

HOUSE BILL 353

J1

(4lr1925)

ENROLLED BILL

— Health and Government Operations/Education, Energy, and the Environment —

Introduced by ~~Delegate Cullison~~ Delegates Cullison, Pena-Melnyk, Alston, Bagnall, Bhandari, Chisholm, Guzzone, Hill, Hutchinson, S. Johnson, Kaiser, Kerr, Kipke, R. Lewis, Lopez, Martinez, M. Morgan, Reilly, Rosenberg, Szeliga, Taveras, White Holland, and Woods

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this _____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, _____ M.

Speaker.

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Department of Health – 2-1-1 Maryland – Oversight**

3 FOR the purpose of defining the term “Health and Human Services Referral System” for
4 the purposes of certain provisions of law governing the System to mean a certain
5 coordinated system for health and human service resources that is accessible to State
6 residents, rather than a certain telephone service; altering the definition of “2-1-1
7 Maryland” to clarify that it is the entity that administers the 2-1-1 system in the
8 State; repealing the requirement that the Maryland Department of Health evaluate
9 the performance of certain call centers and make certain recommendations regarding
10 the quality of service provided by call centers and corrective action to be taken by a
11 call center; and generally relating to 2-1-1 Maryland.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments.



1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
2 Article – Health – General
3 Section 24–1201 through 24–1204
4 Annotated Code of Maryland
5 (2023 Replacement Volume)

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

8 **Article – Health – General**

9 24–1201.

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

11 (b) “Health and Human Services Referral System” means [telephone service that
12 automatically connects an individual dialing the digits 2–1–1 to an established information
13 and referral answering point] **A COORDINATED SYSTEM FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN
14 SERVICE RESOURCES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STATE RESIDENTS THROUGH 2–1–1 AND
15 OTHER DESIGNATED TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS.**

16 (c) “2–1–1” means the abbreviated dialing code assigned by the Federal
17 Communications Commission for consumer access to community information and referral
18 services.

19 (d) “2–1–1 Maryland” means the Maryland Information Network, 2–1–1
20 Maryland, a 501(c)(3) corporation in the State **THAT ADMINISTERS THE 2–1–1 SYSTEM.**

21 (e) “2–1–1 Maryland call center” means a nonprofit agency or organization
22 designated by 2–1–1 Maryland to provide 2–1–1 services.

23 24–1202.

24 (a) The General Assembly:

25 (1) Recognizes the importance of a statewide information and referral
26 system for health and human services;

27 (2) Recognizes that an integrated [telephone] **TECHNOLOGY** system
28 would provide **ACCESS TO** a single source for information and referral to health and human
29 services, community preparedness, and [crisis information] **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE
30 COORDINATION** and could be accessed toll free from anywhere in Maryland, 24 hours a
31 day, 365 days a year;

32 (3) Acknowledges that the three–digit number, 2–1–1, is a nationally
33 recognized and applied telephone number which may be used for information and referral

1 and eliminates delays caused by lack of familiarity with health and human services
2 numbers and by understandable confusion in circumstances of crisis; and

3 (4) Recognizes a demonstrated need for an easy to remember, easy to use
4 telephone number that will enable individuals in need to be directed to available
5 community resources.

6 (b) The purpose of this subtitle is to establish the three-digit number, 2-1-1, as
7 the primary information and referral telephone number for health and human services in
8 the State.

9 24-1203.

10 (a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, an agency or organization
11 shall be approved by 2-1-1 Maryland as a 2-1-1 Maryland call center in order to provide
12 2-1-1 services in the State.

13 (b) When approving a 2-1-1 service provider, 2-1-1 Maryland shall consider:

14 (1) The ability of the proposed 2-1-1 service provider to meet the national
15 2-1-1 standards recommended by:

16 (i) The Alliance of Information and Referral Systems and adopted
17 by the National 2-1-1 Collaborative; or

18 (ii) An equivalent entity;

19 (2) The financial stability of the proposed 2-1-1 service provider;

20 (3) Any community support for the proposed 2-1-1 service provider;

21 (4) Any experience that the proposed 2-1-1 service provider has with other
22 information and referral services;

23 (5) The degree to which the county in which the proposed call center is to
24 be located has dedicated substantial resources to the establishment of a single telephone
25 source for non-emergency inquiries regarding county services; and

26 (6) Any other criteria that 2-1-1 Maryland considers appropriate.

27 (c) If [a unit] AN AGENCY of the State that provides health and human services
28 establishes a public information telephone line or hotline, the [unit] AGENCY shall consult
29 with 2-1-1 Maryland about using the 2-1-1 system to provide public access to information.

30 24-1204.

31 (a) The Department shall, in consultation with 2-1-1 Maryland, as appropriate:

1 (1) Maintain public information available from State agencies, programs,
2 and departments that provide health and human services;

3 (2) Support projects and activities that further the development of 2-1-1
4 Maryland;

5 (3) Examine and make recommendations to maximize the use of
6 information technology in making 2-1-1 services available throughout the State; **AND**

7 [(4) Evaluate the performance of each 2-1-1 Maryland call center;

8 (5) Make recommendations to 2-1-1 Maryland regarding the quality of
9 service provided by call centers or the performance of call centers when issues related to
10 service quality and performance are presented to the Department;

11 (6) Make recommendations regarding corrective action to be taken by a call
12 center, as appropriate; and

13 (7) (4) Make recommendations to 2-1-1 Maryland regarding the
14 establishment of an opt-in mental health services phone call program that:

15 (i) Requires a call center to call individuals who have opted in to the
16 mental health services phone call program on a periodic basis, as determined by 2-1-1
17 Maryland; and

18 (ii) Attempts to connect individuals to a provider of mental health
19 services if the individual requests to speak to a mental health provider during a call with
20 2-1-1 Maryland.

21 (b) The Governor may include in the annual budget bill an appropriation to the
22 Department in an amount sufficient to carry out subsection [(a)(7)] (A)(4) of this section.

23 (c) On or before December 31, 2005, and every year thereafter, the Department,
24 in consultation with 2-1-1 Maryland, shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1257
25 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on the activities performed under
26 subsection (a) of this section.

27 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

28 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the 2-1-1 Maryland board of
29 directors be expanded to include two representatives of 2-1-1 Maryland call centers
30 nominated by the 2-1-1 Maryland call centers.

31 (b) On or before July 1, 2024, the 2-1-1 Maryland call centers shall nominate two
32 representatives to serve on the 2-1-1 Maryland board of directors.

1 SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
2 ~~October~~ June 1, 2024.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.