

HOUSE BILL 834

D4

6lr2936
CF 6lr2938

By: **Delegate Schindler**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Family Law – Child Neglect Definition – Alteration**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the definition of child neglect to include the failure or refusal
4 to provide to a child the education required by law; and generally relating to child
5 neglect.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
7 Article – Family Law
8 Section 5–701(a) and (e)
9 Annotated Code of Maryland
10 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Family Law
13 Section 5–701(s)
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 – Family Law**

19 5–701.

20 (a) Except as otherwise provided in § 5–705.1 of this subtitle, in this subtitle the
21 following words have the meanings indicated.

22 (e) “Child” means any individual under the age of 18 years.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(s) **(1)** “Neglect” means the leaving of a child unattended or other failure to give proper care and attention to a child by any parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of the child under circumstances that indicate:

[(1)] (I) that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or placed at substantial risk of harm; or

[(2)] (II) mental injury to the child or a substantial risk of mental injury.

(2) “NEGLECT” INCLUDES THE FAILURE OR REFUSAL TO PROVIDE TO A CHILD THE EDUCATION REQUIRED BY LAW BY ANY PARENT OR OTHER PERSON WHO HAS PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY CARE OR CUSTODY OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPERVISION OF THE CHILD.

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