

# SENATE BILL 458

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By: **Senator Gile**

Introduced and read first time: January 21, 2025

Assigned to: Finance

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Occupations – Structural Racism Training**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring applicants for renewal of certain licenses and certain  
4 certificates issued by certain health occupation boards to attest that the applicant  
5 completed an implicit bias and structural racism training program, rather than an  
6 implicit bias training program, approved by the Cultural and Linguistic Health Care  
7 Professional Competency Program; and generally relating to structural racism  
8 training programs.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
10 Article – Health – General  
11 Section 20–1301, 20–1302, and 20–1306  
12 Annotated Code of Maryland  
13 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
15 Article – Health Occupations  
16 Section 1–225  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

21 **Article – Health – General**

22 20–1301.

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

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (b) “Cultural and linguistic competency” means cultural and linguistic abilities  
2 that can be incorporated into therapeutic and medical evaluation and treatment, including:

3 (1) Direct communication in the patient’s primary language;

4 (2) Understanding and applying the roles that culture, ethnicity, and race  
5 play in diagnosis, treatment, and clinical care; and

6 (3) Awareness of how the attitudes, values, and beliefs of health care  
7 providers and patients influence and impact professional and patient relations.

8 (c) “Health care professional” includes a physician, nurse, dentist, social worker,  
9 psychologist, pharmacist, health educator, or other allied health professional.

10 (d) “Implicit bias” means a bias in judgment that results from subtle cognitive  
11 processes, including the following prejudices and stereotypes that often operate at a level  
12 below conscious awareness and without intentional control:

13 (1) Prejudicial negative feelings or beliefs about a group that an individual  
14 holds without being aware of the feelings or beliefs; and

15 (2) Unconscious attributions of particular qualities to a member of a  
16 specific social group that are influenced by experience and based on learned associations  
17 between various qualities and social categories, including race and gender.

18 (e) “Program” means the Cultural and Linguistic Health Care Professional  
19 Competency Program.

20 **(F) “STRUCTURAL RACISM” MEANS A SYSTEM OF INHERITED**  
21 **INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS THAT PROVIDE DIFFERENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR**  
22 **HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, AND THE ENVIRONMENT TO**  
23 **AN INDIVIDUAL BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL’S RACE.**

24 20–1302.

25 (a) There is a Cultural and Linguistic Health Care Professional Competency  
26 Program.

27 (b) The purpose of the Program is to:

28 (1) Provide for a voluntary program in which educational classes are  
29 offered to health care professionals to teach health care professionals:

30 (i) Methods to improve the health care professionals’ cultural and  
31 linguistic competency to communicate with non–English speaking patients and patients  
32 from other cultures who are English speaking;

1 (ii) Cultural beliefs and practices that may impact patient health  
2 care practices and allow health care professionals to incorporate the knowledge of the  
3 beliefs and practices in the diagnosis and treatment of patients; and

4 (iii) Methods to enable health care professionals to increase the  
5 health literacy of their patients to improve the patient's ability to obtain, process, and  
6 understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health care  
7 decisions;

8 (2) Establish and provide an evidence-based implicit bias training  
9 program for health care professionals involved in the perinatal care of patients under §  
10 20–1305 of this subtitle; and

11 (3) Identify and approve implicit bias **AND STRUCTURAL RACISM** training  
12 programs for health occupation licensure and certification under § 1–225 of the Health  
13 Occupations Article.

14 20–1306.

15 (a) (1) The Program shall, in coordination with the Office of Minority Health  
16 and Health Disparities, identify and approve implicit bias **AND STRUCTURAL RACISM**  
17 training programs that an individual may complete to satisfy the requirements of § 1–225  
18 of the Health Occupations Article.

19 (2) The Program may approve only implicit bias **AND STRUCTURAL**  
20 **RACISM** training programs under paragraph (1) of this subsection that are recognized by a  
21 health occupations board established under the Health Occupations Article or accredited  
22 by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.

23 (b) The Program shall provide a list of training programs approved under  
24 subsection (a) of this section on request.

## 25 Article – Health Occupations

26 1–225.

27 (a) **[An] SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, AN** applicant for the  
28 renewal of a license or certificate issued by a health occupations board under this article  
29 shall attest in the application that the applicant has completed an implicit bias **AND**  
30 **STRUCTURAL RACISM** training program approved by the Cultural and Linguistic Health  
31 Care Professional Competency Program under § 20–1306 of the Health – General Article.

32 (b) The **[requirements of] REQUIREMENT UNDER** subsection (a) of this section  
33 **THAT AN APPLICANT ATTEST TO THE COMPLETION OF AN IMPLICIT BIAS AND**  
34 **STRUCTURAL RACISM TRAINING PROGRAM** shall apply only to an applicant's first  
35 license or certificate renewal after April 1, **[2022] 2026**.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, if an applicant for the  
2 renewal of a license or certificate issued by a health occupations board under the Health  
3 Occupations Article is applying on or after the effective date of this Act but before April 1,  
4 2026, for the applicant's first license or certificate renewal, the applicant shall attest in the  
5 application that the applicant has completed an implicit bias training program approved  
6 by the Cultural and Linguistic Health Care Professional Competency Program under §  
7 20-1306 of the Health – General Article.

8           SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
9 October 1, 2025.