

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.



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

Article – Education

15–141.

(A) AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Article – Health – General

18–510.

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

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

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

(2) PROVIDE INFORMATION ON ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT THAT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION CAN OFFER TO STUDENTS WITH SICKLE CELL DISEASE TO ENABLE THE STUDENTS TO SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY WHILE EFFECTIVELY MANAGING SICKLE CELL DISEASE.

18-511.

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

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

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

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

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

(2) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2026, DEVELOP A PROCESS TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCEDURES BY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

18-512.

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

(B) THE MATERIALS DEVELOPED OR COMPILED UNDER THIS SECTION 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.