

# HOUSE BILL 564

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By: **Delegates Allen, Behler, Bhandari, Cardin, Chang, Ebersole, Embry, Fair, Forbes, Guyton, Guzzone, D. Jones, Kaufman, Ross, Ruth, ~~and Woorman~~ Woorman, Alston, Bagnall, Cullison, Hill, Hutchinson, S. Johnson, Kipke, Lopez, Martinez, Reilly, Rosenberg, Taveras, and White Holland**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2026

Assigned to: Economic Matters

Reassigned: Health, February 5, 2026

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 22, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 ~~Business Regulation~~ **Pet Cremation and Burial Services – Requirements**  
3 **(Pet Cremation and Burial Services Consumer Protection Act)**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing certain consumer protection requirements for registered  
5 cemeterians, registered cemetery operators, ~~or~~ and certain permit holders and  
6 licensees that sell or offer for sale pet cremation services of pet remains; establishing  
7 the duties of certain persons responsible for returning pet cremains to certain animal  
8 owners after cremation; and generally relating to the cremation of pet remains.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

10 Article – Business Regulation

11 Section 5–101(a), (f) through (i), and (s)

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 BY repealing

15 Article – Business Regulation

16 Section 5–101(t)

17 Annotated Code of Maryland

18 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



- 1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
2 Article – Business Regulation  
3 Section 5–101(u) through (dd) and 5–804  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)
- 6 BY adding to  
7 Article – Business Regulation  
8 Section 5–7A–01 through 5–7A–05, 5–7A–07, and 5–7A–08 to be under the new  
9 subtitle “Subtitle 7A. Pet Cremation and Burial Services”  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)
- 12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article – Commercial Law  
14 Section 13–301(14)(xlvii) and (xlviii)  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2025 Replacement Volume)
- 17 ~~BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
18 Article – Commercial Law  
19 Section 13–301(14)(xlviii)  
20 Annotated Code of Maryland  
21 (2025 Replacement Volume)~~
- 22 BY adding to  
23 Article – Commercial Law  
24 Section 13–301(14)(xlix) and (xlx)  
25 Annotated Code of Maryland  
26 (2025 Replacement Volume)
- 27 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
28 Article – Health Occupations  
29 Section 7–101(a), (d), (m), and (r)  
30 Annotated Code of Maryland  
31 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)
- 32 BY adding to  
33 Article – Health Occupations  
34 Section 7–4B–01 through 7–4B–07 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 4B. Pet  
35 Cremation”  
36 Annotated Code of Maryland  
37 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)
- 38 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
39 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Business Regulation**

1  
2 5–101.

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

4 (f) (1) “Cemetery” means land used or to be used for interment.

5 (2) “Cemetery” includes a structure used or to be used for interment.

6 (g) “Cremation” means the disposition of a dead human body by means of  
7 incineration.

8 (h) “Crematory” means a building, portion of a building, or structure that houses  
9 the necessary appliances and facilities for cremation or alkaline hydrolysis.

10 (i) “Director” means the Director of the Office of Cemetery Oversight.

11 (s) “Permit” means a permit issued by the Director to allow a partnership, limited  
12 liability company, or corporation to operate a business through which a registrant may:

13 (1) engage in the operation of a cemetery or crematory; or

14 (2) provide burial goods.

15 [(t) (1) “Pet remains” means the body of a deceased animal that was kept as a  
16 pet.

17 (2) “Pet remains” includes the body of a pet or a part of a pet’s body in any  
18 state of decomposition or the body of a pet after having been cremated.]

19 [(u) (T) (1) “Preneed goods” means burial goods that are sold before the  
20 buyer’s death.

21 (2) “Preneed goods” does not include burial space.

22 [(v) (U) “Provide burial goods” means a retail transaction:

23 (1) to erect, service, or inscribe burial memorials; or

24 (2) to sell burial goods.

25 [(w) (V) “Reduction facility” means a building, portion of a building, or structure  
26 that houses the necessary appliances, containers, and facilities for performing natural  
27 organic reduction.

1           [(x)] (W)     “Registered cemeterian” means an individual registered to operate a  
2 cemetery as a sole proprietor or on behalf of a sole proprietor or of a permit holder.

3           [(y)] (X)     “Registered crematory operator” means an individual registered to  
4 operate a crematory as a sole proprietor or on behalf of a sole proprietor or permit holder.

5           [(z)] (Y)     “Registered reduction operator” means an individual registered to  
6 operate a reduction facility as a sole proprietor or on behalf of a sole proprietor or a permit  
7 holder.

8           [(aa)] (Z)    “Registered seller” means an individual registered to provide burial  
9 goods as a sole proprietor or on behalf of a sole proprietor or of a permit holder.

10          [(bb)] (AA)  “Registration” means a registration issued by the Director authorizing  
11 an individual to operate a cemetery, to operate a crematory, to operate a reduction facility,  
12 or to provide burial goods.

13          [(cc)] (BB)  “Responsible party” means a sole proprietor or the individual  
14 designated by a partnership, limited liability company, or corporation to be responsible for  
15 the operations of a cemetery, crematory, reduction facility, or burial goods business.

16          [(dd)] (CC)  “Soil remains” means the soil produced at final disposition of a dead  
17 human body at a reduction facility by completion of natural organic reduction.

18                           **SUBTITLE 7A. PET CREMATION AND BURIAL SERVICES.**

19   **5-7A-01.**

20           (A)   **IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**  
21 **INDICATED.**

22           (B)   **“PET” MEANS A DOMESTICATED OR TAMED ANIMAL KEPT AS A**  
23 **COMPANION OR FOR PLEASURE.**

24           (C)   **“PET CREMAINS” MEANS THE BODY FRAGMENTS OF A PET AFTER**  
25 **HAVING BEEN CREMATED.**

26           (D)   **(1) “PET REMAINS” MEANS THE BODY OF A DECEASED ANIMAL THAT**  
27 **WAS KEPT AS A PET.**

28                   **(2) “PET REMAINS” INCLUDES THE BODY OF A PET OR A PART OF A**  
29 **PET’S BODY IN ANY STATE OF DECOMPOSITION OR THE PET CREMAINS.**

30   **5-7A-02.**

1           **THIS SUBTITLE APPLIES ONLY TO A REGISTERED CEMETERIAN, REGISTERED**  
2 **CEMETERY OPERATOR, OR PERMIT HOLDER THAT ENGAGES IN THE OPERATION OF**  
3 **A CEMETERY, CREMATORY, OR BURIAL GOODS BUSINESS THAT SELLS OR OFFERS TO**  
4 **SELL TO THE PUBLIC CREMATION SERVICES FOR PET REMAINS OR A BURIAL LOT OR**  
5 **A BURIAL RIGHT IN A CEMETERY FOR PET REMAINS.**

6 **5-7A-03.**

7           **(A) EACH REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER SHALL DISTRIBUTE A WRITTEN**  
8 **DESCRIPTION OF AVAILABLE PET CREMATION SERVICES TO THE FOLLOWING**  
9 **PERSONS:**

10           **(1) EACH OWNER OF A DECEASED PET OR THE AGENT OF AN OWNER**  
11 **OF A DECEASED PET WHO ARRANGES FOR PET CREMATION SERVICES;**

12           **(2) EACH VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, FUNERAL DIRECTOR, OR OTHER**  
13 **PERSON WHO REFERS PET OWNERS OR DELIVERS DECEASED PETS TO THE**  
14 **REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER MORE THAN FIVE TIMES IN A CALENDAR YEAR;**

15           **(3) THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; AND**

16           **(4) ON REQUEST, ANY OTHER PERSON.**

17           **(B) (1) THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES REQUIRED**  
18 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE A DETAILED AND CLEAR**  
19 **EXPLANATION OF EACH PET CREMATION SERVICE OFFERED BY THE REGISTRANT OR**  
20 **PERMIT HOLDER, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS OF CREMATION**  
21 **SERVICES, IF OFFERED:**

22           **(I) PRIVATE CREMATION MEANS THE CREMATION OF A SINGLE**  
23 **PET IN A CLEAN, EMPTY CHAMBER, AFTER WHICH THE PET CREMAINS ARE**  
24 **RETURNED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE OWNER OF THE PET;**

25           **(II) INDIVIDUAL-PARTITIONED CREMATION MEANS THE**  
26 **CREMATION OF MULTIPLE PETS IN THE SAME CHAMBER USING PHYSICAL BARRIERS**  
27 **OR DESIGNATED SPACES TO MAINTAIN SEPARATION, AFTER WHICH THE PET**  
28 **CREMAINS ARE RETURNED TO EACH OWNER; AND**

29           **(III) COMMUNAL CREMATION MEANS THE CREMATION OF**  
30 **MULTIPLE PETS SIMULTANEOUSLY IN A SINGLE CHAMBER WITHOUT SEPARATION**  
31 **AND WITHOUT THE RETURN OF PET CREMAINS TO AN OWNER.**

1           **(2) IN THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES REQUIRED**  
2 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, A REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER MAY**  
3 **NOT:**

4           **(I) FAIL TO INCLUDE A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE**  
5 **EXPLANATION OF EACH PET CREMATION SERVICE;**

6           **(II) OMIT A REQUIRED DISCLOSURE UNDER THIS SECTION; OR**

7           **(III) INCLUDE TEXT, ILLUSTRATIONS, A LAYOUT, OR**  
8 **FORMATTING THAT CAUSES CONFUSION ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PET**  
9 **CREMATION SERVICE OR OBSTRUCTS ACCURATE DISCLOSURE.**

10           **(3) EACH REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER SHALL MAKE WRITTEN**  
11 **COPIES OF THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES UNDER SUBSECTION**  
12 **(A) OF THIS SECTION:**

13           **(I) AVAILABLE IN QUANTITIES SUFFICIENT TO ALLOW FOR THE**  
14 **DISTRIBUTION TO PET OWNERS WHO MAY BE REFERRED TO OR SERVED BY THE**  
15 **REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER; AND**

16           **(II) AVAILABLE AT NO COST.**

17           **(C) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, REGISTRANT, PERMIT HOLDER, OR ANY**  
18 **OTHER PERSON WHO REFERS PET OWNERS OR ACCEPTS DECEASED PETS FOR**  
19 **CREMATION MORE THAN FIVE TIMES IN A CALENDAR YEAR SHALL PROVIDE A COPY**  
20 **OF THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES DESCRIBED UNDER**  
21 **SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION TO THE PET OWNER AT THE TIME OF REFERRAL**  
22 **OR ACCEPTANCE OF THE DECEASED PET.**

23 **5-7A-04.**

24           **(A) IF PET CREMATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY A REGISTRANT OR PERMIT**  
25 **HOLDER INCLUDE THE RETURN OF PET CREMAINS, THE REGISTRANT OR PERMIT**  
26 **HOLDER SHALL PROVIDE A WRITTEN CERTIFICATE WITH THE RETURNED PET**  
27 **CREMAINS THAT INCLUDES:**

28           **(1) THE DATE THE CREMATION WAS COMPLETED;**

29           **(2) A STATEMENT THAT, TO THE BEST OF THE REGISTRANT'S OR**  
30 **PERMIT HOLDER'S KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, THE CREMATION AND RELATED**  
31 **SERVICES WERE PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REGISTRANT'S OR PERMIT**

1 **HOLDER'S WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED ON**  
2 **THE CERTIFICATE;**

3 **(3) A STATEMENT THAT THE CREMATION WAS CONDUCTED IN**  
4 **ACCORDANCE WITH PREVAILING INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES AND**  
5 **IN COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS; AND**

6 **(4) THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "THE POSTED DISCLOSURE OF PET**  
7 **CREMATION AND BURIAL SERVICES RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IS A SUMMARY**  
8 **OF MARYLAND LAW. THE FULL PROVISIONS OF THE LAW ARE SET FORTH IN THE PET**  
9 **CREMATION AND BURIAL SERVICES CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT IN TITLE 5,**  
10 **SUBTITLE 7A OF THE BUSINESS REGULATION ARTICLE OF THE MARYLAND**  
11 **ANNOTATED CODE."**

12 **(B) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, OR OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR**  
13 **RETURNING PET CREMAINS TO A PET OWNER SHALL PROVIDE TO THE PET OWNER:**

14 **(1) A COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE PROVIDED BY THE REGISTRANT OR**  
15 **PERMIT HOLDER UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; AND**

16 **(2) AN ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATE THAT STATES, TO THE BEST OF THE**  
17 **PERSON'S KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, AND EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE INDICATED ON**  
18 **THE CERTIFICATE, THE RETURNED PET CREMAINS:**

19 **(I) ARE THOSE OF THE PET OWNER'S DECEASED PET; AND**

20 **(II) HAVE BEEN RETURNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE**  
21 **REGISTRANT'S OR PERMIT HOLDER'S REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PET OWNER.**

22 **(C) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, OR OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR**  
23 **RETURNING PET CREMAINS TO A PET OWNER:**

24 **(1) MAY RELY IN GOOD FAITH ON THE CERTIFICATE PROVIDED AND**  
25 **REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY A REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER PROVIDING PET**  
26 **CREMATION SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS**  
27 **SECTION; AND**

28 **(2) IS NOT REQUIRED TO OBSERVE THE CREMATION PROCESS.**

29 **5-7A-05.**

30 **(A) EACH REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER PROVIDING PET CREMATION**  
31 **SERVICES SHALL POST A COPY OF THIS SUBTITLE AND A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF**

1 THE PET CREMATION SERVICES BEING OFFERED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE IN THE  
2 PLACE OF BUSINESS.

3 (B) EACH REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER THAT PROVIDES PET  
4 CREMATION SERVICES SHALL ENSURE THAT A HOLDING FACILITY USED TO RETAIN  
5 PET REMAINS BEFORE CREMATION:

6 (1) PROTECTS THE HEALTH OF ALL INDIVIDUALS RESPONSIBLE FOR  
7 HANDLING PET REMAINS;

8 (2) PRESERVES THE DIGNITY OF THE PET REMAINS; AND

9 (3) COMPLIES WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS.

10 (C) (1) EACH REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER THAT PROVIDES PET  
11 CREMATION SERVICES SHALL MAINTAIN COMPLETE AND ACCURATE RECORDS FOR  
12 EACH PET CREMATION COMPLETED.

13 (2) EACH REGISTRANT AND PERMIT HOLDER SHALL RETAIN THE  
14 FOLLOWING RECORDS FOR A PERIOD OF AT LEAST 5 YEARS:

15 (I) EACH AUTHORIZATION FOR PET CREMATION SIGNED BY  
16 THE PET OWNER OR PET OWNER'S AGENT;

17 (II) EACH IDENTIFICATION RECORD, INCLUDING TAGS, LABELS,  
18 OR TRACKING DOCUMENTATION USED TO IDENTIFY PET CREMAINS; AND

19 (III) A LOGBOOK FOR EACH PET CREMATION COMPLETED THAT  
20 SPECIFIES:

21 1. THE DATE OF CREMATION;

22 2. THE METHOD OF CREMATION, AND

23 3. THE NAME OF THE INDIVIDUAL WHO PERFORMED THE  
24 CREMATION.

25 (3) EACH REGISTRANT OR PERMIT HOLDER SHALL ESTABLISH AND  
26 MAINTAIN REASONABLE PROCEDURES TO ENSURE THE CONFIDENTIALITY AND  
27 SECURITY OF ALL RECORDS, INCLUDING PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION  
28 RELATED TO A PET OWNER OR CREMATED PET.

29 [5-804.] 5-7A-06.

1 (a) In this section, “perpetual care” has the meaning stated in § 5–601 of this title.

2 (b) A registered cemeterian, registered crematory operator, or permit holder that  
3 engages in the operation of a cemetery, crematory, or burial goods business who sells or  
4 offers to sell to the public cremation services, a burial lot, or a burial right in a cemetery  
5 for pet remains as to which perpetual care is stated or implied owes a duty of perpetual  
6 care for the cemetery in which the pet remains are interred.

7 (c) The Director shall adopt regulations in accordance with § 5–204(a) of this title  
8 to enforce the requirements of this section.

9 **5–7A–07.**

10 **(A) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SUBTITLE IS GUILTY OF A**  
11 **MISDEMEANOR AND, ON CONVICTION, IS SUBJECT TO:**

12 **(1) FOR A FIRST VIOLATION, A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000 OR**  
13 **IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH;**

14 **(2) FOR A SECOND VIOLATION, A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$10,000 OR**  
15 **IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 2 YEARS OR BOTH; AND**

16 **(3) FOR A THIRD OR SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION, A FINE NOT**  
17 **EXCEEDING \$15,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 3 YEARS OR BOTH.**

18 **(B) (1) IF THE DIRECTOR FINDS THAT A PERSON HAS VIOLATED THIS**  
19 **SUBTITLE OR A REGULATION ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, THE DIRECTOR MAY**  
20 **REFER THE MATTER TO:**

21 **(I) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CIVIL ENFORCEMENT; OR**

22 **(II) THE APPROPRIATE STATE’S ATTORNEY FOR CRIMINAL**  
23 **PROSECUTION.**

24 **(2) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL MAY SUE FOR AND A COURT MAY**  
25 **GRANT:**

26 **(I) INJUNCTIVE OR OTHER EQUITABLE RELIEF;**

27 **(II) IMPOSITION OF A CIVIL PENALTY NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000;**  
28 **OR**

29 **(III) BOTH.**

1 5-7A-08.

2 THIS SUBTITLE AND TITLE 7, SUBTITLE 4B OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS  
 3 ARTICLE MAY BE CITED AS THE ~~“MARYLAND MARYLAND~~ PET CREMATION AND  
 4 BURIAL SERVICES CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT” ACT.

5 **Article – Commercial Law**

6 13-301.

7 Unfair, abusive, or deceptive trade practices include any:

8 (14) Violation of a provision of:

9 (xlvii) Title 14, Subtitle 50 of this article; [or]

10 (xlviii) Section 13-411.1(c)(2) of the Transportation Article; ~~or~~

11 (XLIX) TITLE 5, SUBTITLE 7A OF THE BUSINESS  
 12 REGULATION ARTICLE; OR

13 (XLX) TITLE 7, SUBTITLE 4B OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS  
 14 ARTICLE; OR

15 **Article – Health Occupations**

16 7-101.

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

18 (d) “Board” means the State Board of Morticians and Funeral Directors.

19 (m) (1) “License” means, unless the context requires otherwise, a license issued  
 20 by the Board.

21 (2) “License” includes, unless otherwise indicated:

22 (i) A mortician license;

23 (ii) An apprentice license;

24 (iii) A funeral director license;

25 (iv) A surviving spouse license;



1           **(4) ON REQUEST, ANY OTHER PERSON.**

2           **(B) (1) THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES REQUIRED**  
3 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE A DETAILED AND CLEAR**  
4 **EXPLANATION OF EACH PET CREMATION SERVICE OFFERED BY THE LICENSEE,**  
5 **INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS OF CREMATION SERVICES, IF OFFERED:**

6                   **(I) PRIVATE CREMATION MEANS THE CREMATION OF A SINGLE**  
7 **PET IN A CLEAN, EMPTY CHAMBER, AFTER WHICH THE PET REMAINS ARE**  
8 **RETURNED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE OWNER OF THE PET;**

9                   **(II) INDIVIDUAL-PARTITIONED CREMATION MEANS THE**  
10 **CREMATION OF MULTIPLE PETS IN THE SAME CHAMBER USING PHYSICAL BARRIERS**  
11 **OR DESIGNATED SPACES TO MAINTAIN SEPARATION, AFTER WHICH THE PET**  
12 **REMAINS ARE RETURNED TO EACH OWNER; AND**

13                   **(III) COMMUNAL CREMATION MEANS THE CREMATION OF**  
14 **MULTIPLE PETS SIMULTANEOUSLY IN A SINGLE CHAMBER WITHOUT SEPARATION**  
15 **AND WITHOUT THE RETURN OF PET REMAINS TO AN OWNER.**

16           **(2) IN THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES REQUIRED**  
17 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, A LICENSEE MAY NOT:**

18                   **(I) FAIL TO INCLUDE A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE**  
19 **EXPLANATION OF EACH PET CREMATION SERVICE;**

20                   **(II) OMIT A REQUIRED DISCLOSURE UNDER THIS SECTION; OR**

21                   **(III) INCLUDE TEXT, ILLUSTRATIONS, A LAYOUT, OR**  
22 **FORMATTING THAT CAUSES CONFUSION ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PET**  
23 **CREMATION SERVICE OR OBSTRUCTS ACCURATE DISCLOSURE.**

24           **(3) EACH LICENSEE SHALL MAKE WRITTEN COPIES OF THE**  
25 **DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS**  
26 **SECTION:**

27                   **(I) AVAILABLE IN QUANTITIES SUFFICIENT TO ALLOW FOR THE**  
28 **DISTRIBUTION TO PET OWNERS WHO MAY BE REFERRED TO OR SERVED BY THE**  
29 **LICENSEE; AND**

30                   **(II) AVAILABLE AT NO COST.**

31           **(C) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, REGISTRANT, PERMIT HOLDER, LICENSEE,**  
32 **OR ANY OTHER PERSON WHO REFERS PET OWNERS OR ACCEPTS DECEASED PETS**

1 FOR CREMATION MORE THAN 5 TIMES IN A CALENDAR YEAR SHALL PROVIDE A COPY  
2 OF THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES DESCRIBED UNDER  
3 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION TO THE PET OWNER AT THE TIME OF REFERRAL  
4 OR ACCEPTANCE OF THE DECEASED PET.

5 7-4B-04.

6 (A) IF PET CREMATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY A LICENSEE INCLUDE THE  
7 RETURN OF PET CREMAINS, THE LICENSEE SHALL PROVIDE A WRITTEN  
8 CERTIFICATE WITH THE RETURNED PET CREMAINS THAT INCLUDES:

9 (1) THE DATE THE CREMATION WAS COMPLETED;

10 (2) A STATEMENT THAT, TO THE BEST OF THE LICENSEE'S  
11 KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, THE CREMATION AND RELATED SERVICES WERE  
12 PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LICENSEE'S WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF  
13 SERVICES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED ON THE CERTIFICATE;

14 (3) A STATEMENT THAT THE CREMATION WAS CONDUCTED IN  
15 ACCORDANCE WITH PREVAILING INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES AND  
16 IN COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS; AND

17 (4) THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "THE POSTED DISCLOSURE OF PET  
18 CREMATION RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IS A SUMMARY OF MARYLAND LAW.  
19 THE FULL PROVISIONS OF THE LAW ARE SET FORTH IN THE PET CREMATION  
20 CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT IN TITLE 7, SUBTITLE 4B OF THE HEALTH  
21 OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE OF THE MARYLAND ANNOTATED CODE."

22 (B) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, OR OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR  
23 RETURNING PET CREMAINS TO A PET OWNER SHALL PROVIDE TO THE PET OWNER:

24 (1) A COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE PROVIDED BY THE LICENSEE UNDER  
25 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; AND

26 (2) AN ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATE THAT STATES, TO THE BEST OF THE  
27 PERSON'S KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, AND EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE INDICATED ON  
28 THE CERTIFICATE, THE RETURNED PET CREMAINS:

29 (i) ARE THOSE OF THE PET OWNER'S DECEASED PET; AND

30 (ii) HAVE BEEN RETURNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
31 LICENSEE'S REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PET OWNER.



1                                    2. THE METHOD OF CREMATION; AND

2                                    3. THE NAME OF THE INDIVIDUAL WHO PERFORMED THE  
3 CREMATION.

4                    (3) EACH LICENSEE SHALL ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN REASONABLE  
5 PROCEDURES TO ENSURE THE CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY OF ALL RECORDS,  
6 INCLUDING PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION RELATED TO A PET OWNER  
7 OR CREMATED PET.

8 7-4B-06.

9                    (A) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SUBTITLE IS GUILTY OF A  
10 MISDEMEANOR AND, ON CONVICTION, IS SUBJECT TO:

11                                    (1) FOR A FIRST VIOLATION, A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000 OR  
12 IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH;

13                                    (2) FOR A SECOND VIOLATION, A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$10,000 OR  
14 IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 2 YEARS OR BOTH; AND

15                                    (3) FOR A THIRD OR SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION, A FINE NOT  
16 EXCEEDING \$15,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 3 YEARS OR BOTH.

17                    (B) (1) IF THE BOARD FINDS THAT A PERSON HAS VIOLATED THIS  
18 SUBTITLE OR A REGULATION ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, THE BOARD MAY  
19 REFER THE MATTER TO:

20                                    (I) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CIVIL ENFORCEMENT; OR

21                                    (II) THE APPROPRIATE STATE’S ATTORNEY FOR CRIMINAL  
22 PROSECUTION.

23                                    (2) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL MAY SUE FOR AND A COURT MAY  
24 GRANT:

25                                    (I) INJUNCTIVE OR OTHER EQUITABLE RELIEF;

26                                    (II) IMPOSITION OF A CIVIL PENALTY NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000;  
27 OR

28                                    (III) BOTH.

29 7-4B-07.



1 (vii) A courtesy card.

2 (r) “Licensee” means an individual or entity licensed by the Board to practice  
3 mortuary science to the extent determined by the Board.

4 **SUBTITLE 4B. PET CREMATION.**

5 **7-4B-01.**

6 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
7 INDICATED.

8 (B) “PET” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-7A-01 OF THE BUSINESS  
9 REGULATION ARTICLE.

10 (C) “PET CREMAINS” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-7A-01 OF THE  
11 BUSINESS REGULATION ARTICLE.

12 (D) “PET REMAINS” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-101 OF THE  
13 BUSINESS REGULATION ARTICLE.

14 **7-4B-02.**

15 THIS SUBTITLE APPLIES ONLY TO A LICENSEE THAT ENGAGES IN THE  
16 OPERATION OF A CREMATORY THAT SELLS OR OFFERS TO SELL TO THE PUBLIC  
17 CREMATION SERVICES FOR PET REMAINS.

18 **7-4B-03.**

19 (A) EACH LICENSEE SHALL DISTRIBUTE A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF  
20 AVAILABLE PET CREMATION SERVICES TO THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

21 (1) EACH OWNER OF A DECEASED PET OR THE AGENT OF AN OWNER  
22 OF A DECEASED PET WHO ARRANGES FOR PET CREMATION SERVICES;

23 (2) EACH VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, FUNERAL DIRECTOR, OR OTHER  
24 PERSON WHO REFERS PET OWNERS OR DELIVERS DECEASED PETS TO THE LICENSEE  
25 MORE THAN 5 TIMES IN A CALENDAR YEAR;

26 (3) THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; AND

27 (4) ON REQUEST, ANY OTHER PERSON.

1           **(B) (1) THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES REQUIRED**  
2 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL INCLUDE A DETAILED AND CLEAR**  
3 **EXPLANATION OF EACH PET CREMATION SERVICE OFFERED BY THE LICENSEE,**  
4 **INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS OF CREMATION SERVICES, IF OFFERED:**

5                   **(I) PRIVATE CREMATION MEANS THE CREMATION OF A SINGLE**  
6 **PET IN A CLEAN, EMPTY CHAMBER, AFTER WHICH THE PET CREMAINS ARE**  
7 **RETURNED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE OWNER OF THE PET;**

8                   **(II) INDIVIDUAL-PARTITIONED CREMATION MEANS THE**  
9 **CREMATION OF MULTIPLE PETS IN THE SAME CHAMBER USING PHYSICAL BARRIERS**  
10 **OR DESIGNATED SPACES TO MAINTAIN SEPARATION, AFTER WHICH THE PET**  
11 **CREMAINS ARE RETURNED TO EACH OWNER; AND**

12                   **(III) COMMUNAL CREMATION MEANS THE CREMATION OF**  
13 **MULTIPLE PETS SIMULTANEOUSLY IN A SINGLE CHAMBER WITHOUT SEPARATION**  
14 **AND WITHOUT THE RETURN OF PET CREMAINS TO AN OWNER.**

15           **(2) IN THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES REQUIRED**  
16 **UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, A LICENSEE MAY NOT:**

17                   **(I) FAIL TO INCLUDE A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE**  
18 **EXPLANATION OF EACH PET CREMATION SERVICE;**

19                   **(II) OMIT A REQUIRED DISCLOSURE UNDER THIS SECTION; OR**

20                   **(III) INCLUDE TEXT, ILLUSTRATIONS, A LAYOUT, OR**  
21 **FORMATTING THAT CAUSES CONFUSION ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PET**  
22 **CREMATION SERVICE OR OBSTRUCTS ACCURATE DISCLOSURE.**

23           **(3) EACH LICENSEE SHALL MAKE WRITTEN COPIES OF THE**  
24 **DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS**  
25 **SECTION:**

26                   **(I) AVAILABLE IN QUANTITIES SUFFICIENT TO ALLOW FOR THE**  
27 **DISTRIBUTION TO PET OWNERS WHO MAY BE REFERRED TO OR SERVED BY THE**  
28 **LICENSEE; AND**

29                   **(II) AVAILABLE AT NO COST.**

30           **(C) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, REGISTRANT, PERMIT HOLDER, LICENSEE,**  
31 **OR ANY OTHER PERSON WHO REFERS PET OWNERS OR ACCEPTS DECEASED PETS**  
32 **FOR CREMATION MORE THAN 5 TIMES IN A CALENDAR YEAR SHALL PROVIDE A COPY**  
33 **OF THE DESCRIPTION OF PET CREMATION SERVICES DESCRIBED UNDER**

1 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION TO THE PET OWNER AT THE TIME OF REFERRAL  
2 OR ACCEPTANCE OF THE DECEASED PET.

3 7-4B-04.

4 (A) IF PET CREMATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY A LICENSEE INCLUDE THE  
5 RETURN OF PET CREMAINS, THE LICENSEE SHALL PROVIDE A WRITTEN  
6 CERTIFICATE WITH THE RETURNED PET CREMAINS THAT INCLUDES:

7 (1) THE DATE THE CREMATION WAS COMPLETED;

8 (2) A STATEMENT THAT, TO THE BEST OF THE LICENSEE'S  
9 KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, THE CREMATION AND RELATED SERVICES WERE  
10 PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LICENSEE'S WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF  
11 SERVICES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED ON THE CERTIFICATE;

12 (3) A STATEMENT THAT THE CREMATION WAS CONDUCTED IN  
13 ACCORDANCE WITH PREVAILING INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES AND  
14 IN COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS; AND

15 (4) THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: "THE POSTED DISCLOSURE OF PET  
16 CREMATION RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IS A SUMMARY OF MARYLAND LAW.  
17 THE FULL PROVISIONS OF THE LAW ARE SET FORTH IN THE PET CREMATION  
18 CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT IN TITLE 7, SUBTITLE 4B OF THE HEALTH  
19 OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE OF THE MARYLAND ANNOTATED CODE."

20 (B) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, OR OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR  
21 RETURNING PET CREMAINS TO A PET OWNER SHALL PROVIDE TO THE PET OWNER:

22 (1) A COPY OF THE CERTIFICATE PROVIDED BY THE LICENSEE UNDER  
23 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; AND

24 (2) AN ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATE THAT STATES, TO THE BEST OF THE  
25 PERSON'S KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, AND EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE INDICATED ON  
26 THE CERTIFICATE, THE RETURNED PET CREMAINS:

27 (I) ARE THOSE OF THE PET OWNER'S DECEASED PET; AND

28 (II) HAVE BEEN RETURNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
29 LICENSEE'S REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PET OWNER.

30 (C) A VETERINARIAN, PET SHOP, OR ANY OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR  
31 RETURNING PET CREMAINS TO A PET OWNER:

1           **(1) MAY RELY IN GOOD FAITH ON THE CERTIFICATE PROVIDED AND**  
2 **REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY A LICENSEE PROVIDING PET CREMATION SERVICES IN**  
3 **ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION; AND**

4           **(2) IS NOT REQUIRED TO OBSERVE THE CREMATION PROCESS.**

5 **7-4B-05.**

6           **(A) EACH LICENSEE PROVIDING PET CREMATION SERVICES SHALL POST A**  
7 **COPY OF THIS SUBTITLE AND A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF THE PET CREMATION**  
8 **SERVICES BEING OFFERED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE IN THE PLACE OF BUSINESS.**

9           **(B) EACH LICENSEE THAT PROVIDES PET CREMATION SERVICES SHALL**  
10 **ENSURE THAT A HOLDING FACILITY USED TO RETAIN PET REMAINS BEFORE**  
11 **CREMATION:**

12           **(1) PROTECTS THE HEALTH OF ALL INDIVIDUALS RESPONSIBLE FOR**  
13 **HANDLING PET REMAINS;**

14           **(2) PRESERVES THE DIGNITY OF THE PET REMAINS; AND**

15           **(3) COMPLIES WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS.**

16           **(C) (1) EACH LICENSEE THAT PROVIDES PET CREMATION SERVICES**  
17 **SHALL MAINTAIN COMPLETE AND ACCURATE RECORDS FOR EACH PET CREMATION**  
18 **COMPLETED.**

19           **(2) EACH LICENSEE SHALL RETAIN THE FOLLOWING RECORDS FOR A**  
20 **PERIOD OF AT LEAST 5 YEARS:**

21           **(I) EACH AUTHORIZATION FOR PET CREMATION SIGNED BY**  
22 **THE PET OWNER OR PET OWNER'S AGENT;**

23           **(II) EACH IDENTIFICATION RECORD, INCLUDING TAGS, LABELS,**  
24 **OR TRACKING DOCUMENTATION USED TO IDENTIFY PET CREMAINS; AND**

25           **(III) A LOGBOOK FOR EACH PET CREMATION COMPLETED THAT**  
26 **SPECIFIES:**

27                   **1. THE DATE OF CREMATION;**

28                   **2. THE METHOD OF CREMATION; AND**

1                                   **3. THE NAME OF THE INDIVIDUAL WHO PERFORMED THE**  
2 **CREMATION.**

3                   **(3) EACH LICENSEE SHALL ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN REASONABLE**  
4 **PROCEDURES TO ENSURE THE CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY OF ALL RECORDS,**  
5 **INCLUDING PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION RELATED TO A PET OWNER**  
6 **OR CREMATED PET.**

7 **7-4B-06.**

8           **(A) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SUBTITLE IS GUILTY OF A**  
9 **MISDEMEANOR AND, ON CONVICTION, IS SUBJECT TO:**

10                   **(1) FOR A FIRST VIOLATION, A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000 OR**  
11 **IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR BOTH;**

12                   **(2) FOR A SECOND VIOLATION, A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$10,000 OR**  
13 **IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 2 YEARS OR BOTH; AND**

14                   **(3) FOR A THIRD OR SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION, A FINE NOT**  
15 **EXCEEDING \$15,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 3 YEARS OR BOTH.**

16           **(B) (1) IF THE BOARD FINDS THAT A PERSON HAS VIOLATED THIS**  
17 **SUBTITLE OR A REGULATION ADOPTED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, THE BOARD MAY**  
18 **REFER THE MATTER TO:**

19                   **(I) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CIVIL ENFORCEMENT; OR**

20                   **(II) THE APPROPRIATE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR CRIMINAL**  
21 **PROSECUTION.**

22                   **(2) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL MAY SUE FOR AND A COURT MAY**  
23 **GRANT:**

24                   **(I) INJUNCTIVE OR OTHER EQUITABLE RELIEF;**

25                   **(II) IMPOSITION OF A CIVIL PENALTY NOT EXCEEDING \$5,000;**  
26 **OR**

27                   **(III) BOTH.**

28 **7-4B-07.**

1            THIS SUBTITLE MAY BE CITED AS THE MARYLAND PET CREMATION  
 2 CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT.

3            SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall  
 4 take effect October 1, 2026, contingent on the taking effect of Chapter     or     (S.B.  
 5 413 or H.B. 698) of 2026. If Section 2 of this Act takes effect, Section 1 of this Act, with no  
 6 further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force  
 7 and effect.

8            SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to Section 3 of this  
 9 Act, this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.

Approved:

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Governor.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.

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President of the Senate.