

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 353

(Delegate Cullison, *et al.*)

Health and Government Operations

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Maryland Department of Health - 2-1-1 Maryland - Oversight

This bill alters the definition of “Health and Human Services Referral System” to mean a coordinated system for health and human service resources accessible to all State residents through 2-1-1 and other designated technology systems. The bill repeals the requirements that the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), in consultation with 2-1-1 Maryland, (1) evaluate the performance of each 2-1-1 Maryland call center; (2) make recommendations to 2-1-1 Maryland regarding the quality of service provided by call centers or the performance of call centers when issues related to service quality and performance are presented to MDH; and (3) make recommendations regarding corrective action to be taken by a call center, as appropriate. The bill expresses legislative intent that 2-1-1 Maryland expand membership of its board of directors to include two representatives of 2-1-1 Maryland call centers (as nominated by the call centers by July 1, 2024). The bill also makes conforming changes. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any change in State activities does not materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Health and Human Services Referral System is a telephone service that automatically connects an individual dialing the digits 2-1-1 to an established information and referral answering point. 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. As noted above, the bill expresses legislative intent that 2-1-1 Maryland add two representatives to its board of directors, as nominated by 2-1-1 Maryland call centers by July 1, 2024. The Department of Legislative Services notes that 2-1-1 Maryland cannot be required to do so due to its status as a private, nonprofit organization.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 340 and SB 890 of 2023.

Designated Cross File: SB 445 (Senators Zucker and Augustine) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 2, 2024
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