

HOUSE BILL 516

C2, C3

6lr1531

By: **Delegate Vogel**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2026

Assigned to: Government, Labor, and Elections

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Department of Labor – Investigation of Complaints – Requirements**
3 **(Worksite Enforcement Act of 2026)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Labor to establish certain
5 procedures for receiving, reviewing, and investigating certain complaints regarding
6 matters under the jurisdiction of the Department; requiring the Department to
7 employ a certain number of investigators for certain regions of the State for a certain
8 purpose; requiring, beginning in a certain fiscal year, the Governor to include in the
9 annual budget bill an appropriation for the hiring of certain investigators; and
10 generally relating to the Maryland Department of Labor and complaint
11 investigation.

12 BY adding to
13 Article – Business Regulation
14 Section 2–111
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

19 **Article – Business Regulation**

20 **2–111.**

21 **(A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:**

22 **(1) ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR RECEIVING, REVIEWING, AND**
23 **INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS REGARDING MATTERS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF**
24 **THE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING MISMANAGEMENT, MISCONDUCT, ABUSE, FRAUD,**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WASTE, AND BEHAVIOR THAT THREATENS PUBLIC SAFETY OR DEMONSTRATES
2 NEGLIGENCE, INCOMPETENCE, OR MALFEASANCE; AND

3 (2) COOPERATE WITH AND COORDINATE INVESTIGATIVE EFFORTS
4 WITH:

5 (I) THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION OF THE OFFICE
6 OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND, WHEN A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION
7 ESTABLISHES A SUFFICIENT BASIS TO WARRANT A REFERRAL, SHALL REFER
8 MATTERS TO THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION OF THE OFFICE OF THE
9 ATTORNEY GENERAL; AND

10 (II) UNITS IN THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER STATE AND
11 FEDERAL AGENCIES.

12 (B) (1) ON RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SEND A
13 WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINANT:

14 (I) WITHIN 7 CALENDAR DAYS AFTER RECEIPT IF THE
15 COMPLAINT ALLEGES UNLICENSED OR UNSAFE ACTIVITY THAT POSES AN IMMEDIATE
16 RISK TO PUBLIC SAFETY;

17 (II) WITHIN 14 CALENDAR DAYS AFTER RECEIPT IF THE
18 COMPLAINT ALLEGES WAGE THEFT, WORKER MISCLASSIFICATION, OR
19 PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT; AND

20 (III) WITHIN 30 CALENDAR DAYS AFTER RECEIPT IF THE
21 COMPLAINT ALLEGES ADMINISTRATIVE OR RECORD-KEEPING DEFICIENCIES.

22 (2) A RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINANT BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER
23 PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL STATE:

24 (I) WHETHER THE DEPARTMENT IS ABLE TO INVESTIGATE THE
25 COMPLAINT; AND

26 (II) IF THE DEPARTMENT IS UNABLE TO INVESTIGATE THE
27 COMPLAINT:

28 1. THE REASONS FOR THE INABILITY TO INVESTIGATE;
29 AND

30 2. THE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE DIVISION OF
31 CONSUMER PROTECTION OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

1 **(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL INITIATE A PRELIMINARY**
2 **FACT-FINDING INVESTIGATION ON RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT IN A MANNER AND**
3 **WITHIN A TIME FRAME SUFFICIENT TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF EVIDENCE OR A DELAY**
4 **IN ENFORCEMENT.**

5 **(2) A PRELIMINARY FACT-FINDING INVESTIGATION UNDER**
6 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MAY INCLUDE:**

7 **(I) VERIFYING LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, PERMIT, AND**
8 **CERTIFICATION;**

9 **(II) CONDUCTING SITE CHECKS;**

10 **(III) REQUESTING RECORDS, INCLUDING PERMITS, PAYROLL**
11 **RECORDS, AND WORKER CLASSIFICATION DOCUMENTATION; AND**

12 **(IV) ANY OTHER INVESTIGATORY ACTION NECESSARY TO**
13 **PRESERVE EVIDENCE AND SUBSTANTIATE THE ALLEGATIONS OF A COMPLAINT.**

14 **(D) THE INITIATION OF AN INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT UNDER THIS**
15 **SECTION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A FINAL DETERMINATION OF LIABILITY OR AN**
16 **ENFORCEMENT ACTION BY THE DEPARTMENT.**

17 **(E) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL EMPLOY ONE INVESTIGATOR FOR EACH**
18 **OF THE FOLLOWING REGIONS TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH**
19 **THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION:**

20 **(I) WESTERN MARYLAND (ALLEGANY COUNTY, CARROLL**
21 **COUNTY, GARRETT COUNTY, AND WASHINGTON COUNTY);**

22 **(II) BALTIMORE COUNTY AND BALTIMORE CITY;**

23 **(III) THE EASTERN SHORE;**

24 **(IV) CENTRAL MARYLAND (ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY,**
25 **FREDERICK COUNTY, HARFORD COUNTY, HOWARD COUNTY, AND MONTGOMERY**
26 **COUNTY); AND**

27 **(V) STATEWIDE AND SOUTHERN MARYLAND (CALVERT**
28 **COUNTY, CHARLES COUNTY, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, AND ST. MARY'S**
29 **COUNTY).**

1 **(2) EACH INVESTIGATOR UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS**
2 **SUBSECTION IS ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES UNDER THE**
3 **STANDARD STATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS, AS PROVIDED IN THE STATE BUDGET.**

4 **(F) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE**
5 **GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF**
6 **\$500,000 FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF FIVE INVESTIGATORS UNDER SUBSECTION (E)**
7 **OF THIS SECTION.**

8 **(G) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE**
9 **PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDING REGULATIONS SPECIFYING PROCESSES**
10 **AND PROCEDURES FOR:**

11 **(1) THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF COMPLAINTS TO PRIORITIZE**
12 **THE IDENTIFICATION OF URGENT ISSUES THAT THREATEN PUBLIC OR PERSONAL**
13 **SAFETY REQUIRING PRIORITY INVESTIGATION AND RESPONSE;**

14 **(2) REFERRING COMPLAINTS TO OTHER DIVISIONS WITHIN THE**
15 **DEPARTMENT OR OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES; AND**

16 **(3) DOCUMENTING COMPLAINTS, INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS, AND**
17 **OUTCOMES.**

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