

HOUSE BILL 878

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By: **Delegates Barron, Ivey, and Williams**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2020

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Prince George’s County – Human Services – Family Connects Home Visiting**
3 **Pilot Program**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Family Connects Home Visiting Pilot Program in
5 Prince George’s County; providing for the purpose of the Program; authorizing the
6 Program to provide certain services; requiring the Prince George’s County
7 Department of Family Services, in consultation with a certain entity, to begin the
8 selection of certain participants in the Program on or before a certain date, provide
9 certain services, and study certain matters; authorizing the Prince George’s County
10 Department of Family Services to implement certain policies and procedures and
11 develop a certain process and certain partnerships; requiring the Governor, for a
12 certain fiscal year, to include in the State budget a certain appropriation for the
13 administration of the Program; requiring the Prince George’s County Department of
14 Family Services to attempt to access certain federal funds; requiring the Prince
15 George’s County Department of Family Services to report certain information on the
16 Program to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date;
17 defining certain terms; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally
18 relating to the Family Connects Home Visiting Pilot Program in Prince George’s
19 County.

20 BY adding to

21 Article – Human Services

22 Section 8–1301 through 8–1305 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 13. Prince
23 George’s County Family Connects Home Visiting Pilot Program”

24 Annotated Code of Maryland

25 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

26 Preamble

27 WHEREAS, 10% of all births in Prince George’s County were to women receiving
28 late to no prenatal care, 25% of all women in Maryland receiving late or no prenatal care

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 are residents of Prince George’s County, and only 55% of births in Prince George’s County
2 are to women receiving first trimester prenatal care; and

3 WHEREAS, Research clearly shows that the earliest months of life are foundational
4 for later social, emotional, and brain development; the physical and mental health of
5 parents plays a critical role in this development; and when families and newborn infants
6 have unmet needs, this often results in poor outcomes for children; and

7 WHEREAS, Family Connects International is an evidence–based home visiting
8 model developed by Duke University combining engagement and alignment of community
9 services providers with short–term home visiting by registered nurses, beginning in the
10 first month after birth; and

11 WHEREAS, The goal of Family Connects International is to support families and
12 infants in the critical first months following birth with services that reflect their needs and
13 preferences and that advance the well–being of all; and

14 WHEREAS, Providing parents with information and support during the transition
15 to parenthood and early childhood is an effective strategy for achieving greater health and
16 well–being; and

17 WHEREAS, The Prince George’s County Department of Family Services is
18 committed to improving healthy child and family development through intensive prenatal
19 support, mentoring, and in–home visits for women living in Prince George’s County;
20 therefore, the Department is willing to administer and monitor the Family Connects Home
21 Visiting Pilot Program; now, therefore,

22 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
23 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

24 **Article – Human Services**

25 **SUBTITLE 13. PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY FAMILY CONNECTS HOME VISITING**
26 **PILOT PROGRAM.**

27 **8–1301.**

28 **(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
29 **INDICATED.**

30 **(B) “ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD” MEANS A HOUSEHOLD LOCATED IN PRINCE**
31 **GEORGE’S COUNTY THAT HAS A NEWBORN WHO WAS DELIVERED AT A HOSPITAL**
32 **LOCATED IN PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY.**

33 **(C) “HOME VISITING PROGRAM” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 8–101 OF**
34 **THIS TITLE.**

1 (D) "HOME VISITING SERVICES" MEANS SERVICES PROVIDED BY A HOME
2 VISITING PROGRAM.

3 (E) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE FAMILY CONNECTS HOME VISITING PILOT
4 PROGRAM.

5 8-1302.

6 (A) THERE IS A FAMILY CONNECTS HOME VISITING PILOT PROGRAM IN
7 THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES.

8 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE, IMPROVE, AND STUDY
9 THE EFFECTS OF HOME VISITING SERVICES FOR ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS.

10 (C) HOME VISITING SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAM MAY INCLUDE:

11 (1) PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING;

12 (2) COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS;

13 (3) MAKING CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES;

14 (4) EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

15 (5) SAFETY SERVICES; AND

16 (6) ANY OTHER SERVICES THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
17 DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PRINCE
18 GEORGE'S CHILD RESOURCE CENTER, DETERMINES TO BE NECESSARY.

19 8-1303.

20 (A) THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES,
21 IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PRINCE GEORGE'S CHILD RESOURCE CENTER,
22 SHALL:

23 (1) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2020, BEGIN THE SELECTION OF
24 ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM;

25 (2) PROVIDE PARTICIPATING ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS WITH HOME
26 VISITING SERVICES; AND

1 **(3) STUDY THE EFFECTS THAT HOME VISITING SERVICES HAVE ON**
2 **THE WELL-BEING OF MEMBERS OF PARTICIPATING ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS,**
3 **INCLUDING EFFECTS RELATED TO:**

4 **(I) CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES;**

5 **(II) THE USE OF CHILD CARE PROGRAMS;**

6 **(III) CHANGES IN PARENTING BEHAVIORS;**

7 **(IV) CHANGES IN HOME ENVIRONMENTS;**

8 **(V) MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH;**

9 **(VI) THE USE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE; AND**

10 **(VII) REFERRALS TO CHILD WELFARE SERVICES.**

11 **(B) THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES**
12 **MAY:**

13 **(1) IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO ENCOURAGE**
14 **PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM; AND**

15 **(2) DEVELOP A REFERRAL PROCESS AND INTEGRATED**
16 **PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER LOCAL OR STATE AGENCIES THROUGH WHICH**
17 **ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS MAY ACCESS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT TARGET:**

18 **(I) IMPROVEMENTS IN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL INFANT**
19 **DEVELOPMENT;**

20 **(II) IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF**
21 **INFANTS AND PARENTS; AND**

22 **(III) POSITIVE AND SAFE PARENTING AND CHILD CARE.**

23 **8-1304.**

24 **(A) IN FISCAL YEAR 2022, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL**
25 **BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$100,000 FOR THE PRINCE GEORGE'S**
26 **COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE**
27 **PROGRAM.**

1 **(B) IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE PROGRAM, THE**
2 **PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES SHALL ATTEMPT**
3 **TO ACCESS FEDERAL FUNDS RELATING TO HOME VISITING SERVICES FOR ELIGIBLE**
4 **HOUSEHOLDS.**

5 **8–1305.**

6 **ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2025, THE PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY**
7 **DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT ON THE PROGRAM**
8 **TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2–1257 OF THE STATE**
9 **GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT INCLUDES:**

10 **(1) THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS PARTICIPATING IN THE**
11 **PROGRAM;**

12 **(2) INFORMATION REGARDING HOW THE PROGRAM HAS IMPACTED**
13 **THE HEALTH, PSYCHOSOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE MEMBERS OF**
14 **THE PARTICIPATING ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS; AND**

15 **(3) A RECOMMENDATION ON WHETHER THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE**
16 **EXTENDED OR EXPANDED.**

17 **SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July**
18 **1, 2020. It shall remain effective for a period of 5 years and, at the end of June 30, 2025,**
19 **this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and**
20 **of no further force and effect.**