

SENATE BILL 719

C5

2lr1970
CF 2lr1969

By: **Senator Benson**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2022

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Human Services – Office of Home Energy Programs – Uniform Redetermination**
3 **Process**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Office of Home Energy Programs to develop a certain
5 redetermination process to assist certain eligible energy customers who are at least
6 a certain age in enrolling in energy assistance programs; and generally relating to
7 the Office of Home Energy Programs and energy assistance programs.

8 BY renumbering

9 Article – Human Services

10 Section 5–5A–09

11 to be Section 5–5A–10

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

15 Article – Human Services

16 Section 5–5A–01(d)

17 Annotated Code of Maryland

18 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

19 BY adding to

20 Article – Human Services

21 Section 5–5A–09

22 Annotated Code of Maryland

23 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

24 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
25 That Section(s) 5–5A–09 of Article – Human Services of the Annotated Code of Maryland
26 be renumbered to be Section(s) 5–5A–10.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
2 as follows:

3 **Article – Human Services**

4 5–5A–01.

5 (d) “Office” means the Office of Home Energy Programs.

6 **5–5A–09.**

7 **(A) (1) THE OFFICE SHALL DEVELOP A UNIFORM REDETERMINATION**
8 **PROCESS TO ASSIST ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMERS WHO ARE AT LEAST 65 YEARS**
9 **OLD IN ENROLLING IN ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

10 **(2) THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS DEVELOPED UNDER**
11 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE UPDATED ANNUALLY.**

12 **(B) THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS SHALL REQUIRE LOCAL**
13 **ADMINISTERING AGENCIES TO:**

14 **(1) HAVE AN ACCESSIBLE LOCATION TO RECEIVE ELIGIBLE ENERGY**
15 **CUSTOMERS’ APPLICATIONS ACCORDING TO THE OFFICE’S CONTRACTUAL OR**
16 **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS; AND**

17 **(2) ESTABLISH A POLICY REFLECTING REASONABLE**
18 **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR APPLICANTS WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR REQUEST**
19 **ACCOMMODATION, INCLUDING BY:**

20 **(I) ARRANGING FOR A HOME VISIT; OR**

21 **(II) ALLOWING AN INDIVIDUAL TO APPLY ON THE BEHALF OF AN**
22 **ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMER.**

23 **(C) THE OFFICE SHALL PROVIDE NOTICE OF THE REDETERMINATION**
24 **PROCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMERS AND INCLUDE WITH THE NOTICE**
25 **AN ADDRESSED ENVELOPE WITH PREPAID POSTAGE.**

26 **(D) IN ADDITION TO THE NOTICE REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF**
27 **THIS SECTION, THE OFFICE SHALL:**

28 **(1) REQUIRE YEARLY VERIFICATION OF STATUS FOR EACH**
29 **CUSTOMER THAT QUALIFIES FOR THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS;**

1 **(2) ALLOW AN ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMER 45 DAYS TO RESPOND TO**
2 **A REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION; AND**

3 **(3) MAINTAIN RECORDS ORGANIZED BY COUNTY, INCLUDING**
4 **RECORDS ON THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR:**

5 **(I) THAT WERE ELIGIBLE FOR REDETERMINATION;**

6 **(II) WHOSE NOTICE OF THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS WAS**
7 **VERIFIED AND RETURNED; AND**

8 **(III) THAT WERE REENROLLED IN THE REDETERMINATION**
9 **PROCESS.**

10 **(E) THE OFFICE MAY NOT REQUIRE A NEW APPLICATION FOR A CURRENT**
11 **ENERGY CUSTOMER WHOSE ELIGIBILITY HAS NOT CHANGED FROM THE PREVIOUS**
12 **YEAR.**

13 **(F) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE OFFICE SHALL REPORT,**
14 **IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE**
15 **GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE INFORMATION COLLECTED UNDER SUBSECTION (D)(3)**
16 **OF THIS SECTION.**

17 **(G) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS**
18 **SECTION.**

19 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
20 October 1, 2022.