

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2025 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 106 (Delegate Harris)  
Health and Government Operations

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**Public Safety - 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System - Definition of First Responders**

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This bill expands the definition of “first responder” used within the Public Safety Article in reference to the State’s 9-1-1 emergency telephone system to include (1) an emergency response technician employed by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT); (2) a facility maintenance technician employed by MDOT; and (3) a vehicle services and recovery technician employed by MDOT.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:**

*The 9-1-1 System*

The State’s 9-1-1 system operates primarily through public safety answering points (PSAPs), which are generally owned and operated by local governments. 9-1-1 specialists working within PSAPs answer, redirect, and take action on 9-1-1 calls received based on the location of the originating 9-1-1 call. State and local governments are preparing for “next generation” 9-1-1 technology that will allow PSAPs to access not only more accurate

information about caller location but also other information that will assist emergency personnel in communicating with callers and responding more efficiently. Legislation has been enacted in recent years to, among other things:

- transfer the Maryland 9-1-1 Board that is responsible for administering the 9-1-1 Trust Fund and overseeing the State’s 9-1-1 system from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to the Maryland Department of Emergency Management;
- expand the uses of the 9-1-1 Trust Fund to include providing funding for 9-1-1 specialist training activities;
- increase funding for the State’s 9-1-1 system; and
- establish a definition of “first responder.”

### *First Responders*

“First responder” means an employee of a State or local public safety agency that provides emergency response services and it includes, (1) a firefighter; (2) a paramedic; (3) an emergency medical technician; (4) a rescue squad member; (5) a sworn member of the Office of the State Fire Marshall; (6) a member of a volunteer fire company who is considered a covered employee for the purposes of Workers’ Compensation Law; (7) an individual with an emergency medical services license or certificate; and (8) a 9-1-1 specialist.

Though the term “first responder” is not otherwise used in the Public Safety Article, the term is referenced a handful of times throughout State law. Notably:

- the Department of Natural Resources must offer a discount of at least \$40 on annual State Park passes for all first responders who are Maryland residents; and
- first responders who may have been exposed to HIV must be notified of the potential exposure by the designated infectious disease/communicable disease officer of a hospital under specified circumstances.

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## **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Emergency Management; Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Association of Counties; Calvert, Howard, and Prince George's counties; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 13, 2025  
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