

Chapter 510

(House Bill 309)

AN ACT concerning

Public Safety – Law Enforcement Agencies – Peer Support Programs

FOR the purpose of establishing certain confidentiality requirements for peer support counseling programs for law enforcement agencies; and generally relating to peer support programs for law enforcement agencies.

BY adding to

Article – Public Safety

Section 3–534

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

Article – Public Safety**3–534.**

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM” MEANS A PROGRAM PROVIDED BY A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY OR THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE THAT PROVIDES COUNSELING SERVICES FROM A PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST TO A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.

(3) “PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST” MEANS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OR A MEMBER OF THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE WHO:

(I) HAS RECEIVED TRAINING IN PEER SUPPORT, INCLUDING EMOTIONAL AND MORAL SUPPORT TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN OR EXPOSED TO AN EMOTIONALLY TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE IN THE COURSE OF DUTY AS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER; AND

(II) IS DESIGNATED BY THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY TO PROVIDE THE SERVICES DESCRIBED IN ITEM (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

(B) (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST OR PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT MAY NOT DISCLOSE THE CONTENTS OF ANY WRITTEN OR ORAL COMMUNICATION REGARDING A PEER SUPPORT INTERACTION.

(2) PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY IF:

(I) THE COMMUNICATION CONTAINS:

1. AN EXPLICIT THREAT OF SUICIDE, THE DISCLOSURE OF WHICH THE PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST BELIEVES IS NECESSARY TO AVOID A SUICIDE ATTEMPT;

2. AN EXPLICIT THREAT OF IMMINENT AND SERIOUS BODILY HARM OR DEATH TO A CLEARLY IDENTIFIED OR IDENTIFIABLE INDIVIDUAL;

3. INFORMATION RELATING TO THE ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD OR VULNERABLE ADULT, OR ABUSE OR NEGLECT THAT IS OTHERWISE REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED BY LAW; OR

4. THE ADMISSION OF CRIMINAL CONDUCT;

(II) THE DISCLOSURE IS AUTHORIZED BY EACH PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT WHO WAS A PARTY TO THE COMMUNICATION; OR

(III) A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION ISSUES AN ORDER OR SUBPOENA REQUIRING THE DISCLOSURE OF THE COMMUNICATION.

(3) BEFORE THE INITIAL PEER SUPPORT INTERACTION WITH A PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT, A PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST SHALL INFORM THE PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT IN WRITING OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY PROVISIONS IN THIS SUBSECTION.

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

Approved by the Governor, May 13, 2025.