

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 1276 (Delegate Henson)  
 Health and Government Operations

Maryland Emergency Management Agency – Emergency Planning and  
 Management Cultural Competency – Study

This bill requires the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to study and make recommendations on best practices and model policies, including those addressing emergency responder training, for the culturally sensitive inclusion of minority communities in State and local emergency plans and management. By December 31, 2021, MEMA must report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021, and terminates June 30, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by \$175,000 in FY 2022 only. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	175,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$175,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

*Note: ( ) = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

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

**Small Business Effect:** None.

Analysis

**Bill Summary:** In conducting the study and making recommendations, MEMA must conduct a survey of State and local government organizations for emergency management

to ascertain current emergency planning strategies that address the needs of diverse communities, including (1) individuals with disabilities; (2) African American, Latino, Indigenous, and other minority communities; (3) individuals with limited English proficiency; (4) individuals facing socioeconomic challenges; and (5) individuals with religious restrictions. MEMA must also review federal emergency management plans and the emergency management plans of other states that address the needs of diverse communities.

**Current Law:**

*Office of Disability Integration and Coordination and Disability Coordinator*

As a result of the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) appointed a disability coordinator to advise the agency on issues concerning people with disabilities before, during, and after disasters. In 2010, FEMA established the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination to support the work of the coordinator. The coordinator and office provide state and local governments resources to help ensure that people with disabilities can participate in, and benefit from, programs and services during all phases of emergency management.

*Maryland Emergency Management Agency*

MEMA, which is part of the Military Department, is responsible for coordinating the State response in any major emergency or disaster. This includes supporting local governments as needed or requested and coordinating assistance with FEMA and other federal partners. MEMA manages many of the federal grants that fund a broad range of initiatives leading to enhanced protection from and responses to the full range of natural and man-made disasters that could threaten the State's citizens.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures increase by \$175,000 in fiscal 2022 only for MEMA to hire a consultant to conduct the required study and develop the required report. MEMA advises that it needs outside technical support to conduct the study, develop the survey, review other state and federal emergency management plans, and produce the report. As the study requires the collection and analysis of data within a short timeframe, the Department of Legislative Services concurs. MEMA may also need to temporarily redirect staff from other priorities to assist with the study but can do so using existing budget resources.

## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Howard and Prince George's counties; Maryland Association of Counties; City of Bowie; Maryland Municipal League; Governor's Office; Department of Budget and Management; Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Military Department; Federal Emergency Management Agency; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 8, 2021  
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