

# Our Town America of Baltimore Franchisee Speaks Out



smallbiztrends.com (May 2015) - Baltimore businesses are dealing with riots, looting and violence — as well as a citywide curfew imposed on April 28 — following civil unrest stemming from the suspicious death of a 25-year-old black man while in police custody.

Because of the curfew, enforced within the city between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., restaurants and other businesses need to close earlier than usual. In addition, some business owners have chosen to temporarily close down — either as a precautionary measure or in response to vandalism — until the curfew's end, slated for this coming Monday.

"There's a huge police and National Guard presence," Steve Diamond, president of Synergy HomeCare, a franchise that provides in-home care for the elderly, told Small Business Trends.

He noted that some restaurants and other small businesses within the city are hurting from the curfew. Exponentially increasing the damage is the timing: now is when Baltimore blooms from its annual tourist infusion.

"This is the time of year when folks arrive and walk around the harbor," he said. "Now, who knows what will happen. They're keeping the National Guard here."

Synergy HomeCare is based in Towson, Maryland, and serves residents in the city and in Baltimore County. While it is located outside, it employs caregivers who reside in the city. Still the company has felt minimal impact from the curfew and Diamond says his ability to provide services was not curtailed.

Because of the nature of Synergy HomeCare's services, it is not beholden to the curfew. However, two of its caregivers who live in the city were unable to work Wednesday night.

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