

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1246 (Delegate Lewis)
 Economic Matters and Government,
 Labor, and Elections

Maryland Department of Health - Employment Training and Opportunity Database

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to coordinate with specified entities to develop and maintain an employment training and opportunity database to provide individuals in the State with assistance in finding employment training and other opportunities that may enable them to become eligible and maintain eligibility for Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor), the Secretary of Human Services, and the Department of Service and Civic Innovation (DSCI) must each (1) establish a process through which a person may recommend a vocational, workforce training, or job placement program for inclusion in the database and (2) if appropriate, forward a recommendation to MDH for inclusion in the database. **The bill terminates September 30, 2029.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Medicaid expenditures increase by \$500,000 (90% federal funds, 10% general funds) in FY 2027 for implementation costs, and by \$51,200 (75% federal funds, 25% general funds) in FY 2028 for maintenance costs (which continue through FY 2030), as discussed below. Federal fund revenues increase accordingly. MD Labor, the Department of Human Services (DHS), and DSCI can likely meet the bill’s requirements with existing budgeted resources.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
FF Revenue	\$450,000	\$38,400	\$39,300	\$40,200	\$0
GF/FF Exp.	\$500,000	\$51,200	\$52,400	\$53,600	\$0
Net Effect	(\$50,000)	(\$12,800)	(\$13,100)	(\$13,400)	\$0

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

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

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: In developing and maintaining the database, MDH must coordinate with: MD Labor; DHS; DCSI; the Maryland Chamber of Commerce; labor unions; trade associations; educational institutions; local workforce development boards; and any other entity that MDH determines appropriate.

The database must include:

- vocational, workforce training, and job placement programs available in the State;
- information regarding how to apply for such opportunities; and
- a mechanism that allows an individual to directly contact the vocational, workforce training, or job placement program in which the individual is interested.

MDH must (1) make the database available to the public on a dedicated page on the department's website; (2) assist individuals in enrolling in vocational, workforce training, and job placement programs listed in the database; and (3) update the database every 30 days.

Current Law:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SNAP, administered by DHS, is a federally funded benefit that helps low-income households purchase food. Program rules and requirements are issued by the federal government, while administrative costs are split equally between the State and federal government. Participants must meet income and resource requirements.

SNAP offers funding to states that provide a package of employment and training services to SNAP participants through SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T). SNAP E&T helps SNAP participants gain skills, training, or work experience to increase their ability to obtain regular employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

The Maryland SNAP E&T program connects people who receive monthly food supplement benefits to free job-driven training programs. These programs provide services, including job readiness activities, support services, job placement, and job retention services. Some

programs provide adult basic education, vocational training, and opportunities for participants to receive certificates or credentials. SNAP E&T workforce development services include case management designed to identify and remove certain barriers to employment, including child care, transportation, criminal records, limited education, age, disability, domestic violence, housing issues, lack of employment history, or literacy.

To be eligible for SNAP E&T, individuals must be older than age 16, receive monthly food supplement benefits, and be able to work upon completion of the program. Individuals cannot receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families if they wish to participate. Each SNAP E&T employment program may have its own additional eligibility requirements. DHS maintains a [list](#) of available SNAP E&T training programs.

Federal Changes Regarding Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Eligibility

General work requirements apply to all SNAP recipients ages 16 to 59 who must register for work and participate in a program if offered. Recipients known as “Able-bodied Adults without Dependents” (ABAWD) ages 18 to 54 must work or participate in an education/training program for an average of at least 20 hours per week. Individuals are exempt from ABAWD requirements if, among other things, they are physically or mentally unfit to work, pregnant, caring for a dependent child, participating in substance use treatment, or studying in school or a training program at least half time. If an ABAWD recipient cannot document required work activities, their receipt of SNAP is limited to three months in a three-year period.

The federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) of 2025 made substantial changes to SNAP work requirements by (1) increasing the age range for ABAWD work requirements to 18 to 64 (up from age 54); (2) limiting the exception for caring for a dependent child to parents with children younger than 14 (reduced from 18); and (3) removing exemptions for people experiencing homelessness, veterans, and young adults formerly in foster care.

Although these changes were effective upon enactment of OBBA, guidance by the U.S. Department of Agriculture was not issued until October 2025. DHS began implementing the changes in November 2025, with the impact on recipients occurring on a phased-in basis. New recipients face the new work requirements immediately, while current recipients will face the new work requirements at recertification.

Medicaid

MDH administers Medicaid, which provides comprehensive health care coverage to eligible low-income individuals. In general, recipients of Temporary Cash Assistance or federal Supplemental Security Income benefits automatically qualify for Medicaid. Children in foster care are also automatically eligible, and individuals who were in foster care on their eighteenth birthday are eligible until age 26, regardless of income.

Other individuals qualify for Medicaid based on their income or due to an inability to pay extraordinary medical bills resulting from a catastrophic illness or extended nursing home or hospital stay. Residents of Maryland who are U.S. citizens, meet qualifying immigration statuses, and have lived in the United States for at least five years, or who otherwise qualify, must meet certain income limitations as well as one of the following conditions: younger than age 65; disabled; blind; younger than age 21; caring for a related child in the home; pregnant; or parents of an unmarried child younger than age 21. Certain elderly individuals may also be eligible for assistance under Medicaid as well as Medicare.

Federal Changes Regarding Medicaid

OBBA also makes substantial changes to Medicaid, including establishing new work requirements. Effective January 1, 2027, able-bodied Medicaid expansion adults (ages 19 to 64) must work or participate in educational, volunteer, or work programs for 80 hours per month or report income of at least \$580 per month to maintain coverage. Formal guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding implementation of work requirements is not expected until June 2026.

Maryland Department of Labor

MD Labor, among other things, administers employment service and adult learning programs. MD Labor's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) operates workforce development programs, including job services, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and labor market information programs. It also manages adult education programs, including adult literacy programs and skills training for correctional institutions. DWDAL provides job training opportunities through the Office of Apprenticeship, Office of Workforce Development, Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services, and Office of Strategic Initiatives.

MD Labor manages an [eligible training provider list](#) to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which provides federal funds to assist individuals who meet certain criteria for enrollment into a postsecondary school program.

Department of Service and Civic Innovation

DSCI promotes services and the use of volunteers by State and local government, employers, and nonprofit organizations. To enhance State volunteer projects, the department works with national, State, and local volunteerism groups. DSCI coordinates and oversees the activities of the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism, recognizes volunteers in State programs, and administers service programs.

State Fiscal Effect:

Maryland Department of Health

The bill requires MDH to coordinate with specified entities to develop and maintain an employment training and opportunity training database, to be made available on a dedicated page on the department's website and updated every 30 days through September 30, 2029. MDH must also assist individuals in enrolling in vocational, workforce training, and job placement programs listed in the database.

MDH advises that development of the database required by the bill can be included in planned updates to specified Eligibility and Enrollment platforms. MDH submitted a Community Engagement-specific Advance Planning Document (CE-APD) to CMS, which was approved in February 2026, to comply with updated OBBBA requirements regarding Medicaid eligibility and enrollment. MDH further advises that it will submit an annual update to CE-APD requesting additional funding for federal fiscal 2027 and can request funding to meet the requirements of the bill. CMS approval and implementation of the database are not likely until August 2026; however, the database could be operational by January 1, 2027.

Therefore, Medicaid expenditures increase by an estimated \$500,000 (90% federal funds, 10% general funds) in fiscal 2027 for design, development, and implementation expenses. Beginning in fiscal 2028, Medicaid expenditures increase by \$51,180 (75% federal funds, 25% general funds) for ongoing maintenance costs. Maintenance costs continue through fiscal 2030, with an estimated 2% inflation rate annually. Federal fund revenues increase accordingly.

This estimate does not reflect any potential costs to MDH to *assist individuals* in enrolling in vocational, workforce training, and job placement programs listed in the database, as required under the bill.

Maryland Department of Labor

MD Labor must coordinate with MDH and (1) establish a process through which a person may recommend a vocational, workforce training, or job placement program for inclusion in the database and (2) if appropriate, forward a recommendation to MDH for inclusion in the database.

MD Labor advises that DWDAL manages more than 1,000 training programs in the State, and that the bill's requirement to update the database created under the bill would place a significant administrative burden on the department that requires three additional staff. However, the Department of Legislative Services notes that, under the bill, MD Labor is

required to establish a *process* through which a program may be added to the database and forward recommendations to MDH; MD Labor is not required to update the list of vocational, workforce training, or job placement programs for inclusion in the database. Since MD Labor currently manages a list of eligible training providers, this analysis assumes that the department can meet the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources. To the extent that additional staff are required, MD Labor general fund expenditures increase by \$192,761 in fiscal 2027, increasing to \$255,686 in fiscal 2030.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: SB 772 (Senator Ferguson) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Human Services; Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Service and Civic Innovation; Department of Legislative Services

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