

SENATE BILL 421

J1, F2

6lr2395
CF HB 60

By: Senator M. Washington

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment and Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Sickle Cell Disease – Institutions of Higher Education – Policies, Procedures,**
3 **and Educational Campaigns**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting an institution of higher education from denying access or
5 services to a student based on the student's diagnosis of sickle cell disease; requiring
6 an institution of higher education to provide reasonable accommodations for
7 students with sickle cell disease; requiring the Maryland Department of Health to
8 develop an education and awareness campaign for institutions of higher education
9 in the State regarding students with sickle cell disease; requiring the Department,
10 in consultation with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, the Statewide
11 Steering Committee on Sickle Cell Disease, and certain community organizations to
12 develop a framework and procedures for institutions of higher education in the State
13 to follow in assessing, supporting, and treating students with sickle cell disease;
14 requiring the Department to develop or compile materials to provide a
15 comprehensive education on sickle cell disease to certain faculty and staff at
16 institutions of higher education in the State; and generally relating to sickle cell
17 disease and institutions of higher education.

18 BY adding to

19 Article – Education

20 Section 15–141

21 Annotated Code of Maryland

22 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

23 BY adding to

24 Article – Health – General

25 Section 18–510 through 18–512

26 Annotated Code of Maryland

27 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

3 **Article – Education**

4 **15–141.**

5 **(A) AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION:**

6 **(1) SHALL PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS TO A STUDENT**
7 **WITH SICKLE CELL DISEASE; AND**

8 **(2) MAY NOT DENY ACCESS TO FACILITIES OR SERVICES TO A**
9 **STUDENT BASED ON THE STUDENT'S DIAGNOSIS OF SICKLE CELL DISEASE.**

10 **(B) AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH A CLEAR**
11 **AND ACCESSIBLE PROCEDURE THROUGH WHICH A PERSON MAY REPORT AN**
12 **ALLEGED VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.**

13 **(C) AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL PUBLICIZE IN A**
14 **MANNER THAT IS CLEAR AND ACCESSIBLE TO STUDENTS:**

15 **(1) THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION; AND**

16 **(2) THE REPORTING PROCEDURE ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION**
17 **(B) OF THIS SECTION.**

18 **Article – Health – General**

19 **18–510.**

20 **(A) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH SICKLE CELL DISEASE**
21 **TREATMENT PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, SHALL**
22 **DEVELOP AN EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN FOR INSTITUTIONS OF**
23 **HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE REGARDING STUDENTS WITH SICKLE CELL**
24 **DISEASE.**

25 **(B) THE CAMPAIGN DEVELOPED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION**
26 **SHALL:**

27 **(1) DESCRIBE CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH**
28 **SICKLE CELL DISEASE, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON CHALLENGES ARISING**
29 **DURING SICKLE CELL DISEASE-RELATED HEALTH CRISES AND OTHER CHRONIC**
30 **CONDITIONS THAT MAY COMPOUND THESE CHALLENGES; AND**

5 18-511.

6 (A) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MARYLAND HIGHER
7 EDUCATION COMMISSION, THE STATEWIDE STEERING COMMITTEE ON SICKLE
8 CELL DISEASE, AND SICKLE CELL DISEASE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS BASED IN
9 THE STATE, SHALL DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURES FOR INSTITUTIONS
10 OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE TO FOLLOW IN ASSESSING, SUPPORTING, AND
11 TREATING STUDENTS WITH SICKLE CELL DISEASE.

12 (B) THE DEPARTMENT, THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION
13 COMMISSION, AND THE STATEWIDE STEERING COMMITTEE ON SICKLE CELL
14 DISEASE JOINTLY SHALL:

15 (1) BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, 2026, PROVIDE TECHNICAL
16 ASSISTANCE TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO:

17 (I) IMPLEMENT THE PROCEDURES DEVELOPED UNDER THIS
18 SECTION; AND

19 (II) INSTRUCT PERSONNEL OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
20 EDUCATION REGARDING THE PROCEDURES DEVELOPED UNDER THIS SECTION; AND

24 18-512.

25 (A) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATEWIDE
26 STEERING COMMITTEE ON SICKLE CELL DISEASE AND SICKLE CELL DISEASE
27 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS BASED IN THE STATE, SHALL DEVELOP OR COMPILE
28 MATERIALS TO PROVIDE HEALTH PERSONNEL, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATIVE
29 STAFF EMPLOYED AT AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE WITH
30 A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION ON SICKLE CELL DISEASE.

31 (B) THE MATERIALS DEVELOPED OR COMPILED UNDER THIS SECTION
32 SHALL BE DESIGNED TO ENHANCE UNDERSTANDING OF SICKLE CELL DISEASE,

1 REDUCE STIGMAS, AND PROMOTE AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING AND SUPPORTIVE
2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH SICKLE CELL DISEASE.

3 (C) EACH INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IS ENCOURAGED TO
4 CONDUCT PERIODIC ASSESSMENTS, SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES, AWARENESS
5 CAMPAIGNS, AND EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS BASED ON THE MATERIALS DEVELOPED
6 OR COMPILED UNDER THIS SECTION AS FINANCIAL RESOURCES ALLOW.

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