

HOUSE BILL 570

D4, O4

6lr1826

By: **Delegate Grammer**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Foster Care – Adjacent County Applicants and Reporting Requirements**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing an individual to apply to be approved as a foster parent by
4 the local department of social services for the county where the individual resides or
5 a county adjacent to the county where the individual resides; prohibiting a local
6 department from denying an application to be a foster parent due to the applicant's
7 county of residence if the individual resides in the same county as, or an adjacent
8 county to, the county where the local department is located; requiring local
9 departments to submit a certain quarterly report to the Department of Human
10 Services; and generally relating to foster care.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
12 Article – Family Law
13 Section 1–101(a) and (h) and 5–101(a) and (e)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Family Law
18 Section 5–505.3 and 5–505.4
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Family Law**

24 1–101.

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(h) “Local department” means:

(1) a local department of social services; or

(2) in Montgomery County, the county department of health and human services.

5–101.

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

(e) “Department” means the State Department of Human Services.

5–505.3.

(A) AN INDIVIDUAL MAY APPLY TO BE APPROVED AS A FOSTER PARENT BY THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT FOR:

(1) THE COUNTY WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL PRIMARILY RESIDES; OR

(2) A COUNTY ADJACENT TO THE COUNTY WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL PRIMARILY RESIDES.

(B) A LOCAL DEPARTMENT MAY NOT DENY AN INDIVIDUAL’S APPLICATION TO BE A FOSTER PARENT DUE TO THE INDIVIDUAL’S COUNTY OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE IF THE INDIVIDUAL PRIMARILY RESIDES IN:

(1) THE COUNTY WHERE THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT IS LOCATED; OR

(2) A COUNTY ADJACENT TO THE COUNTY WHERE THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT IS LOCATED.

5–505.4.

ON A QUARTERLY BASIS, EACH LOCAL DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT A REPORT STATING THE NUMBER OF:

(1) CHILDREN IN THE COUNTY WHO ARE WAITING TO BE PLACED IN A FOSTER HOME; AND

(2) VACANT FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS IN APPROVED FOSTER HOMES IN THE COUNTY.

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