

Chapter 137

(House Bill 1440)

AN ACT concerning

Courts – Parental Accommodations

FOR the purpose of requiring certain circuit courthouses in the State to maintain on the premises a private lactation room to be used by certain individuals; providing that breast-feeding mothers and certain individuals caring for children under a certain age may be excused from jury service; requiring the Maryland Judiciary to collect and report certain information relating to jury service excusals; and generally relating to excusal from jury service.

BY adding to

Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

Section 1–505

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2020 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

Section ~~8–101~~ and 8–402

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2020 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 – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**1–505.**

(A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO A CIRCUIT COURTHOUSE THAT IS CONSTRUCTED OR UNDERGOES A MAJOR RENOVATION PROJECT ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 1, 2025.

(B) A CIRCUIT COURTHOUSE SHALL MAINTAIN ON ITS PREMISES A PRIVATE LACTATION ROOM THAT MAY BE USED BY EMPLOYEES OF THE COURT AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NURSE AND EXPRESS BREAST MILK.

(C) THE LACTATION ROOM REQUIRED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE:

- (1) A CHAIR WITH A TABLE AND ELECTRICAL OUTLET NEARBY TO ACCOMMODATE PLACEMENT OF A BREAST PUMP DEVICE;
- (2) A DOOR THAT MAY BE LOCKED FROM THE INSIDE;
- (3) A SINK; AND
- (4) A REFRIGERATOR.

8-101.

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

(B) “BREAST-FEEDING MOTHER” MEANS A MOTHER WHO IS FEEDING HER CHILD BREAST MILK, EITHER DIRECTLY FROM HER BREAST OR BY EXPRESSING AND BOTTLE-FEEDING THE CHILD.

[(b)] (C) (1) “Jury commissioner” means an individual who is designated under a jury plan to manage jury selection and service.

(2) “Jury commissioner” includes an acting jury commissioner who is designated in accordance with a jury plan.

[(c)] (D) “Jury plan” means a plan that the circuit court for a county adopts under this title to govern jury selection and service for the county.

[(d)] (E) “Prospective juror” means an individual whose name is selected from a source pool but who has not yet been screened for disqualification, excusal, or exemption.

[(e)] (F) “Qualified juror” means an individual who, after selection as a prospective juror, is not disqualified, excused, or exempted.

[(f)] (G) “Source pool” means a pool from which the name of each prospective juror is to be selected as provided under a jury plan.

8-402.

(a) Subject to the requirements of this section, a jury judge or, if a county’s jury plan allows, its jury commissioner may disqualify, excuse, or exempt an individual who is summoned for jury service or reschedule jury service.

(b) An individual may be disqualified only on the basis of information provided on a juror questionnaire or during an interview or other competent evidence.

(c) (1) To be excused, an individual shall show, on a juror questionnaire, during an interview, or by other competent evidence, that **[extreme]**:

(I) **EXTREME** inconvenience, public necessity, or undue hardship requires excusal;

(II) **THE INDIVIDUAL IS A BREAST-FEEDING MOTHER; OR**

(III) **THE INDIVIDUAL HAS LEGAL CUSTODY OF AND IS PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR A CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF 4 3 YEARS REQUIRING CONTINUOUS CARE BY THE INDIVIDUAL DURING NORMAL COURT HOURS.**

(2) **A JURY JUDGE OR JURY COMMISSIONER MAY, BUT IS NOT REQUIRED TO, EXCUSE AN INDIVIDUAL UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(II) OR (III) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

(3) An individual may be excused:

(i) Only for the period that the jury judge or jury commissioner considers necessary; and

(ii) Not more than twice unless the jury judge finds that the individual has shown an extraordinary circumstance that requires an additional excuse.

~~(3)~~ **(4)** When the period set under this subsection expires, a jury commissioner again shall summon the individual for jury service.

(D) (1) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2025, AND EACH DECEMBER 31 THEREAFTER, THE MARYLAND JUDICIARY SHALL COLLECT AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR THE PRECEDING CALENDAR YEAR:

(I) THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING TO BE EXCUSED FOR JURY DUTY UNDER SUBSECTION (C)(1) OF THIS SECTION; AND

(II) THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS GRANTED OR DENIED AN EXCUSAL UNDER SUBSECTION (C)(1) OF THIS SECTION.

(2) THE INFORMATION REPORTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE DISAGGREGATED BY:

(I) JURISDICTION;

(II) THE TYPE OF EXCUSAL REQUESTED UNDER SUBSECTION (C)(1) OF THIS SECTION; AND

(III) WHETHER THE EXCUSAL REQUEST WAS GRANTED OR DENIED.

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

Approved by the Governor, April 22, 2025.