

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 997
Finance

(Senator Klausmeier)

Health - Vital Records - Electronic Filing and Storage

This bill requires the Secretary of Health, by January 1, 2028, to establish a process by which vital records can be filed electronically, replacing an existing requirement that the Secretary, by January 1, 2015, establish a process for death certificates to be filed electronically. Additionally, the Secretary must (1) educate physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners regarding the process by which *vital records* (rather than death certificates) can be filed electronically and (2) store vital records in a searchable electronic database.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) can implement the bill with existing budgeted resources, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

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

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: “Vital record” means a certificate or report of birth, death, fetal death, marriage, divorce, dissolution or annulment of marriage, adoption, or adjudication of paternity that is required by law to be filed with the Secretary.

The Division of Vital Records in MDH maintains a statewide system for registering, indexing, filing, and protecting all records of birth, death, fetal death, marriage and divorce, adoption, and legitimation and adjudication of paternity for events occurring in Maryland.

The Secretary must provide, on request, any person authorized by applicable regulations with a certified or abridged copy of a birth, death, fetal death, or marriage (for a marriage performed after June 1, 1951) certificate.

State Fiscal Effect: According to MDH, vital records are already stored in a searchable electronic database and all vital records can be filed electronically, except for fetal death certificates (and marriage and divorce certificates and reports in two jurisdictions). MDH advises that electronic filing for fetal death certificates should become available by January 1, 2025.

MDH advises that Anne Arundel County does not currently participate in the electronic vital records submission process for marriage certificates and Baltimore City does not participate for divorce certificates.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Association of County Health Officers; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 12, 2024
km/jc

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