

Chapter 906

(Senate Bill 412)

AN ACT concerning

Mental Health Law – County Mental Health Advisory Committees – Membership

FOR the purpose of altering the membership of a county’s mental health advisory committee by including an individual with experience with mental health care for veterans or individuals serving in the military on the list of groups from which individuals may be appointed to the committee by the governing body of the county; and generally relating to county mental health advisory committees.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 Article – Health – General
 Section 10–309
 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

10–309.

- (a) (1) The mental health advisory committee of each county shall consist of:
- (i) As nonvoting ex officio members, the following individuals or their designees:
1. The health officer for the county;
 2. A representative of a State inpatient facility that serves that county, appointed as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection;
 3. The county mental health director;
 4. The director of the core service agency or local behavioral health authority, if any; and
 5. In jurisdictions with designated State inpatient beds located in local general hospitals, a representative from that facility; and
- (ii) As voting members, appointed by the governing body of the county and representative of the county’s major socio-economic and ethnic groups:

1. At least 5, but not more than 7, representatives selected from among the following groups or agencies:

- A. The governing body;
- B. The county department of education;
- C. The local department of social services;
- D. The practicing physicians;
- E. Mental health professionals who are not physicians;
- F. The clergy;
- G. The legal profession;
- H. A local law enforcement agency;
- I. A local general hospital that contains an inpatient psychiatric unit;
- J. The Department of Aging;
- K. The Department of Juvenile Services;
- L. The local alcohol and drug abuse agency; and
- M. A local community rehabilitation or housing program; and

2. At least 5 individuals selected from among the following groups or organizations and appointed as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection:

- A. At least 2 individuals who are currently receiving or who have in the past received mental health services;
- B. Parents or other relatives of adults with mental disorders;
- C. Parents or other relatives of children or adolescents with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders the onset of which occurred during childhood or adolescence;
- D. The local mental health association, if any; [and]

E. AN INDIVIDUAL WITH EXPERIENCE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS OR INDIVIDUALS SERVING IN THE MILITARY; AND

F. A member of the general public.

(2) If more than one State inpatient facility serves a county, a representative from at least 1 of the facilities shall be appointed by the Director.

(3) At least one-half of the voting members shall be appointed from among the individuals listed in paragraph (1)(ii)2A through C of this subsection.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subsection, if the governing body of Baltimore City or Anne Arundel County designates a core service agency or local behavioral health authority as the mental health advisory committee, the mental health advisory committee shall consist of the governing body of the core service agency or local behavioral health authority.

(b) If an intercounty advisory committee is established, the governing body of each participating county shall appoint at least 4 members of the committee.

(c) Notwithstanding subsection (a)(1)(ii) of this section, if the governing body of a county establishes a joint mental health and addictions advisory committee, the governing body may appoint any additional members as necessary to advise and advocate about addictions issues.

(d) (1) The term of an appointed member is 3 years and begins on July 1.

(2) The terms of one-third of the appointed members of each county advisory committee or intercounty advisory committee end each year.

(3) At the end of a term, a member may continue to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

(4) A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the rest of the term and until a successor is appointed and qualifies.

(5) A member who serves 2 consecutive full 3-year terms may not be reappointed for 2 years after completion of those terms.

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

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2024.