

HOUSE BILL 1353

R4, J1

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By: **Delegates Fair, Behler, Bouchat, Crutchfield, Ebersole, Embry, Hornberger, A. Johnson, Kerr, Martinez, Pasteur, Pruski, Qi, Ruth, Simmons, Simpson, Solomon, Spiegel, Stein, Stewart, and Ziegler**

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation and Health

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Homeless Individuals – Fee and Examination Exemptions**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting the Maryland Department of Health from collecting a fee
4 for certain copies of vital records issued to homeless individuals; establishing that a
5 vehicle owned by a homeless individual is exempt from vehicle registration fees;
6 altering the period of time after which an unaccompanied homeless youth who holds
7 a learner’s instructional permit and is under a certain age may take certain
8 examinations for a provisional driver’s license; prohibiting the Motor Vehicle
9 Administration from imposing certain driver’s license fees if the licensee or applicant
10 is a homeless individual; exempting homeless individuals from certain mandatory
11 vehicle emissions inspections; requiring homeless individuals to provide a certain
12 statement as proof of homelessness under certain circumstances; and generally
13 relating to fee and examination exemptions for homeless individuals.

14 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
15 Article – Health – General
16 Section 4–201(a) and (u)
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

19 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
20 Article – Health – General
21 Section 4–217(c)
22 Annotated Code of Maryland
23 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
25 Article – Transportation
26 Section 13–903, 16–105(d)(3), 16–111.2, and 23–206.2

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Annotated Code of Maryland
2 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

3 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
4 Article – Transportation
5 Section 16–105(d)(1) and (2)
6 Annotated Code of Maryland
7 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

10 **Article – Health – General**

11 4–201.

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

13 (u) “Vital record” means a certificate or report of birth, death, fetal death,
14 marriage, divorce, dissolution or annulment of marriage, adoption, or adjudication of
15 paternity that is required by law to be filed with the Secretary.

16 4–217.

17 (c) (1) Except as otherwise provided by law:

18 (i) The Department shall collect a \$12 fee:

19 1. For each certified or abridged copy of a fetal death,
20 marriage, or divorce verification certificate;

21 2. For a report that a search of the fetal death, marriage, or
22 divorce verification certificate files was made and the requested record is not on file;

23 3. For each change to a fetal death, marriage, or divorce
24 verification certificate made later than 1 year after the certificate has been registered with
25 the Department; or

26 4. To process an adoption, foreign adoption, or legitimation;

27 (ii) The Department shall collect a \$10 fee:

28 1. Except as provided in paragraph (6)(ii) of this subsection,
29 for each certified or abridged copy of a birth certificate;

30 2. For the first copy of a certified or abridged death certificate
31 issued in a single transaction;

1 3. For a report that a search of the birth or death certificate
2 files was made and the requested record is not on file; or

3 4. For each change to a birth or death certificate made later
4 than 1 year after the certificate has been registered with the Department; and

5 (iii) The Department shall collect a \$12 fee for each additional
6 certified or abridged copy of a death certificate provided concurrently with an initial
7 requested death certificate.

8 (2) From the fee the Department collects under paragraph (1) of this
9 subsection, the Department shall transfer the entire fee to the General Fund.

10 (3) (i) Any local health department or the Motor Vehicle
11 Administration may set and collect a fee for processing and issuing a birth certificate or
12 death certificate, or for a report that a search of the files was made and the requested record
13 is not on file, that covers:

14 1. The administrative costs of providing this service; and

15 2. The requirements of subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph.

16 (ii) The fee set by the local health department or the Motor Vehicle
17 Administration for processing and issuing a birth certificate or for a report under
18 subparagraph (i) of this paragraph may not exceed the actual costs to the local health
19 department or the Motor Vehicle Administration for processing and issuing a birth
20 certificate or death certificate or a report.

21 (iii) From the fee the local health department or the Motor Vehicle
22 Administration collects under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph, \$10 shall be transferred
23 to the General Fund.

24 (iv) Prior to setting and collecting a fee for processing and issuing a
25 birth certificate or death certificate or for a report under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph,
26 the local health department or the Motor Vehicle Administration shall enter into a
27 memorandum of understanding with the Maryland Department of Health that outlines the
28 local health department's or the Motor Vehicle Administration's fee structure.

29 (4) The Department, a local health department, or the Motor Vehicle
30 Administration may collect a fee for a certificate requested by an agency of the State or any
31 of its political subdivisions.

32 (5) The Secretary may waive all or part of a fee if chargeable to an agency
33 of the United States.

1 (6) (i) The Department may not collect a fee for a copy of a vital record
2 issued to:

- 3 1. A current or former member of the uniformed services; or
4 2. The surviving spouse or child of the member, if the copy
5 will be used in connection with a claim for a dependent or beneficiary of the member.

6 (ii) 1. In this subparagraph, “homeless individual” has the
7 meaning stated in the federal McKinney–Vento Homeless [Education] Assistance
8 [Improvements] Act [of 2001].

9 2. Subject to subsubparagraph 4 of this subparagraph, the
10 Department may not collect a fee for a [certified or an abridged copy of a birth certificate]
11 **VITAL RECORD** issued to a homeless individual.

12 3. The Department shall accept as proof of homelessness a
13 signed written statement from a homeless services provider located in the State that:

14 A. Affirms that the individual is homeless; and

15 B. Includes the address to which the copy of the [birth
16 certificate] **VITAL RECORD** requested under this section may be sent.

17 4. A homeless individual may receive one copy of a [birth
18 certificate] **VITAL RECORD** without a fee in a single transaction.

19 5. The Department shall adopt regulations to implement this
20 subparagraph.

21 (iii) The Department may not collect a fee for a certified or abridged
22 copy of a death certificate of a first responder, as defined in § 18–213.2 of this article, killed
23 in the line of duty, if the copy is issued to a surviving spouse or child of the first responder
24 and will be used in connection with a claim for a dependent or beneficiary of the first
25 responder.

26 Article – Transportation

27 13–903.

28 (a) The following vehicles are exempt from the registration fees specified in this
29 subtitle:

30 (1) A vehicle that is owned and operated by the United States, this State,
31 or any political subdivision of this State;

1 (2) A vehicle that is owned by a volunteer fire company incorporated in this
2 State or by a rescue squad and that is used for firefighting or ambulance purposes;

3 (3) A canteen wagon of a recognized fire buff organization, as certified by
4 the International Fire Buffs Association;

5 (4) A vehicle owned and operated by the Civil Air Patrol;

6 (5) A vehicle owned and operated by a unit of a national veterans'
7 organization;

8 (6) A vehicle owned and operated by a Maryland chapter of the American
9 Red Cross;

10 (7) A motor vehicle and trailer known as the "40-8 box car" that is owned
11 and operated only for social or charitable purposes by any voiture of the Forty and Eight of
12 the American Legion, Department of Maryland;

13 (8) A vehicle owned by, or leased to, and personally used by a veteran who:

14 (i) As designated or classified by the U.S. Department of Veterans
15 Affairs, has lost the use of a hand, arm, or leg, or is totally disabled; or

16 (ii) Has a permanent impairment of both eyes so that:

17 1. The central visual acuity is 20/200 or less in the better eye,
18 with corrective glasses; or

19 2. There is a field defect in which the peripheral field has
20 contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular
21 distance no greater than 20 degrees in the better eye;

22 (9) A vehicle owned and personally used by an individual who is the
23 surviving spouse of a deceased disabled veteran, as defined under § 7-208 of the
24 Tax – Property Article; [and]

25 (10) A Type I or Type II school vehicle owned and operated by a religious
26 organization; AND

27 **(11) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A VEHICLE**
28 **OWNED AND PERSONALLY USED BY A HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL.**

29 **(B) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, "HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL" HAS THE**
30 **MEANING STATED IN THE FEDERAL MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE**
31 **ACT.**

1 **(2) FOR PURPOSES OF SUBSECTION (A)(11) OF THIS SECTION, THE**
2 **ADMINISTRATION SHALL ACCEPT AS PROOF OF HOMELESSNESS A SIGNED WRITTEN**
3 **STATEMENT FROM A HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDER LOCATED IN THE STATE THAT:**

4 **(I) AFFIRMS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IS HOMELESS; AND**

5 **(II) INCLUDES AN ADDRESS TO WHICH A REGISTRATION CARD**
6 **AND REGISTRATION PLATES MAY BE SENT.**

7 **(3) THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO**
8 **IMPLEMENT THIS SUBSECTION.**

9 **(C)** The Administration may exempt from the registration fees specified in this
10 subtitle any vehicle of a law enforcement agency of the United States or of any other state,
11 if the United States or other state provides a reciprocal exemption for law enforcement
12 vehicles of this State.

13 **[(c)] (D)** (1) Each registered vehicle that is exempt from registration fees
14 under subsection (a) of this section shall display a special identification marker approved
15 by the Administrator.

16 (2) The special identification marker for a motor vehicle and trailer exempt
17 under subsection (a)(7) of this section shall bear the number of the organization and the
18 number of the local voiture, reading “40–8–(local number)”.

19 (3) The special identification marker for a vehicle exempt under subsection
20 (a)(8)(i) of this section shall indicate that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has
21 designated or classified the veteran as having lost the use of a hand, arm, or leg or as being
22 totally disabled.

23 **[(d)] (E)** A disabled veteran whose vehicle is eligible for exemption under
24 subsection (a)(8) of this section may, if eligible, receive the special registration number and
25 special registration plates provided under § 13–616, § 13–617, § 13–618, § 13–619, §
26 13–619.1, or § 13–619.2 of this title without payment of the registration fees specified in
27 this subtitle.

28 16–105.

29 (d) (1) This subsection applies to an individual who:

30 (i) Seeks to obtain an original driver’s license under this subtitle;
31 and

32 (ii) Does not qualify for a learner’s instructional permit under
33 subsection (e) of this section.

1 (2) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection, an individual
2 under the age of 19 years who holds a learner's instructional permit may not take a driver
3 skills examination or driver road examination for a provisional license:

4 (i) Sooner than 9 months following the later of:

5 1. The date that the individual first obtains the learner's
6 instructional permit; or

7 2. The most recent date the individual was convicted of, or
8 granted probation before judgment under § 6–220 of the Criminal Procedure Article for, a
9 moving violation;

10 (ii) Until after successful completion of:

11 1. The driver education program approved under Subtitle 5
12 of this title, consisting of at least 30 hours of classroom instruction and at least 6 hours of
13 highway driving instruction; and

14 2. At least 60 hours, 10 hours of which must occur during the
15 period beginning 30 minutes before sunset and ending 30 minutes after sunrise, of
16 behind-the-wheel driving practice supervised by an individual who:

17 A. Holds a valid driver's license;

18 B. Is at least 21 years old; and

19 C. Has been licensed to drive for at least 3 years; and

20 (iii) Unless the individual submits, in accordance with the
21 Administration's regulations, a completed skills log book signed by:

22 1. Each supervising driver who certifies that the individual
23 has satisfactorily demonstrated a required skill and has completed the driving practice
24 requirements of item (ii)2 of this paragraph; and

25 2. If a signature of a parent, guardian, or other person is
26 required under § 16–107 of this subtitle, the parent, guardian, or other person who signs
27 the individual's application under that section.

28 (3) **(I) IN THIS PARAGRAPH, “UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS**
29 **YOUTH” MEANS A CHILD OR YOUTH WHO:**

30 1. **IS NOT IN THE PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF A PARENT OR**
31 **GUARDIAN;**

1 **2. IS A HOMELESS CHILD OR YOUTH, AS DEFINED BY THE**
 2 **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT; AND**

3 **3. WAS DETERMINED TO BE A HOMELESS CHILD OR**
 4 **YOUTH BY:**

5 **A. A MARYLAND LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM HOMELESS**
 6 **LIAISON, AS DEFINED BY THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT;**

7 **B. A DIRECTOR OR A DESIGNEE OF THE DIRECTOR OF A**
 8 **MARYLAND-BASED PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS**
 9 **YOUTH ACT; OR**

10 **C. A DIRECTOR OR A DESIGNEE OF THE DIRECTOR OF A**
 11 **MARYLAND-BASED PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER TITLE IV, SUBTITLE B OF THE**
 12 **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT.**

13 **(II)** An individual who holds a learner's instructional permit and who
 14 is 18 years old and has a high school diploma or its equivalent [or], is at least 19 years old
 15 but under the age of 25 years, **OR IS AN UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH WHO**
 16 **HOLDS A LEARNER'S INSTRUCTIONAL PERMIT AND IS UNDER THE AGE OF 19 YEARS,**
 17 may not take a driver skills examination or driver road examination for a provisional
 18 license:

19 **[(i)] 1. Sooner than the later of:**

20 **[1.] A.** 3 months following the date that the individual first
 21 obtains the learner's instructional permit; or

22 **[2.] B.** 9 months following the most recent date the
 23 individual was convicted of, or granted probation before judgment for, a moving violation;

24 **[(ii)] 2. Until after successful completion of:**

25 **[1.] A.** A standard driver education program approved
 26 under Subtitle 5 of this title, consisting of at least 30 hours of classroom instruction and at
 27 least 6 hours of highway driving instruction; and

28 **[2.] B.** At least 60 hours, 10 hours of which must occur
 29 during the period beginning 30 minutes before sunset and ending 30 minutes after sunrise,
 30 of behind-the-wheel driving practice supervised by an individual who:

31 **[A.] I.** Holds a valid driver's license;

32 **[B.] II.** Is at least 21 years old; and

1 [C.] III. Has been licensed to drive for at least 3 years; and

2 [(iii)] 3. Unless the individual submits, in accordance with the
3 Administration's regulations, a completed skills log book signed by each supervising driver
4 who certifies that the individual has satisfactorily demonstrated a required skill and has
5 completed the driving practice requirements under this paragraph.

6 16-111.2.

7 (a) (1) (I) When an applicant applies for an initial driver's license or for a
8 class of driver's license other than that which the applicant currently holds, the applicant
9 shall pay the Administration a license fee established by the Administration.

10 (II) This fee covers issuance of a learner's instructional permit and,
11 if the applicant qualifies before the learner's instructional permit expires, issuance of a
12 driver's license or provisional license.

13 (2) If a learner's instructional permit is not required, the applicant shall
14 pay the Administration, when the driver's license is issued, a license fee established by the
15 Administration.

16 (3) If an appointment to take a driver's license examination made by the
17 applicant is not kept, the Administration may charge the applicant a missed appointment
18 fee established by the Administration.

19 (b) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, for the renewal
20 of a noncommercial Class A, B, C, D, E, or M driver's license, a licensee shall pay the
21 Administration a renewal fee established by the Administration.

22 (2) The Administration may not charge a licensee who is a recipient of the
23 Medal of Honor a fee for the renewal of the licensee's noncommercial Class A, B, C, D, E,
24 or M driver's license.

25 (c) For issuance of a duplicate or corrected noncommercial Class A, B, C, D, E, or
26 M driver's license, a licensee shall pay the Administration a duplicate or corrected driver's
27 license fee established by the Administration.

28 (d) For conversion of a provisional license to a driver's license issued under §
29 16-111.1 of this subtitle, a licensee shall pay the Administration a fee established by the
30 Administration.

31 (e) A licensee shall pay a fee established by the Administration if the license is
32 issued or renewed under § 16-104.1 of this subtitle.

33 (f) (1) Whenever an applicant or licensee pays a fee required under subsection
34 (a)(1) or (2) or (b) of this section, the Administration shall offer the individual the option to

1 make a voluntary contribution of \$1 to the Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Fund
2 established under Title 13, Subtitle 9 of the Health – General Article.

3 (2) All moneys collected under this subsection shall be paid to the
4 Comptroller of the State and deposited into the Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness
5 Fund established under Title 13, Subtitle 9 of the Health – General Article.

6 **(G) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, “HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL” HAS THE**
7 **MEANING STATED IN THE FEDERAL MCKINNEY–VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE**
8 **ACT.**

9 (2) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION AND
10 EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE
11 ADMINISTRATION MAY NOT IMPOSE ANY FEE UNDER THIS SECTION IF THE LICENSEE
12 OR APPLICANT IS A HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL.

13 (3) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE ADMINISTRATION
14 SHALL ACCEPT AS PROOF OF HOMELESSNESS A SIGNED WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM
15 A HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDER LOCATED IN THE STATE THAT:

16 (I) AFFIRMS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IS HOMELESS; AND

17 (II) INCLUDES AN ADDRESS TO WHICH THE HOMELESS
18 INDIVIDUAL’S DRIVER’S LICENSE MAY BE SENT.

19 (4) A HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A FEE FOR
20 ISSUANCE OF A DUPLICATE LICENSE.

21 (5) THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO
22 IMPLEMENT THIS SUBSECTION.

23 23–206.2.

24 (a) (1) A motor vehicle for which special registration plates have been issued
25 under § 13–616 of this article is exempt from the mandatory inspections required by this
26 subtitle if:

27 (i) All of the owners of the motor vehicle meet the disability
28 requirements of § 13–616(b)(1) of this article;

29 (ii) The motor vehicle is driven 5,000 miles or less annually; and

30 (iii) The exemption is not otherwise prohibited by federal law.

1 (2) In order to qualify for an exemption under paragraph (1) of this
2 subsection, all owners of the motor vehicle shall certify the following:

3 (i) That the owner of the motor vehicle meets the disability
4 requirements of § 13–616(b)(1) of this article;

5 (ii) That the motor vehicle has been issued a special disabled
6 person’s registration number and special registration plates under § 13–616 of this article;

7 (iii) That the motor vehicle is driven 5,000 miles or less annually; and

8 (iv) The motor vehicle’s odometer reading at the time of the
9 certification.

10 (3) The certification required in paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be
11 made on a form provided by the Administration.

12 (b) (1) A motor vehicle owned by an individual who is at least 70 years of age
13 at the time of a scheduled mandatory inspection under this subtitle is exempt from the
14 mandatory inspections required by this subtitle if:

15 (i) All of the owners of the motor vehicle are at least 70 years of age
16 at the time of the scheduled mandatory inspection under this subtitle;

17 (ii) The motor vehicle is being driven 5,000 miles or less annually;
18 and

19 (iii) The exemption is not otherwise prohibited by federal law.

20 (2) In order to qualify for an exemption under paragraph (1) of this
21 subsection, all owners of the motor vehicle shall certify the following:

22 (i) That all of the owners of the motor vehicle are at least 70 years
23 of age at the time of a scheduled mandatory inspection under this subtitle;

24 (ii) That the motor vehicle is being driven 5,000 miles or less
25 annually; and

26 (iii) The motor vehicle’s odometer reading at the time of the
27 certification.

28 (3) The certification required in paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be
29 made on a form provided by the Administration.

30 (c) (1) A motor vehicle owned by at least one active duty member of the
31 uniformed services at the time of a scheduled mandatory inspection under this subtitle is
32 exempt from the mandatory inspections required by this subtitle if:

1 (i) An owner of the motor vehicle who is a member of the uniformed
2 services has received official orders:

- 3 1. For deployment outside the United States; or
4 2. To a duty station in a jurisdiction that is not subject to a
5 vehicle emissions control inspection and maintenance program; and

6 (ii) The exemption is not otherwise prohibited by federal law.

7 (2) In order to qualify for an exemption under paragraph (1) of this
8 subsection, all owners of the motor vehicle shall certify that at least one owner of the motor
9 vehicle has received official orders for deployment outside the United States or to a duty
10 station in a jurisdiction that is not subject to a vehicle emissions control inspection and
11 maintenance program.

12 (3) The certification required in paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be
13 made on a form provided by the Administration.

14 (d) **(1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, "HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL" HAS THE**
15 **MEANING STATED IN THE FEDERAL MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE**
16 **ACT.**

17 **(2) A MOTOR VEHICLE OWNED BY A HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL AT THE**
18 **TIME OF A SCHEDULED MANDATORY INSPECTION UNDER THIS SUBTITLE IS EXEMPT**
19 **FROM THE MANDATORY INSPECTIONS REQUIRED BY THIS SUBTITLE IF THE**
20 **EXEMPTION IS NOT OTHERWISE PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW.**

21 **(3) IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR AN EXEMPTION UNDER PARAGRAPH**
22 **(2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE OWNER OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE SHALL PROVIDE**
23 **PROOF OF HOMELESSNESS BY SUBMITTING TO THE ADMINISTRATION A SIGNED**
24 **WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM A HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDER LOCATED IN THE**
25 **STATE THAT:**

26 **(I) AFFIRMS THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IS HOMELESS; AND**

27 **(II) INCLUDES AN ADDRESS TO WHICH ANY CORRESPONDENCE**
28 **FROM THE ADMINISTRATION MAY BE SENT.**

29 **(E)** The Administrator may adopt regulations as necessary to administer or
30 enforce the provisions of this section.

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