

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 771
Health

(Delegate Miller, *et al.*)

Health Occupations - Human Trafficking Awareness Training

This bill requires each health occupations board to (1) adopt regulations that permit an applicant for license or certification renewal to receive continuing education credits for completing an approved human trafficking awareness training program and (2) conduct outreach to make individuals regulated by the board aware of human trafficking awareness training options, including by providing information in general board communications and on the board’s website. By July 1, 2026, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), in collaboration and consultation with required stakeholders, must approve the required training program. By October 1, 2026, each health occupations board must adopt regulations necessary to carry out the bill. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MDH can collaborate with stakeholders to approve a training program and the health occupations boards can promulgate regulations and conduct outreach with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: “Local university” means a public or private institution of higher education in the State with a public health, law, or social work program. “Local university” includes a program within an institution of higher education, such as the University of Maryland SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors.

A training program for which an applicant may receive continuing education credits under the bill must:

- be approved by MDH in collaboration with a local university and in consultation with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force (MHTTF) and organizations that provide direct services to human trafficking survivors;
- be at least one hour in duration;
- be readily accessible and provided to an individual free of charge; and
- include instruction on: (1) the definitions and forms of sex and labor trafficking under federal and State law; (2) an understanding of the trauma-informed care model; (3) the physical, behavioral, and emotional indicators of human trafficking, particularly those presenting in a health care setting; (4) appropriate screening protocols and documentation methods; (5) mandatory reporting requirements under State law and established protocols for reporting suspected cases of human trafficking to the appropriate authorities, including the National Human Trafficking Hotline; and (6) available federal, State, and local resources and services for survivors of human trafficking.

Current Law: Twenty health occupations boards share responsibility for regulating various health professions in Maryland. With specified exceptions, an individual must be licensed, certified, registered, or permitted by the respective board before the individual may practice in the State. Licensure, certification, registration, and permit requirements vary by profession but typically require, among other things, specified education and experience, passage of a national and/or State examination, and a criminal history records check. Several boards require continuing education as a condition of license renewal.

Human Trafficking Awareness Training

Numerous government entities and licensed businesses in the State are required to provide, approve, and/or receive training on the identification and reporting of human trafficking. For example:

- the Maryland State Department of Education must collaborate with MDH to provide awareness and training for Directors of Student Services in local education agencies on human trafficking, including strategies for the prevention of trafficking of children;
- a commercial driver's license training school is required to include, as part of its curriculum, education and training on the recognition, prevention, and effective reporting of human trafficking;
- each innkeeper must provide a new employee with an annual training for the accurate and prompt identification and reporting of suspected human trafficking

(any such training program must be approved by the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy and the Maryland Department of Labor); and

- Chapter 437 of 2025 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop or identify and implement a human trafficking awareness training program and administer the training program to specified employees and contractors.

Additional Comments: The University of Maryland SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors, in collaboration with the Maryland Hospital Association, developed [Guidelines for Healthcare Providers](#) to help medical professionals identify and support survivors of human trafficking in hospitals.

[MHTTF](#) is the State’s primary organization that works to prevent trafficking, protect victims by providing them with the services they need, prosecute traffickers, and partner with a variety of organizations to eradicate human trafficking from Maryland’s communities. MHTTF’s website compiles several human trafficking [webinars](#).

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): University System of Maryland; Morgan State University; Maryland Independent College and University Association; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 24, 2026
jg/jc

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