

SENATE BILL 473

C5, R2, E4

6lr2251
CF HB 829

By: **Senators Hettleman ~~and Love~~, Love, and Hester**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 25, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Utilities – For-Hire Drivers and Transportation Network Operators –**
3 **Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Training and Liability**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring an applicant for certain for-hire driver’s licenses ~~and~~
5 ~~transportation network operator’s licenses~~ to submit to the Public Service
6 Commission documentation verifying that the applicant completed a certain human
7 trafficking awareness training program; prohibiting licensed taxicab drivers,
8 for-hire drivers, or transportation network operators and applicants for a
9 transportation network operator’s license from being held civilly or criminally liable
10 for reporting or responding to in good faith a suspected incident of human trafficking;
11 prohibiting a transportation network company from allowing certain applicants for
12 and holders of a transportation network operator’s license to provide transportation
13 network services using a digital network application if the applicant or license holder
14 has not completed a certain human trafficking awareness training program; and
15 generally relating to for-hire drivers and transportation network operators.

16 BY renumbering

17 Article – Public Utilities

18 Section 10-404(g) and (h)

19 to be Section 10-404(h) and (i), respectively

20 Annotated Code of Maryland

21 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

22 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

23 Article – Public Utilities

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Section 10–103(b), 10–104(a)(1), 10–104.1(b), and 10–106, ~~and 10–404(b) and (e)~~
 2 Annotated Code of Maryland
 3 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

4 BY adding to
 5 Article – Public Utilities
 6 Section 10–104.2 and 10–404(g)
 7 Annotated Code of Maryland
 8 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 10 That Section(s) 10–404(g) and (h) of Article – Public Utilities of the Annotated Code of
 11 Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 10–404(h) and (i), respectively.

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
 13 as follows:

14 **Article – Public Utilities**

15 10–103.

16 (b) (1) A county or municipal corporation may license taxicab drivers who
 17 drive taxicabs that are based in that county or municipal corporation if, at a minimum, the
 18 county or municipal corporation:

19 (I) conducts a criminal record check [and] **OF EACH APPLICANT**
 20 **FOR A LICENSE;**

21 (II) **CONDUCTS A** driving record check of each applicant for a license;
 22 **AND**

23 (III) **REQUIRES THAT EACH APPLICANT FOR A LICENSE INCLUDE**
 24 **IN THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT**
 25 **COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH**
 26 **§ 10–104.2 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

27 (2) A taxicab driver licensed by a county or municipal corporation is not
 28 required to be licensed by the Commission.

29 10–104.

30 (a) (1) An applicant for a for–hire driver’s license shall:

31 (i) submit to the Commission a completed application on the form
 32 that the Commission provides;

1 (ii) state on the form that the applicant is applying for a
2 passenger-for-hire driver's license or a taxicab driver's license;

3 (iii) pay to the Commission an application fee set by the Commission;

4 (iv) 1. if the applicant is a Maryland driver, allow the
5 Commission access to the driver's photograph through the Motor Vehicle Administration;
6 or

7 2. file with the application a recent photograph in a format
8 that the Commission specifies; [and]

9 (v) **SUBMIT TO THE COMMISSION DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING**
10 **THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING**
11 **IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-104.2 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND**

12 (VI) apply to the Criminal Justice Information System Central
13 Repository of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services for a State
14 criminal history records check as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

15 10-104.1.

16 (b) The Commission may approve an applicant and issue a temporary driver's
17 license to the applicant if:

18 (1) the applicant provides all information that the Commission requires for
19 the application, including the information specified in item (2) of this subsection; [and]

20 (2) the Commission is satisfied with the successful submission of the
21 applicant's:

22 (i) national criminal history records check:

23 1. conducted by a consumer reporting agency as defined
24 under § 14-1201 of the Commercial Law Article or a comparable entity approved by the
25 Commission; and

26 2. that includes:

27 A. a Multi-State Multi-Jurisdiction Criminal Records
28 Database Search or a search of a similar nationwide database with validation;

29 B. a search of the Sex Offender Registry; and

30 C. a search of the U.S. Department of Justice's National Sex
31 Offender Public website; and

1 (ii) driving record check that includes a driving history research
2 report; AND

3 (3) THE APPLICANT SUBMITS TO THE COMMISSION DOCUMENTATION
4 VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS
5 TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-104.2 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

6 10-104.2.

7 (A) AN APPLICANT FOR A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
8 10-103(B) OF THIS SUBTITLE OR UNDER § 10-104, § 10-104.1, OR § 10-106 OF THIS
9 SUBTITLE ~~OR § 10-104 OF THIS TITLE~~ SHALL INCLUDE IN THE APPLICATION
10 DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED:

11 (1) ~~(H)~~ THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S LEADERS
12 AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING/COMBATting HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE
13 TRANSPORTATION AWARENESS TRAINING; OR

14 ~~(H)~~ (2) ANY NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN TRAFFICKING
15 AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAM; ~~AND.~~

16 ~~(2)~~ (B) A HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION PROGRAM THAT
17 PROVIDES AWARENESS TRAINING THAT AN APPLICANT COMPLETES UNDER
18 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION ON HOW TO:

19 ~~(H)~~ (1) RECOGNIZE POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF HUMAN
20 TRAFFICKING;

21 ~~(H)~~ (2) RESPOND TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO MAY BE OR IS A
22 VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING; AND

23 ~~(H)~~ (3) CONNECT AN INDIVIDUAL WHO MAY BE OR IS A VICTIM
24 OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING WITH AVAILABLE RESOURCES REPORT SUSPECTED
25 INCIDENTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.

26 ~~(B)~~ (C) A LICENSED TAXICAB DRIVER, OR FOR-HIRE DRIVER, ~~OR~~
27 ~~TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OPERATOR~~ MAY NOT BE HELD CIVILLY OR CRIMINALLY
28 LIABLE FOR REPORTING OR RESPONDING IN GOOD FAITH TO A SUSPECTED
29 INCIDENT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

30 10-106.

1 (a) The term of a for-hire driver's license is not less than 1 year and not more
2 than 3 years, as the Commission sets.

3 (b) (1) An applicant for a renewal of a for-hire driver's license shall:

4 (I) submit to the Commission an application on the form that the
5 Commission provides; AND

6 (II) INCLUDE IN THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION
7 VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS
8 TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-104.2 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

9 (2) The Commission may renew the for-hire driver's license by appropriate
10 endorsement on the license.

11 (c) The Commission shall keep on file with the original application of a driver a
12 complete record of:

13 (1) each for-hire driver's license issued to the driver; and

14 (2) any renewal, suspension, and revocation of a for-hire driver's license
15 issued to the driver.

16 10-404.

17 ~~(b) The Commission may approve an applicant to be an operator and issue a~~
18 ~~temporary transportation network operator's license to the applicant if:~~

19 ~~(1) the applicant provides all information that the Commission requires for~~
20 ~~the application, including the information specified in item (2) of this subsection; [and]~~

21 ~~(2) the Commission is satisfied with the successful submission of the~~
22 ~~applicant's:~~

23 ~~(i) national criminal history records check;~~

24 ~~1. conducted by a consumer reporting agency as defined~~
25 ~~under § 14-1201 of the Commercial Law Article or a comparable entity approved by the~~
26 ~~Commission; and~~

27 ~~2. that includes:~~

28 ~~A. a Multi-State Multi-Jurisdiction Criminal Records~~
29 ~~Database Search or a search of a similar nationwide database with validation;~~

30 ~~B. a search of the Sex Offender Registry; and~~

~~C. a search of the U.S. Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Website; and~~

~~(ii) driving record check that includes a driving history research report; AND~~

~~(3) THE APPLICANT SUBMITS TO THE COMMISSION DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-104.2 OF THIS TITLE.~~

~~(e) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, the Commission may issue a permanent transportation network operator's license to an applicant [upon] ON the submission of:~~

~~(1) a satisfactory supplemental criminal background check as set forth under § 10-104(b) of this title; AND~~

~~(2) DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-104.2 OF THIS TITLE.~~

~~(G) AN APPLICANT FOR THE RENEWAL OF A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OPERATOR'S LICENSE SHALL SUBMIT TO THE COMMISSION DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING THAT THE APPLICANT COMPLETED A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 10-104.2 OF THIS TITLE.~~

(G) (1) THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO:

(I) SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION FOR A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OPERATOR'S LICENSE ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30, 2026; AND

(II) COMPLETED, BETWEEN JUNE 1, 2025, AND NOVEMBER 30, 2026, A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

(2) A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANY MAY NOT ALLOW AN APPLICANT FOR A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OPERATOR'S LICENSE OR THE HOLDER OF A TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OPERATOR'S LICENSE TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK SERVICES USING A DIGITAL NETWORK APPLICATION UNLESS THE APPLICANT OR LICENSE HOLDER, WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE APPLICANT OR LICENSE HOLDER FIRST PROVIDES A PREARRANGED RIDE, HAS COMPLETED:

1 **(I) THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION’S LEADERS**
2 **AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING/COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE**
3 **TRANSPORTATION SECTOR AWARENESS TRAINING;**

4 **(II) ANY NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN TRAFFICKING**
5 **AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAM; OR**

6 **(III) ANY DIGITAL TRAINING DEVELOPED BY A TRANSPORTATION**
7 **NETWORK COMPANY IN CONSULTATION WITH A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED**
8 **ORGANIZATION WITH EXPERTISE IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING.**

9 **(3) A HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING THAT AN**
10 **APPLICANT OR LICENSE HOLDER COMPLETES UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS**
11 **SUBSECTION MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION ON HOW TO:**

12 **(I) RECOGNIZE POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING;**

13 **(II) RESPOND TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO MAY BE OR IS A VICTIM OF**
14 **HUMAN TRAFFICKING; AND**

15 **(III) REPORT SUSPECTED INCIDENTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**
16 **TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.**

17 **(4) AN APPLICANT FOR A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK OPERATOR’S**
18 **LICENSE OR THE HOLDER OF A TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT TRANSPORTATION**
19 **NETWORK OPERATOR’S LICENSE MAY NOT BE HELD CIVILLY OR CRIMINALLY LIABLE**
20 **FOR REPORTING OR RESPONDING IN GOOD FAITH TO A SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF**
21 **HUMAN TRAFFICKING.**

22 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
23 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.