

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 719

(Senator Zucker, *et al.*)

Finance

Health and Government Operations

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2-1-1 Maryland - Mental Health Services Phone Call Program (The Thomas  
Bloom Raskin Act)

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This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to make recommendations to 2-1-1 Maryland regarding the establishment of an opt-in mental health services phone call program that (1) requires a call center to make periodic calls to persons who have opted into the program and (2) attempts to connect persons with a mental health provider upon request. The Governor may include an appropriation to MDH in the annual budget bill that is sufficient to carry out the bill's provisions. MDH's performance on this activity must be encompassed in the existing annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MDH can make recommendations using existing budgeted resources. Any funding to otherwise carry out the bill's provisions depends on the recommendations made and is discretionary. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The three-digit number 2-1-1 is established in statute as the primary information and referral telephone number for health and human services in the State. MDH oversees the 2-1-1 Maryland call centers and operation of the Health and Human Services Referral System in the State. MDH, in consultation with 2-1-1 Maryland,

(1) maintains public information available from State agencies, programs, and departments that provide health and human services; (2) supports projects and activities that further 2-1-1 Maryland development; (3) examines and make recommendations to maximize the use of information technology in making 2-1-1 services available throughout the State; (4) evaluates the performance of each call center; (5) makes recommendations to 2-1-1 Maryland regarding the quality of service provided or the performance of call centers; and (6) makes recommendations regarding corrective action to be taken by a call center. By December 31 each year, MDH must report to the Governor and the General Assembly on these activities.

**Additional Comments:** 2-1-1 Maryland is a private, nonprofit organization that maintains an information and referral service network that is available to Maryland residents via telephone and Internet. 2-1-1 Maryland offers guidance 24 hours a day and seven days a week regarding access to health, crisis, and social services.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 812 (Delegate Cullison) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 18, 2021  
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