

SENATE BILL 66

J1, J2

8lr0626

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Senators Simonaire, Young, Mathias, Eckardt, and Ready**

Requested: September 17, 2017

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 2018

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health – Vital Statistics – Veteran Suicide Reporting**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the information that is required on a certificate of death to
4 include, under certain circumstances, whether the decedent was ever a member of
5 the armed forces of the United States; requiring the Secretary of the Maryland
6 Department of Health to publish an annual report on veteran suicide; limiting the
7 information that may be included in the report; requiring the Secretary to submit
8 the report to the State Department of Veterans Affairs and certain committees of the
9 General Assembly on or before a certain date each year; and generally relating to
10 reporting on veteran suicide.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
12 Article – Health – General
13 Section 4–212 (a) and (c)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2017 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
17 Article – Health – General
18 Section 4–212(b) and 4–219
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2017 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Health – General**

24 4–212.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (a) This section does not apply to a fetal death.

2 (b) (1) A certificate of death regardless of age of decedent shall be filled out
3 and signed by:

4 (i) The medical examiner, if the medical examiner takes charge of
5 the body; or

6 (ii) If the medical examiner does not take charge of the body, the
7 physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner who last attended the deceased.

8 (2) The medical examiner, physician, physician assistant, or nurse
9 practitioner shall fill in only the following information on the certificate of death:

10 (i) The name of the deceased;

11 (ii) The cause of death and medical certification;

12 (iii) The date and hour of death; [and]

13 (iv) The place where death occurred; AND

14 (v) **IF KNOWN, WHETHER THE DECEDENT WAS EVER A MEMBER**
15 **OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES.**

16 (3) Any other information that is required on the certificate of death
17 regardless of age of decedent shall be filled in:

18 (i) By the person who has charge of the body; or

19 (ii) If the State Anatomy Board has charge of the body, by the person
20 who last had charge of the body before it was sent to the State Anatomy Board.

21 (4) The medical certification shall be completed within 24 hours after
22 receipt of the death certificate by the physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner
23 in charge of the patient's care for the illness or condition which resulted in death, except
24 when inquiry is required by the medical examiner.

25 (5) In the absence or inability of the attending physician, physician
26 assistant, or nurse practitioner or with the attending physician's, physician assistant's, or
27 nurse practitioner's approval, the certificate may be completed by:

28 (i) The attending physician's associate;

29 (ii) The chief medical officer or designee of the institution in which
30 death occurred; or

1 (iii) The physician who performed an autopsy upon the decedent,
2 provided the individual has access to the medical history of the case and death is due to
3 natural causes.

4 (6) The person completing the cause of death and medical certification
5 shall attest to the accuracy by signature or by an approved electronic process.

6 (7) The funeral director or person acting as the funeral director shall in all
7 cases obtain the medical certification from the person responsible for its completion or
8 obtain assurance that the medical certification has been provided to the Secretary by an
9 approved electronic process.

10 (c) Each individual concerned with carrying out this subtitle promptly shall
11 notify the medical examiner if:

12 (1) The deceased was not under treatment by a physician, physician
13 assistant, or nurse practitioner during the terminal illness;

14 (2) The cause of death is unknown; or

15 (3) The individual considers any of the following conditions to be the cause
16 of death or to have contributed to the death:

17 (i) An accident, including a fall with a fracture or other injury;

18 (ii) Homicide;

19 (iii) Suicide;

20 (iv) Other external manner of death;

21 (v) Alcoholism; or

22 (vi) Criminal or suspected criminal abortion.

23 4–219.

24 (a) At least annually, the Secretary shall:

25 (1) Publish a report of vital statistics, including population estimates; and

26 (2) Print and distribute the report to any official, agency, library, or other
27 person whom the Secretary considers entitled to the report.

28 (b) In addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, by June 30 of
29 each year the Secretary shall report to the Morbidity, Mortality, and Quality Review
30 Committee established under § 18–107 of this article on the number and cause of death of

1 Maryland children under the age of 1 year who died during the prior calendar year ending
2 December 31st.

3 (c) In addition to the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, within
4 24 hours of notification of a death, the Secretary shall report to the Mortality and Quality
5 Review Committee any death of an individual who at the time of death was:

6 (1) An individual with a developmental disability, as defined in § 7-101(f)
7 of this article, who resided in or was receiving services from any program or facility licensed
8 or operated by the Developmental Disabilities Administration; or

9 (2) An individual with a mental illness who resided in or was receiving
10 services from any program or facility approved, licensed, or operated by the Behavioral
11 Health Administration.

12 **(D) (1) IN ADDITION TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTIONS (A)**
13 **THROUGH (C) OF THIS SECTION, THE SECRETARY SHALL PUBLISH AN ANNUAL**
14 **REPORT ON VETERAN SUICIDE.**

15 **(2) THE REPORT MAY INCLUDE ONLY INFORMATION REGARDING THE**
16 **AGE, SEX, RACE OR ETHNICITY, AND METHOD OF SUICIDE OF THE VETERAN.**

17 **(3) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2019, AND EACH DECEMBER 1**
18 **THEREAFTER, THE SECRETARY SHALL SUBMIT THE REPORT TO THE STATE**
19 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1246 OF THE**
20 **STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND**
21 **ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE HEALTH AND**
22 **GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE.**

23 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
24 October 1, 2018.