

# HOUSE BILL 881

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CF 1lr1611

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By: **Delegate Valentino-Smith**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2021

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Mental Health Facilities – Sexual Abuse and Harassment – Reporting and**  
3 **Prevention**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring certain mental health facilities to report certain complaints  
5 of sexual abuse and sexual harassment to certain entities; requiring certain mental  
6 health facilities to develop and implement certain policies and procedures, ensure  
7 that staff provide certain assistance, and develop and oversee certain training and  
8 education; requiring the Behavioral Health Administration to ensure that certain  
9 policies and procedures are uniform for certain State facilities; requiring certain  
10 mental health facilities to use certain screen-tools for a certain purpose, reassign  
11 certain patients under certain circumstances, provide a certain patient with certain  
12 treatment and education, and ensure that certain staff are trained in a certain  
13 trauma recovery modality; requiring certain entities to adopt a certain plan; altering  
14 certain requirements relating to sexual abuse and sexual harassment reporting and  
15 prevention for certain State facilities; requiring the Office of Health Care Quality to  
16 enforce certain provisions of law; requiring the Maryland Department of Health to  
17 adopt certain regulations; and generally relating to mental health facilities and the  
18 reporting and prevention of sexual abuse and harassment.

19 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
20 Article – Health – General  
21 Section 10-101(a), (g), and (k) and 10-701(a)(1) and (3)  
22 Annotated Code of Maryland  
23 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
25 Article – Health – General  
26 Section 10-705  
27 Annotated Code of Maryland  
28 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

3 **Article – Health – General**

4 10–101.

5 (a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

6 (g) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this title, “facility” means any public or  
7 private clinic, hospital, or other institution that provides or purports to provide treatment  
8 or other services for individuals who have mental disorders.

9 (2) “Facility” does not include a Veterans’ Administration hospital.

10 (k) “State facility” means a facility that is owned or operated by the Department.

11 10–701.

12 (a) (1) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

13 (3) “Facility” does not include an acute general care hospital that does not  
14 have a separately identified inpatient psychiatric service.

15 10–705.

16 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

17 (2) (i) “Abuse” means cruel or inhumane treatment that causes:

18 1. Any physical injury; or

19 2. Any of the following kinds of sexual abuse:

20 A. A sexual act, as defined in § 3–301 of the Criminal Law  
21 Article;

22 B. Sexual contact, as defined in § 3–301 of the Criminal Law  
23 Article; or

24 C. Vaginal intercourse, as defined in § 3–301 of the Criminal  
25 Law Article.

26 (ii) “Abuse” does not include:

27 1. The performance of an accepted medical procedure that a  
28 physician orders in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of this subtitle; or



1 (i) A determination of the nature, extent, and cause of the abuse, if  
2 any;

3 (ii) The identity of the alleged abuser; and

4 (iii) Any other pertinent fact or matter.

5 (d) As soon as possible, but no later than 10 working days after the completion of  
6 the investigation, the law enforcement agency shall submit a written report of its findings  
7 to the State's Attorney, the State designated protection and advocacy system, and the  
8 administrative head of the facility.

9 (e) A person shall have the immunity from liability described under § 5-626 of  
10 the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article for:

11 (1) Making a report under this section;

12 (2) Participating in an investigation arising out of a report under this  
13 section; or

14 (3) Participating in a judicial proceeding arising out of a report under this  
15 section.

16 (f) **(1) [The Administration shall ensure that State facilities] A FACILITY**  
17 **SHALL:**

18 **[(1)] (I) Develop [uniform] AND IMPLEMENT policies and procedures on**  
19 **making and responding to allegations AND COMPLAINTS of sexual abuse or sexual**  
20 **harassment;**

21 **[(2)] (II) Ensure that staff provide assistance to patients who have**  
22 **requested assistance in making complaints about sexual abuse or sexual harassment;**

23 **[(3)] (III) Develop and oversee training for staff on how to identify and**  
24 **prevent sexual abuse and sexual harassment, how to respond to complaints, and how to**  
25 **support victims in an appropriate manner; and**

26 **[(4)] (IV) Develop and oversee patient education on identifying sexual**  
27 **abuse and sexual harassment and on reporting incidents of sexual abuse and sexual**  
28 **harassment.**

29 **(2) THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL ENSURE THAT THE POLICIES AND**  
30 **PROCEDURES DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS**  
31 **SUBSECTION ARE UNIFORM FOR STATE FACILITIES.**

32 (g) The Administration shall develop and implement a plan to secure the sleeping

1 quarters of male and female patients at all State facilities that maximizes the use of  
2 available resources and infrastructure.

3 (h) Each [State facility] FACILITY shall:

4 (1) Use evidence–based screening tools to identify on admission a patient’s  
5 risk of being a victim of sexual or physical abuse, or being a sexual or physical abuser, and  
6 shall consider the assessment of risk in making any unit and room assignment;

7 (2) **ADOPT A WRITTEN PROTECTION PLAN AS PART OF A PATIENT’S**  
8 **TREATMENT PLAN, AS WARRANTED BY THE PATIENT’S RISK OF BEING A VICTIM OF**  
9 **SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE OR BEING A SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSER;**

10 (3) [Reassign] **IF POSSIBLE, REASSIGN** any patient accused of sexual  
11 assault promptly to another unit and ensure that any alleged victim and the alleged  
12 assailant are not housed in the same unit;

13 [(3)] (4) Provide a patient who has a history of sexual trauma with  
14 treatment and education that is evidence–based or reflective of best practices to reduce the  
15 likelihood of the patient being the victim of repeated sexual abuse; and

16 [(4)] (5) Ensure that designated clinical staff are trained in at least one  
17 trauma recovery modality that is considered to be a best practice.

18 (I) **THE OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE QUALITY SHALL ENFORCE THIS**  
19 **SECTION.**

20 (J) **THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS**  
21 **SECTION.**

22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
23 October 1, 2021.