

Chapter 64

(House Bill 343)

AN ACT concerning

Housing Development Projects – Housing Counseling Services

FOR the purpose of requiring a recipient of certain funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development to ~~offer~~ provide information about certain housing counseling services to certain prospective residents; requiring the Governor to appropriate funds in certain years for community development organizations to partner with certain housing counseling agencies; and generally relating to housing counseling services.

BY adding to

Article – Housing and Community Development
 Section 2–304
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

Article – Housing and Community Development**2–304.**

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

(2) “APPROVED HOUSING COUNSELING AGENCY” MEANS AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS APPROVED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE HOUSING COUNSELING SERVICES DIRECTLY OR THROUGH AFFILIATES OR BRANCHES.

(3) “COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION” MEANS AN ENTITY THAT MEETS THE QUALIFICATIONS OF § 6–203 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(4) “HOUSING COUNSELING” MEANS COUNSELOR–TO–CLIENT ASSISTANCE THAT ADDRESSES UNIQUE FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OR HOUSING ISSUES AND FOCUSES ON WAYS OF OVERCOMING SPECIFIC OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVING A HOUSING GOAL.

(B) AS A CONDITION ON THE RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE DEPARTMENT FROM THE STRATEGIC DEMOLITION FUND OR THE BALTIMORE VACANTS REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE FOR ANY PROJECT TO CONSTRUCT, ACQUIRE, OR REHABILITATE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FOR ~~USE AS HOUSING~~ SINGLE-FAMILY HOMEOWNERSHIP, A FUNDING RECIPIENT SHALL ~~AGREE TO OFFER~~ PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THE HOUSING COUNSELING SERVICES THAT ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO PROSPECTIVE RESIDENTS BEFORE THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT TO PURCHASE THE PROPERTY.

(C) HOUSING COUNSELING SERVICES OFFERED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE PROVIDED BY HOUSING COUNSELORS CERTIFIED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYED BY AN APPROVED HOUSING COUNSELING AGENCY.

(D) IN FISCAL YEAR 2028 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPROPRIATE ~~\$200,000~~ \$90,000 TO BE USED BY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTNER WITH APPROVED HOUSING COUNSELING AGENCIES PROVIDING HOUSING COUNSELING SERVICES UNDER THIS SECTION.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, April 14, 2026.