

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 776 (Delegate Munoz, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

Emergency Medical System Plan - Guidelines for Emergency Medical Services -
Law Enforcement Canines

This bill requires the Emergency Medical System plan to include guidelines authorizing emergency medical services (EMS) personnel to provide services to a canine injured in the line of duty that is owned by, or whose services are employed by, a law enforcement agency, as specified. The guidelines must (1) authorize EMS to be provided to a canine at the scene of the emergency; (2) authorize EMS personnel to transport the canine to a designated veterinary facility and provide services during transport; (3) grant immunity from criminal and civil liability for EMS personnel who provide services to the canine in good faith; and (4) prohibit EMS personnel from providing services to a canine if the personnel are needed concurrently to provide services to individuals. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Development of the required guidelines can likely be handled with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: To the extent local EMS units elect to provide services to a canine under the guidelines, local government expenditures likely increase by an indeterminate amount beginning in FY 2023 to provide training, equipment, and supplies to EMS personnel. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) is the administrative agency responsible for the coordination of all EMS in the State, which is overseen by the State Emergency Medical Services Board (EMS Board). The EMS Board must develop and adopt an Emergency Medical System plan to ensure effective coordination and evaluation of EMS delivered in the State. The plan must include:

- criteria for the designation of trauma and specialty referral facilities;
- criteria and guidelines for the delivery of EMS, including provisions to assure proper medical direction of EMS;
- a plan designed to maintain and enhance the communications and transportation systems for EMS;
- provisions for the evaluation of EMS personnel training programs;
- provisions for the establishment of public information and education programs designed to enhance the public's understanding of the Emergency Medical System;
- criteria and methodologies to evaluate the system's effectiveness in delivering quality EMS needed by the citizens of the State; and
- provisions for the evaluation and monitoring of the system plan to ensure compliance with the plan by all segments of the system.

Each State agency and department must cooperate with the EMS Board in implementing the State Emergency Medical System plan. The EMS Board must consult with local jurisdictions, volunteer and career fire companies, emergency medical technicians, rescue squad personnel, and hospitals prior to adopting regulations to implement the Emergency Medical System plan.

Under § 3-101(e)(1)(ii) of the Public Safety Article, "law enforcement agency" includes (1) the Department of State Police; (2) the Police Department of Baltimore City; (3) the Baltimore City School Police Force; (4) the Baltimore City Watershed Police Force; (5) the police department, bureau, or force of a county; (6) the police department, bureau, or force of a municipal corporation; (7) the office of the sheriff of a county; (8) the police department, bureau, or force of a bicounty agency; (9) the Maryland Transportation Authority Police; (10) the police forces of the Maryland Department of Transportation; (11) the police forces of the Department of Natural Resources; (12) the Field Enforcement Bureau of the Comptroller's Office; (13) the Field Enforcement Division of the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission; (14) the Housing Authority of Baltimore City Police Force; (15) the Crofton Police Department; (16) the police force of the Maryland Department of Health; (17) the police force of the Maryland Capitol Police of the Department of General Services; (18) the police forces of the University System of Maryland; (19) the police force of Morgan State University; (20) the office of the State Fire Marshal; (21) the

Ocean Pines Police Department; (22) the police force of Baltimore City Community College; (23) the police force of Hagerstown Community College; (24) the Internal Investigation Unit of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS); (25) the Warrant Apprehension Unit of the Intelligence and Investigative Division in DPSCS; (26) the police force of Anne Arundel Community College; and (27) the police department of the Johns Hopkins University.

Chapter 411 of 2017 established immunity from civil liability for a member of any State, county, municipal, or volunteer fire department, ambulance and rescue squad, or law enforcement agency, or a corporate fire department who are providing veterinary aid, care, or assistance to an animal at the scene of an emergency, in transit to a veterinary facility, or through communications with licensed veterinary personnel providing emergency veterinary assistance.

State Expenditures: MIEMSS advises that the Emergency Medical System plan was most recently updated in 2020, setting a 10-year plan for the system. To update the current plan, the EMS Board must gather input from EMS personnel, hospitals, county and local governments, and health care practitioners in the State. MIEMSS may incur minimal costs to assist the EMS Board with creating recommendations for providing emergency veterinary care to a law enforcement canine and to print and distribute the new Emergency Medical System plan. This analysis assumes that such costs are minimal and can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.

Local Expenditures: The bill requires the Emergency Medical System plan to include guidelines *authorizing* EMS personnel to provide services to a law enforcement canine injured in the line of duty. To the extent that local EMS units elect to provide such services, local governments incur additional expenses to train EMS personnel to provide emergency veterinary services and to provide equipment, supplies, and medications necessary to treat a canine. The amount of such expenditures cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Anne Arundel County advises that the bill has a minimal impact on county EMS services. The county currently has 28 canines assigned to the police department, office of the sheriff, and fire department.

Howard County advises that the Howard County Police Department has oxygen masks for canines (mostly used for fires) and quickly secures medical care for canines; thus, there is not an impact on the police department. However, the county advises that the fire department incurs costs to train and equip EMS personnel.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: SB 70 (Senator Carozza, *et al.*) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems; Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Garrett, Howard, and Montgomery counties; City of Laurel; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Amberly Holcomb

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510