operations and provide consistent and reliable service.

**EFFECTIVE**  
**18 JAN**  
2022

**NEW Bi-weekly Schedule**

**NE and NW**  
(North of North Avenue)  
Week A **January 18-21**  
Alternating Schedule

**SE and SW**  
(South of North Avenue)  
Week B **January 25-28**  
Alternating Schedule

Please click the following link for your recycling pick up day and week  
[bit.ly/modifiedrecycling](https://bit.ly/modifiedrecycling)

Thank you for your support in helping DPW continue to service residents during these challenging times.  
Learn more at [publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/collectionupdate](https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/collectionupdate)

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
[publicworks.baltimorecity.gov](https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov)

 **DPW**  
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# "Recycle Right"

- Questions about recycling can be answered at the Department of Public Works' recycling page: [www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/recycling-services](http://www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/recycling-services)
- Specific questions on what can or cannot be recycled can be answered using the Recycle Right webapp: [www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/recycle-right](http://www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/recycle-right)

 **RECYCLE** THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING THESE:

 <b>Paper</b>	 <b>Cartons</b>	 <b>Cans</b>	 <b>Plastic</b>	 <b>Glass</b>
				
<b>Paper</b> (all colors and types)	<b>Cardboard and Cartons</b> (empty and dry)	<b>Aluminum and Steel Cans</b> (empty and dry)	<b>Plastic Bottles, Jars and Jugs</b> (empty and dry)	<b>Glass Bottles and Jars</b> (empty and dry)

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**NO!**

				
<b>Plastic Bags and Film</b>	<b>Food and Liquids</b> (recyclables must be clean and dry)	<b>Paper Towels and Napkins</b>	<b>Tanglers: Garden Hoses, Wires, etc.</b>	<b>Carryout Food Containers</b>



Baltimore City Department of Public Works  
Bureau of Solid Waste **(410) 396-4511**  
[publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/recycling-services](http://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/recycling-services)

Funded in part by  
 **THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP**



# Moving Forward

- Working with Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) and the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to bring on more employees
- HR Career Fair to immediately fill vacant positions
- Continuing our newly created in-house CDL Program to increase promotional opportunities for DPW employees and increase the number of available drivers. We have graduated six (6) staff over the last 2 months.
- Contractor support
  - Successfully working with small companies to take on routes
  - Haulers are dealing with their own staffing issues due to COVID and have not been able to take on additional routes
  - Currently working with staffing agencies to bring on employees
- Continue to educate the public on how to properly recycle to reduce contamination and the associated costs
- Continue planning for long-term solid waste handling for Baltimore City to move to a Zero Waste alternative per Mayor Scott's Vision





# Thank You

