

# SENATE BILL 97

O1, E4

(PRE-FILED)

6lr0017  
CF HB 224

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By: **Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee (By Request – Departmental – Human Services)**

Requested: September 25, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Reentry and Reintegration Support Program – Establishment**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a coordinated, interagency partnership among the  
4 Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional  
5 Services, and the Maryland Department of Health to create a voluntary prerelease  
6 benefits and identification application process for covered benefits for individuals  
7 being released from State correctional facilities; and generally relating to reentry  
8 and reintegration support for individuals being released from State correctional  
9 facilities.

10 BY adding to  
11 Article – Human Services  
12 Section 5–324  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
16 That the laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Human Services**

18 **5–324.**

19 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**  
20 **INDICATED.**

21 **(2) “COVERED BENEFITS” MEANS:**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(I) THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM;

(II) TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE; AND

(III) THE MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(3) "DEPARTMENTS" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, AND THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

(4) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE MARYLAND REENTRY AND REINTEGRATION SUPPORT PROGRAM.

(5) "RELEASING INSTITUTION" MEANS A STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY OPERATED BY OR UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES.

(6) "RETURNING CITIZEN" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL CONFINED IN A STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY WHO IS EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED WITHIN 90 DAYS.

(B) (1) THE DEPARTMENTS JOINTLY SHALL ESTABLISH AND ADMINISTER THE MARYLAND REENTRY AND REINTEGRATION SUPPORT PROGRAM.

(2) THE PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE COORDINATED PRERELEASE COVERED BENEFITS APPLICATION ASSISTANCE TO RETURNING CITIZENS WHO CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM.

(C) (1) THE PROGRAM SHALL INCLUDE A VOLUNTARY AND STANDARDIZED PRERELEASE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR COVERED BENEFITS.

(2) THE DEPARTMENTS JOINTLY SHALL DEVELOP A PROCESS TO PROVIDE A RETURNING CITIZEN WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR COVERED BENEFITS BEFORE THE RETURNING CITIZEN'S SCHEDULED RELEASE DATE.

(3) PROGRAM STAFF WITHIN THE RELEASING INSTITUTION SHALL ASSIST A PARTICIPATING RETURNING CITIZEN IN COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING ALL NECESSARY APPLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTATION FOR COVERED BENEFITS.

(D) (1) THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES SHALL ASSIST EACH PARTICIPATING RETURNING CITIZEN IN APPLYING FOR COVERED BENEFITS AND OBTAINING REQUIRED VERIFICATIONS AT NO COST TO THE INDIVIDUAL.

**(2) REQUIRED VERIFICATIONS INCLUDE:**

**(I) A CERTIFIED COPY OF THE RETURNING CITIZEN'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE;**

**(II) A COPY OF THE RETURNING CITIZEN'S SOCIAL SECURITY CARD;**

**(III) PROOF OF THE RETURNING CITIZEN'S INCOME AND ASSETS;**

**(IV) PROOF OF THE RETURNING CITIZEN'S SHELTER COSTS; AND**

**(V) OTHER INFORMATION NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.**

**(3) ASSISTANCE UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE PROVIDED IN A TIMELY MANNER TO ENSURE, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THAT THE RETURNING CITIZEN POSSESSES THE REQUIRED VERIFICATIONS ON RELEASE FROM A STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY.**

**(E) (1) ON OR BEFORE APRIL 1, 2027, THE DEPARTMENTS JOINTLY SHALL DEVELOP AND ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.**

**(2) THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SHALL ESTABLISH A SECURE DATA SHARING PROCESS TO:**

**(I) FACILITATE THE TIMELY PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS FOR COVERED BENEFITS;**

**(II) VERIFY A RETURNING CITIZEN'S IDENTITY AND ELIGIBILITY; AND**

**(III) ENSURE THAT, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, COVERED BENEFITS ARE ACTIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE RETURNING CITIZEN IMMEDIATELY ON RELEASE.**

**(3) DATA SHARED BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE USED SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSES OF ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM AND SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ALL APPLICABLE STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS.**

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