

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

Senate Bill 159

(Senator A. Washington)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Health

Emergency Medical Services - Vehicles and Ambulances - Required Supplies

This bill requires the Executive Director of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) to coordinate, with the Jurisdictional Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Operating Programs (JEMSOPs), the minimum equipment, supplies, and medications for early childhood care (including neonatal care) to be available on EMS vehicles. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill’s requirements can be handled with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

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

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: MIEMSS is the administrative agency responsible for the coordination of all EMS in the State, which is overseen by the State Emergency Medical Services Board (EMS Board). The EMS Board must develop and adopt an Emergency Medical System plan to ensure effective coordination and evaluation of EMS delivered in the State. In accordance with the Emergency Medical System plan and other relevant policies adopted by the EMS Board, the Executive Director of MIEMSS must, among other things:

- coordinate a statewide system of EMS;
- coordinate the five emergency medical service regions in this State;

- coordinate the planning and operation of EMS with the federal, State, and county governments;
- coordinate the training of all personnel in the EMS System and develop the necessary standards for their certification or licensure;
- coordinate programs of research and education that relate to EMS;
- coordinate the development of centers for treating emergency injuries and illnesses;
- coordinate the development of specialty referral centers;
- administer State and federal funds for EMS in the State;
- assure continued improvement of transportation for emergency, critically ill, and injured patients; and
- implement all programmatic, operational, and administrative components of the MIEMSS.

Emergency Medical Services Operational Programs

Under Maryland regulations (COMAR [30.01.01.02](#)), an EMS operational program means (1) JEMSOP or (2) an institution, agency, corporation, or other entity that is licensed by MIEMSS as a commercial service.

Each EMS operational program must have a medical director responsible for providing medical oversight of patient care, including emergency medical dispatch. The medical director must, among other things:

- approve, participate in, and provide medical expertise for the program in: (1) a comprehensive quality assurance plan; (2) standard operating procedures for the program; (3) appropriate EMS provider remedial and continuing education programs; (4) credentialing of EMS providers; (5) timely review and approval of medical equipment used by the program; and (6) all aspects of the EMS operational program that impact patient care, including planning, development, and operations;
- provide timely approval of new and renewal applications to MIEMSS for licensure and certification for all EMS providers affiliated with the program;
- review patient care disciplinary matters; and
- provide a liaison to the medical community as well as regional and State EMS medical directors.

Each EMS operational program must have a written quality assurance plan approved by its medical director that must include provisions for: (1) reviewing data concerning patient care; (2) identifying and analyzing trends in EMS care; (3) annually reporting to MIEMSS on quality assurance issues; (4) providing remedial action to resolve any patient care issues involving EMS providers or the EMS system that should be addressed at the jurisdictional

level; (5) identifying violations of the Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services Providers; (6) notifying MIEMSS within 30 days of discovery of any incidents, protocol variations, or trends, as specified; and (7) reviewing oral or written allegations that an EMS provider failed to act in accordance with applicable law or protocols, or prehospital patient care was below the applicable standard of care.

Voluntary Ambulance Inspection Program

The MIEMSS [Voluntary Ambulance Inspection Program](#) aims to formally recognize emergency response vehicles that meet a specified standard for equipment on ambulances and EMS chase vehicles, with a goal to assure appropriate quantities of medications and supplies are available.

Neonatal Ambulance Service

Under Maryland regulations (COMAR [30.09.12.02](#)), a commercial ambulance service wishing to provide neonatal ambulance services must obtain a neonatal commercial ambulance service license. If providing neonatal transport services in partnership with a hospital-based neonatal intensive care unit, the commercial ambulance service must have a written memorandum of understanding stating that all equipment and medications required to transport a neonate will be readily available. The commercial ambulance service must work with the neonatal or perinatal center that agrees to: (1) serve as medical director for the neonatal service; (2) provide medical direction to personnel-related neonatal care; (3) provide training as required in neonatal care; and (4) participate in a quality assurance program.

Additional Comments: MIEMSS has designated 28 JEMSOPs in the State, including in each county, Baltimore City, and Annapolis.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems; Prince George's County; Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History:
jg/jc

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