

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 221 (Chair, Health and Government Operations
Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Information
Technology)
Health and Government Operations

**Department of Information Technology - Maryland Digital Service -
Establishment**

This departmental bill codifies the Maryland Digital Service (MDDS) within the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) as a centralized unit that collaborates with units of State government to support improved service delivery to Maryland residents and agency staff through user-centered design, software development, and product management best practices. Units of State government must collaborate with MDDS to ensure the alignment and funding of digital initiatives with the overall goals and priorities of the State consistent with the Statewide Information Technology Master Plan. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill codifies an existing office within DoIT, as discussed below, and State agencies can collaborate with MDDS as necessary using existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: DoIT has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Bill Summary: MDDS is responsible for:

- assisting units of State government to prioritize the development and procurement of user-friendly, accessible, and multilingual digital platforms to ensure that all Maryland residents, including individuals with disabilities, can easily access and use government services and information;
- working collaboratively with units of State government to (1) consolidate and streamline Maryland's websites and digital applications to reduce redundancy, complexity, and maintenance costs and (2) prioritize projects that are financially efficient and drive positive outcomes for Maryland residents; and
- overseeing the implementation of user-centered design principles, accessibility standards, and best practices in digital service delivery across units of State government.

The Secretary of Information Technology must appoint a Chief Digital Experience Officer to lead MDDS.

Current Law: DoIT and the Secretary of Information Technology are responsible for:

- developing, maintaining, revising, and enforcing information technology (IT) policies, procedures, and standards;
- providing technical assistance, advice, and recommendations to the Governor and any unit of State government concerning IT matters;
- reviewing agency project plans to make information and services available to the public over the Internet;
- developing and maintaining a statewide IT Master Plan, as specified;
- developing a statewide cybersecurity strategy, as specified;
- adopting and enforcing nonvisual access standards to be used in the procurement of IT services, as specified;
- in consultation with the Maryland Cybersecurity Coordinating Council (MCCC), advising and overseeing a consistent cybersecurity strategy for units of State government, as specified;
- advising and consulting with the Legislative and Judicial branches of State government regarding a cybersecurity strategy;
- in consultation with MCCC, developing guidance on consistent cybersecurity strategies for specified local government entities;
- upgrading IT and cybersecurity-related State government infrastructure;

- annually evaluating (1) the feasibility of units of State government providing public services using artificial intelligence, machine learning, commercial cloud computer services, device-as-a-service procurement models, and other emerging technologies and (2) the development of data analytics capabilities to enable data-driven policymaking by units of State government; and
- conducting inventories of systems that employ artificial intelligence that are used by a unit of State government, as specified.

“IT” means all electronic information processing, including maintenance, telecommunications, hardware, software, and associated services.

Background: The chief digital experience officer position required by the bill was hired in August 2023, and MDDS was [officially created in January 2024](#). DoIT advises that MDDS is modeled after the U.S. Digital Service and designed to deliver high-impact technical solutions across State government that are modern, user-centered, and cost-effective. In addition to the chief digital experience officer, DoIT advises that MDDS currently has 20 total staff.

DoIT advises that most agencies do not have the talent or expertise to improve Maryland’s digital service to meet users’ needs, leaving the State reliant on vendors. Over the years, DoIT estimates that the lack of internal expertise has cost the State hundreds of millions of dollars with low return on investment. By codifying MDDS, DoIT advises that the bill ensures continued collaboration with State agencies to design the right software, websites, and applications and build digital products in a modern, agile, and cost-effective manner.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: SB 242 (Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Information Technology) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Department of Information Technology; Department of Commerce; Maryland Department of Aging; Maryland Department of Emergency Management; Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission; Maryland Cannabis Administration; Comptroller’s Office; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland School for the Deaf; Maryland State Library Agency; St. Mary’s College of Maryland; Interagency Commission on School Construction; Maryland Department of Agriculture; Maryland Department of Disabilities;
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Maryland Department of the Environment; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Human Services; Department of Juvenile Services; Maryland Department of Labor; Maryland Department of Planning; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Board of Public Works; Department of State Police; Office of Administrative Hearings; Maryland Energy Administration; Maryland Insurance Administration; Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Maryland Stadium Authority; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 14, 2025
js/mcr

Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

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

ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Department of Information Technology - Maryland Digital Service - Establishment

BILL NUMBER: HB 221

PREPARED BY: Sara Elalamy - Legislative Director

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

X WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

N/A