

HOUSE BILL 162

O2

6lr1466

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Delegate Queen**

Requested: October 30, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Health

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Aging – Maryland Access Point – Dementia-Friendly**
3 **Communities**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Aging to provide resources, training,
5 grants, and other support to the Maryland Access Point network to create
6 dementia-friendly communities through community-based efforts; requiring the
7 Maryland Access Point network to provide certain public awareness and educational
8 materials to communities regarding community-based ways to support individuals
9 with dementia; and generally relating to Maryland Access Point and individuals with
10 dementia.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Human Services
13 Section 10–1001, 10–1002, and 10–1004
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

18 **Article – Human Services**

19 10–1001.

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

21 (b) “Aging and Disability Resource Center” has the meaning stated in 42 U.S.C.
22 § 3002(4).

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(c) **“DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY” MEANS A VILLAGE, TOWN, CITY, OR COUNTY THAT:**

(1) IS INFORMED, SAFE, AND RESPECTFUL OF INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA, FAMILIES OF INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA, AND CARE PARTNERS; AND

(2) PROVIDES SUPPORTIVE OPTIONS THAT FOSTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEMENTIA.

(D) “Long-term services and supports” means the broad range of assistance needed by older adults and individuals with disabilities.

[(d)] (E) “Options counseling” means an interactive process that:

(1) considers an individual’s needs, preferences, values, and circumstances;

(2) assists and supports the individual and others the individual requests to participate in the process;

(3) determines the individual’s goals for independent living; and

(4) develops an appropriate long-term services and supports plan to achieve those goals.

[(e)] (F) “Program” means the Aging and Disability Resource Center Program established under this subtitle.

10–1002.

(a) There is an Aging and Disability Resource Center Program, known as “Maryland Access Point”, in the Department.

(b) The Program is the State’s Aging and Disability Resource Center for purposes of the federal Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006.

(c) The purpose of the Program is to provide a coordinated system of information and access for individuals seeking long-term services and supports, including in-home, community-based, and institutional services.

(d) The Department shall provide:

(1) periodic training to the Maryland Access Point network to increase awareness of the availability of the State’s earned income tax credit established under § 10–704 of the Tax – General Article; **AND**

**(2) RESOURCES, TRAINING, GRANTS, AND OTHER SUPPORT TO THE
MARYLAND ACCESS POINT NETWORK TO CREATE DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY
COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS.**

(e) The Department shall administer, supervise, and coordinate the Program with the cooperation of the Department of Disabilities, the Department of Human Services, the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the Maryland Department of Health.

10-1004.

The Program shall, using its available resources, provide:

- (1) options counseling;
- (2) assistance concerning aging and disability issues and long-term services and supports planning;
- (3) written materials regarding the availability of Program services;
- (4) a public database, which can be accessed and searched on the Internet, of resources and services that could be useful to:
 - (i) individuals who may need long-term services and supports;
 - (ii) caregivers of individuals who need long-term services and supports; and
 - (iii) individuals involved in long-term services and supports planning; [and]

**(5) PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO
COMMUNITIES REGARDING DEMENTIA, INCLUDING COMMUNITY-BASED WAYS TO:**

- (I) REDUCE THE STIGMA OF DEMENTIA;**
- (II) PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING, EMPATHY, AND TOLERANCE;**
- (III) MAKE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND
EASY TO NAVIGATE THROUGH CLEAR SIGNAGE AND ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE;**
- (IV) FOSTER SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS IN WHICH
INDIVIDUALS WITH DEMENTIA CAN:**

- 1. MAINTAIN SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND NETWORKS;**

1 **2. PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY LIFE; AND**

2 **3. FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING; AND**

3 **(V) FACILITATE SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR FIRST**
4 **RESPONDERS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, PUBLIC AGENCIES, AND COMMUNITY GROUPS**
5 **THAT ENCOURAGE STAFF TO BE MORE AWARE AND SUPPORTIVE OF INDIVIDUALS**
6 **WITH DEMENTIA; AND**

7 **[(5)] (6)** other related services necessary for the Program's success.

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