

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2024 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 1325 (Delegate Addison)  
Environment and Transportation

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**Individuals Experiencing Homelessness - Address Requirements - Prohibition**

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This bill prohibits a public library from requiring an individual experiencing homelessness to provide a current address before issuing a library card to the individual. The bill also prohibits a recipient of financial assistance from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for affordable housing to require an individual experiencing homelessness to provide a current address as a condition of eligibility on a residential application. In addition, DHCD and public housing agencies may not require an individual experiencing homelessness to provide a current address as a condition of eligibility for a housing assistance payment under the Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program. Finally, the bill prohibits local governments from requiring an employee, as a condition of employment, to provide a current address if the employee is an individual experiencing homelessness.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local government operations or finances.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** “Individual experiencing homelessness” has the same meaning as “homeless individual” under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

With respect to a recipient of financial assistance from DHCD, the bill's prohibition applies to a program operated by DHCD that awards grants and loans that may be used to provide affordable single-family or multifamily housing. DHCD must adopt regulations necessary to carry out the prohibition.

## **Current Law:**

### *Public Libraries – Generally*

Each county, including Baltimore City, has established a public library system. As required by State law, a county library provides free library services to residents of the county. A library may establish policies governing the use of the library by individuals living outside the county. Free library services include the use of all library materials and services available for reference and circulation, regardless of format. However, the exact procedures related to providing those services vary by county.

### *Department of Housing and Community Development – Financial Assistance Related to Affordable Single-family or Multifamily Housing*

DHCD administers several programs that provide financial assistance related to affordable housing. Examples of programs that specifically award grants and loans for affordable single-family or multifamily housing include:

- *Partnership Rental Housing Program:* The Partnership Rental Housing Program is intended to expand the supply of affordable housing for low-income households. Among other potential program participants, DHCD is authorized to provide financial assistance to political subdivisions or housing authorities to acquire, construct, reconstruct, renovate, or rehabilitate rental housing that is affordable to households of limited income. The fiscal 2025 capital budget as introduced includes \$6.0 million in general obligation bonds for the program.
- *Rental Housing Program:* The Rental Housing Program is intended to, among other things, stimulate the production of rental housing and use available resources efficiently to serve households that are in need of quality affordable housing opportunities, including families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities or special needs. Loans may be issued to private or nonprofit sponsors, political subdivisions, or local housing authorities on behalf of sponsors of proposed rental housing units. The fiscal 2025 capital budget as introduced includes \$110.0 million in general obligation bonds, \$19.5 million in special funds, and \$9.0 million in federal funds for the program.

- *Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative Program:* The Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative (BRNI) Program is intended to, among other things, provide strategic investment in local housing and businesses to encourage healthy, sustainable communities with a growing tax base and enhanced quality of life. The fiscal 2025 capital budget as introduced includes \$27.0 million in general obligation bonds for the program.
- *National Capital Strategic Economic Development Program:* Similar to BRNI, the National Capital Strategic Economic Development Program also provides strategic investment in local housing and businesses to encourage healthy, sustainable communities with a growing tax base and enhanced quality of life. The fiscal 2025 capital budget as introduced includes \$12.0 million in general obligation bonds for the program.

#### *Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program*

Chapter 446 of 2023 established the Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program in DHCD. The purpose of the program is to provide vouchers and housing assistance payments for low-income families that are currently on a waiting list under the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program for housing in units approved by DHCD or a public housing agency within the State. DHCD and each public housing agency must equally prioritize vouchers and housing assistance payments for families that meet specified demographic criteria. Pursuant to Chapter 446, the Governor is required to include \$10.0 million in the annual budget bill for the program in fiscal 2025 through 2027 and sufficient amounts in future years to fund the same number of vouchers. The fiscal 2025 budget as introduced includes \$10.0 million in general funds for the program, consistent with the mandated appropriation.

#### *Local Personnel – Residency Requirements*

A county or municipality may not require an employee to reside in the State, county, or municipality or within a specified distance of the State, county, or municipality as a condition of employment. A county or municipality may require an at-will supervisory employee to reside in the State, county, or municipality or within a specified distance of the State, county, or municipality as a condition of employment if the at-will supervisory employee reports directly to the head of a unit of the county or municipality. When making employment, promotion, demotion, layoff, and discharge decisions, a county or municipality may not discriminate based on an individual's place of residence. However, a county or municipality may grant a resident of the State, county, or municipality additional points or credits in employment or promotion decisions if the points or credits are provided in accordance with a merit system established by the county or municipality by local law or ordinance. An agency created under State law that provides governmental

services to more than one county or municipality may not require an employee, as a condition of employment, to reside in the State or a county or municipality or within a specified distance of the State, a county, or a municipality for which the agency provides governmental services.

These restrictions do not apply to (1) an elected official; (2) the head of a unit of a county or municipality who reports directly to the chief administrative officer, an elected executive, or the governing body of the county or municipality; or (3) the chief administrative officer of the county or municipality.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Prince George's County; Maryland State Library Agency; Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 3, 2024  
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