

# SENATE BILL 971

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By: **Senator Lam (By Request – Commission on Public Health)**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2025

Assigned to: Finance

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Department of Health and Health Officers – Revisions**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Health to notify each health  
4 officer for a county of a certain procurement to offer the opportunity for the county  
5 health department to join the procurement; authorizing a health officer for a county  
6 to make an appointment to a position without the approval of the Maryland  
7 Department of Health or the Department of Budget and Management if the position  
8 is fully funded through the use of local funding or grant funding; authorizing a health  
9 officer for a county to enter into certain contracts if the Secretary of Health does not  
10 respond to a request for approval within a certain time period; requiring the  
11 Department to include certain data in a health care workforce data clearinghouse if  
12 the Department creates the clearinghouse; authorizing a health officer for a county  
13 to serve on the board of a hospital if the health officer does not accept payment for  
14 the health officer's service on the board; and generally relating to the Maryland  
15 Department of Health and health officers of counties.

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
17 Article – Health – General  
18 Section 3–306  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

21 BY adding to  
22 Article – Health – General  
23 Section 24–2501 and 24–2502 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 25. Health Care  
24 Workforce Data Clearinghouse”  
25 Annotated Code of Maryland  
26 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

27 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
28 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 3–306.

3 (a) Except as provided by agreement between the Secretary and the local  
4 governing body, and in addition to the powers and duties set forth elsewhere, each health  
5 officer has the powers and duties set forth in this section.

6 (b) A health officer may obtain samples of food and drugs for analysis.

7 (c) (1) The health officer for a county is the executive officer and secretary of  
8 the county board of health.

9 (2) (I) Except in Montgomery County, the health officer for a county  
10 shall appoint the staff of the county health department.

11 (II) **IF A POSITION WITH A COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS**  
12 **FULLY FUNDED THROUGH THE USE OF LOCAL FUNDING OR GRANT FUNDING, THE**  
13 **HEALTH OFFICER FOR THE COUNTY MAY APPOINT AN INDIVIDUAL TO THE POSITION**  
14 **WITHOUT APPROVAL BY THE SECRETARY OR THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND**  
15 **MANAGEMENT.**

16 (3) The health officer for a county shall have an office at an accessible place  
17 in the county.

18 (4) (i) The health officer for a county shall enforce throughout the  
19 county:

20 1. Under the direction of the Secretary, the State health laws  
21 and the policies, rules, and regulations that the Secretary adopts; and

22 2. Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,  
23 under the direction of the county board of health, the rules and regulations that the county  
24 board of health adopts.

25 (ii) The health officer for a county shall enforce in each municipality  
26 or special taxing district in the county the rules or regulations that the county board of  
27 health adopts unless the municipality or district has a charter provision or ordinance that:

28 1. Covers the same subject matter as the county rule or  
29 regulation;

30 2. Is at least as restrictive as the county rule or regulation;  
31 and



1           **(F) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A HEALTH**  
2 **OFFICER FOR A COUNTY MAY SERVE ON THE BOARD OF A HOSPITAL IN THE STATE IF**  
3 **THE HEALTH OFFICER DOES NOT ACCEPT PAYMENT FOR THE HEALTH OFFICER'S**  
4 **SERVICE ON THE BOARD.**

5           **(G) IF THE DEPARTMENT PROCURES A SYSTEM FOR COLLECTING AND**  
6 **STORING ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS, AS DEFINED UNDER § 19-142 OF THIS**  
7 **ARTICLE, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL NOTIFY EACH HEALTH OFFICER FOR A COUNTY**  
8 **AND OFFER THE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT THE OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN THE**  
9 **PROCUREMENT.**

10           **[(f)] (H)**       The Secretary may delegate duties, powers, and functions as provided  
11 in this article to a health officer for a county or other county official authorized to  
12 administer and enforce health and environmental laws.

13           **SUBTITLE 25. HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE DATA CLEARINGHOUSE.**

14           **24-2501.**

15           **IN THIS SUBTITLE, "PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE" MEANS THE STAFF OF:**

16                   **(1) THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION;**

17                   **(2) A LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT; OR**

18                   **(3) THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT WHO FOCUS ON**  
19 **COMMUNITY AND POPULATION HEALTH EFFORTS.**

20           **24-2502.**

21           **IF THE DEPARTMENT CREATES A HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE DATA**  
22 **CLEARINGHOUSE, THE CLEARINGHOUSE SHALL INCLUDE DATA RELATED TO THE**  
23 **PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE.**

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