

# SENATE BILL 676

J1, J3

5lr3277  
CF 5lr2113

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By: **Senator Gile**

Introduced and read first time: January 26, 2025

Assigned to: Finance

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Care Facilities – Hospitals and Freestanding Birthing Centers –**  
3 **Perinatal Care Standards**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Health to adopt regulations  
5 establishing minimum perinatal care standards for certain hospitals that meet or  
6 exceed the Maryland Perinatal System Standards; requiring certain hospitals and  
7 freestanding birthing centers, as a condition of licensure, to comply with certain  
8 minimum perinatal care standards; and generally relating to standards of care for  
9 hospitals and freestanding birthing centers.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
11 Article – Health – General  
12 Section 19–319(a) and 19–3B–02(a) and (b)  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

15 BY adding to  
16 Article – Health – General  
17 Section 19–319(j) and 19–3B–03(a)(1)(ii)9.  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

20 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
21 Article – Health – General  
22 Section 19–3B–03(a)(1)(ii)8. and 9.  
23 Annotated Code of Maryland  
24 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **Article – Health – General**

2 19–319.

3 (a) To qualify for a license, an applicant and the hospital or related institution to  
4 be operated shall meet the requirements of this section.

5 **(J) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING**  
6 **MINIMUM PERINATAL CARE STANDARDS THAT MEET OR EXCEED THE MARYLAND**  
7 **PERINATAL SYSTEM STANDARDS FOR EACH HOSPITAL THAT PROVIDES**  
8 **OBSTETRICAL SERVICES.**

9 **(2) EACH HOSPITAL THAT PROVIDES OBSTETRICAL SERVICES SHALL**  
10 **COMPLY WITH THE PERINATAL CARE STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE**  
11 **REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION AS A**  
12 **CONDITION OF LICENSURE.**

13 19–3B–02.

14 (a) A freestanding ambulatory care facility may not operate in the State unless  
15 the Secretary has granted the facility a license.

16 (b) The Secretary shall issue a license to an applicant that meets the  
17 requirements of this subtitle and all applicable regulations adopted by the Secretary.

18 19–3B–03.

19 (a) (1) After consultation with representatives of payors, health care  
20 practitioners, and freestanding ambulatory care facilities, the Secretary shall by regulation  
21 establish:

22 (ii) Standards to ensure quality of care and patient safety that shall  
23 include:

24 8. The use of ultrasound imaging in a freestanding birthing  
25 center; [and]

26 **9. MINIMUM PERINATAL CARE STANDARDS FOR A**  
27 **FREESTANDING BIRTHING CENTER THAT MEET OR EXCEED THE MARYLAND**  
28 **PERINATAL SYSTEM STANDARDS THAT A FREESTANDING BIRTHING CENTER SHALL**  
29 **MEET AS A CONDITION OF LICENSURE; AND**

30 **[9.] 10.** Any other procedures that the Secretary considers  
31 necessary for quality of care and patient safety.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
2   October 1, 2025.