

# 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.



- 1 (I) THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM;
- 2 (II) TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE; AND
- 3 (III) THE MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**(2) REQUIRED VERIFICATIONS INCLUDE:**

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

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

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

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

8 (v) OTHER INFORMATION NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH  
9 ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.

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

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

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

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

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

**SENATE BILL 97**

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