

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1320
Judiciary

(Delegate Rosenberg)

Criminal Procedure - Victim Notification - Request at the Time of Charging

This bill requires a prosecuting attorney, law enforcement officer, and District Court commissioner to inform a victim or victim’s representative of the ability to request notification through the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) system of a defendant’s custody status and court hearings. If a law enforcement officer receives a request, the officer must provide the request to the commissioner at the time of charging. On receiving a request for notification from a victim, representative, or law enforcement officer, the commissioner must enter the request into MDEC. After the commissioner enters the request into MDEC, the State’s Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) vendor must notify the victim or victim’s representative of the defendant’s release by the commissioner, other release from custody, and scheduled court hearings. A prosecuting attorney must inform the victim (or a representative) of the ability to receive information regarding a defendant’s custody status and court hearings within 10 days after the filing of a criminal information in the District Court. The bill also requires a victim or victim’s representative’s telephone number to be kept confidential, as otherwise specified by statute.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for the Judiciary increase by \$40,000 in FY 2027 only for one-time programming costs. Any operational impact for commissioners is not anticipated to be significant or materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Under Maryland law, a victim of a crime or delinquent act (or a representative in the event the victim is deceased, disabled, or a minor) has a broad range of specific rights during the criminal justice process. On first contact with a victim, a law enforcement officer, District Court commissioner, or juvenile intake officer must give an identified victim a pamphlet that advises the victim of the rights, services, and procedures available in the time before and after the filing of a charging document.

As further specified in statute, many of the rights to which a victim of crime is entitled depend on a victim completing a notification request form or requesting notice by following MDEC system protocol. Through MDEC system protocol, a victim or victim's representative may request for the address or electronic mail address to remain confidential and available only as necessary to (1) the court; (2) the prosecuting attorney; (3) the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; (4) the Department of Juvenile Services; (5) the attorney of the victim or victim's representative; (6) the State's VINE vendor; and (7) a commitment unit that a court orders to retain custody of an individual.

If the victim followed MDEC system protocol to originally request notification, the victim may follow MDEC system protocol to terminate notice. If the victim originally filed a notification request form, the victim may discontinue further notices by filing a written request with (1) the prosecuting attorney, if the case is still in a circuit court or juvenile court or (2) the unit to which the defendant or child respondent has been committed, if a commitment order has been issued in the case.

Additional Comments: According to the Judiciary, in calendar 2025, there were 92,255 initial appearance hearings processed by commissioners, and 52,355 total applications for statement of charges processed.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Harford and Talbot counties; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 2026
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