

Chapter 707

(Senate Bill 475)

AN ACT concerning

Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention – Establishment

FOR the purpose of establishing the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention in the Maryland Department of Health to reduce firearm violence, harm from firearm violence, and misuse of firearms in the State; and generally relating to the Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention.

BY adding to

Article – Health – General

Section 13–5201 through 13–5205 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 52. Center for Firearm Violence Prevention and Intervention”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2023 Replacement Volume)

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

Article – Health – General

SUBTITLE 52. CENTER FOR FIREARM VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

13–5201.

IN THIS SUBTITLE, “CENTER” MEANS THE CENTER FOR FIREARM VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

13–5202.

(A) THERE IS A CENTER FOR FIREARM VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION IN THE DEPARTMENT.

(B) THE PURPOSE OF THE CENTER IS TO REDUCE FIREARM VIOLENCE, HARM FROM FIREARM VIOLENCE, AND MISUSE OF FIREARMS IN THE STATE BY PARTNERING WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND AFFECTED COMMUNITIES TO IMPLEMENT A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO FIREARM VIOLENCE REDUCTION.

13–5203.

(A) THE SECRETARY SHALL APPOINT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER.

(B) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL APPOINT AND REMOVE ALL STAFF IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE STATE PERSONNEL AND PENSIONS ARTICLE.

(C) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL COORDINATE AND DIRECT ANY PLANNING RELATED TO THE CENTER INITIATED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(D) THE CENTER MAY APPLY FOR, RECEIVE, AND SPEND FEDERAL GRANTS-IN-AID OR ANY OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR USE IN CARRYING OUT THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OR THE DEPARTMENT.

13-5204.

(A) THE CENTER SHALL:

(1) WORK IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVICES OR ANY SUCCESSOR AGENCY, THE MARYLAND STATE POLICE, AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT STATE OR LOCAL AGENCY TO ENSURE A ~~WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT~~ MULTIDEPARTMENTAL APPROACH TO REDUCING FIREARM VIOLENCE;

(2) SOLICIT AND CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM, ~~AT A MINIMUM:~~

(I) COMMUNITIES DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BY FIREARM VIOLENCE; ~~AND~~

(II) PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS; ~~AND~~

(III) INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN FIREARM SAFETY AND TRAINING; AND

(IV) ANY OTHER EXPERTS, GROUPS, OR ORGANIZATIONS AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DETERMINES APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY; AND

(3) (I) ON OR BEFORE MAY 1, 2025, SUBMIT A PRELIMINARY STATE PLAN FOR A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO REDUCING FIREARM VIOLENCE TO GUIDE THE WORK OF THE CENTER TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE

WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY;
AND

(II) ON OR BEFORE MAY 1, 2029, AND EVERY 4 YEARS THEREAFTER, SUBMIT A STATE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FIREARM VIOLENCE REDUCTION USING PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIES TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

(B) THE CENTER MAY:

(1) OFFER TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS, AND COMMUNITY AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO INCREASE CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED FIREARM VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES;

(2) ISSUE BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE AND MODEL PROCESSES IN CONSULTATION WITH AFFECTED COMMUNITIES REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED FIREARM VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES;

(3) IN CONSULTATION WITH THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVICES OR ANY SUCCESSOR AGENCY, FACILITATE CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL DATA AND INFORMATION SHARING;

(4) CONDUCT PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS;

(5) SHARE DATA AND COLLABORATE WITH HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS REGARDING THE PREVENTION OF FIREARM VIOLENCE;

(6) PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE-BASED FIREARM VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVES IN AFFECTED COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE; AND

(7) ENGAGE IN ANY OTHER ACTIVITY CONSISTENT WITH THE CENTER'S MISSION.

13-5205.

FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE GOVERNOR MAY INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION SUFFICIENT TO FUND THE CENTER.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2024.