

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 370 (Delegate Vogel)  
 Health and Government Operations

Maryland Department of Health - Study on the Effects of and Preparedness for Long COVID-19

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), in consultation with the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) and the Department of Human Services (DHS), to conduct a specified study on the preparedness of health facilities in the State to respond to viral illnesses and the effects of post-viral illnesses resulting from “long COVID-19.” By July 1, 2025, MDH must report its findings and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MDH general fund expenditures increase by as much as \$485,000 in FY 2025 only to complete the study and submit the required report. MDL and DHS can consult with MDH with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	485,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$485,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Note: ( ) = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

Analysis

**Bill Summary:** “Long COVID-19” means signs, symptoms, or conditions that continue to develop after initial SARS-CoV-2 infection. “Long COVID-19” includes symptoms that

present with a relapsing-remitting pattern and progress or worsen over time and may present the possibility of life-threatening events months or years after initial infection.

The study must include information on (1) the preparedness of public health facilities to respond to long COVID-19; (2) the financial security of individuals affected by long COVID-19 and the cost to the State of treating those individuals; and (3) health data trends, as specified. The study must also include suggested best practices for increasing the preparedness of health facilities to treat long COVID-19-related symptoms and conditions and treatment protocols for the effects of long COVID-19.

**State Expenditures:** While MDH acknowledges the presence and impact of long COVID-19, the department advises that it does not have the available resources, expertise, or data to complete the requested study. Thus, the study would be contracted out to an entity such as the Hilltop Institute.

Based on previous contractual services for similar study designs, such a study would likely cost as much as \$485,000 to complete within one year. Thus, MDH general fund expenditures increase by as much as \$485,000 in fiscal 2025 only for contractual expenses to complete the required study. To the extent that the contract requires less intensive resources, general fund expenditures decrease accordingly.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced in the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Health; Department of Budget and Management; Department of Human Services; Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 19, 2024  
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