



RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT NOTE

DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES
MARYLAND ▪ GENERAL ▪ ASSEMBLY

2026 Session
HB1363

Criminal Procedure - Domestic Violence Offenders - Registration

Bill Summary

This bill requires a person, who is convicted of at least two domestically related crimes, to register with the person's supervising authority. A domestic violence offender must register with the appropriate supervising authority in the State within seven days after a second conviction for a domestically related crime. A person is no longer subject to registration if the underlying conviction requiring registration is reversed, vacated, or set aside, or the registrant is pardoned for the underlying conviction. The bill requires the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) to make certain registration statements available to the public. The bill also establishes a penalty for failure to register.

Racial Equity Impact Statement

The bill would require specified domestic violence repeat offenders to register with a supervising authority and for a registrant's identifying information to be posted on a public Internet site. Crime reporting data from the Department of State Police (DSP) provides a detailed picture of domestic violence victims and the multitude of underlying offenses involved. Just over half (52%) of domestically related crime victims in the State in 2024 were Black, and women comprised 68% of all victims. Black women were 58% of all domestic violence homicides in 2022. While there is no data readily available to precisely determine the demographic makeup of offenders, assault was the underlying offense for 84% of all domestically related crimes in 2024. Black individuals comprised 56% of the arrests for assault, including aggravated assault, during that time period. Given the DSP data, the impacts of the bill will likely be mixed. Victims or potential victims will benefit from the public safety aspects of having offender information available online. However, domestic violence offenders, a substantial portion of which may be Black, would be subject to reporting and monitoring requirements as well as any public scrutiny resulting from inclusion on the registry. Determination of any specific impacts would require additional data on those convicted of a domestically related crime two or more times.

Analysis

The bill requires a person convicted of at least two domestically related crimes to register with the appropriate supervising authority in the State within seven days after a second conviction for a domestically related crime. The term of registration is graduated depending on the number of prior convictions. The bill also specifies penalties for failure to register, allows for registration fees, and authorizes DPSCS to promulgate regulations.

A registration statement must include (1) the registrant's full name, including any suffix; (2) a description of the crime for which the registrant was convicted; (3) the date that the registrant was convicted; (4) the jurisdiction and the name of the court in which the registrant was convicted; (5) all identifying factors, including a physical description of the registrant; (6) a copy of the registrant's valid driver's license or identification card; and (7) the registrant's signature and date signed.

DPSCS must make registration statements or information about them available to the public online and include (1) a current listing of each registrant, including each registrant's name, date of birth, date of conviction, jurisdiction of the conviction, and digital image and (2) a plain language factual description of the crime of the offender that is the basis for the registration, excluding details that would identify the victim.

Domestic Violence Data Collection

Maryland has been collecting data involving domestic violence since the passage of the Domestic Violence Act of 1994, which requires all law enforcement agencies in the State to submit incident reports involving domestic violence to DSP. Chapter 554 of 2012 further improved the recording and tracking of domestic violence crimes within the court system by requiring all cases designated by a court to be a "domestically related crime" to become part of the court record for purposes of reporting to the Criminal Justice Information System Central Repository.

The Administrative Office of the Courts houses the Domestic Violence Monthly Reports database, which contains data on protective and peace orders across the State. The database reports the total number of protective or peace orders by sex, race, age, and case type of the respondent and is searchable by county, month, and year; however, the database does not generate aggregate data and does not provide identifying information, criminal history, or the outcome of protective peace orders.

The Maryland Domestic Violence Fatality Review State Implementation Team collects data on domestic violence deaths. According to its latest report in 2023, there were 40 total deaths due to domestic violence in Maryland in 2022, with 26 victims killed alongside 14 bystanders. According to the report, 58% of the domestic violence deaths were Black women.

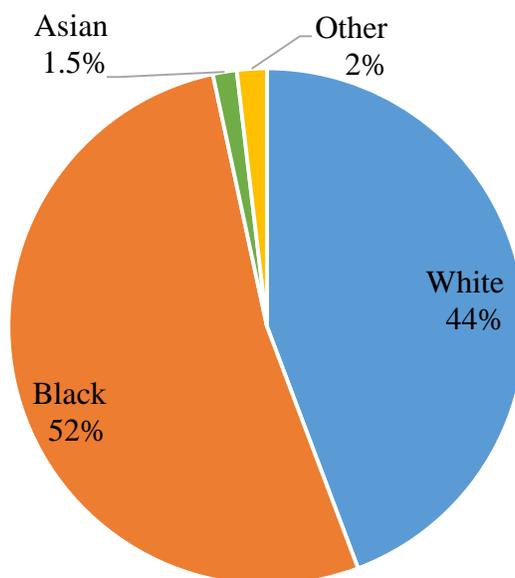
Impacts of the Bill

According to DSP's Uniform Crime Report, there were 31,582 reports of domestically related crimes reported statewide in 2024. DSP classifies domestically related crimes as a broad category under which there are specific underlying offenses, such as homicide, rape, or a sex offense. A large majority of the reports (26,596 or 84%) were domestically related assaults. Of that total, 19%

were aggravated assaults, which are defined as an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. Women made up 68% of all domestic violence victims.

Exhibit 1 illustrates the demographic breakdown of domestically related crime victims for 2024, highlighting the disparity for Black victims who comprised 52% of all victims compared to 44% of victims who were white. Asian victims comprised 1.5% of the total, and individuals of other races were 2% of the total. Because the data is aggregated by race and not ethnicity, the percentage of Hispanic victims is unknown.

Exhibit 1
Victims of Domestically Related Crimes by Race
2024



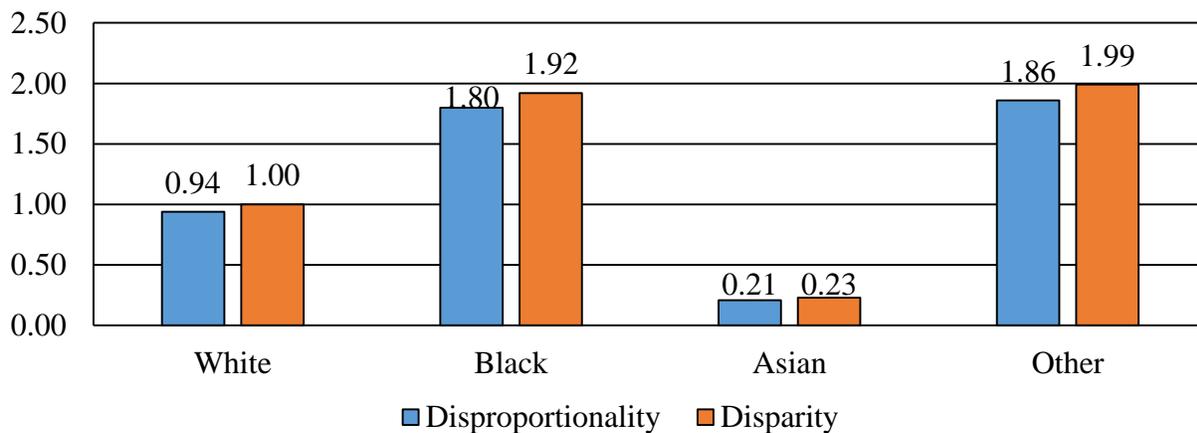
Source: Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Domestic Violence Victims

When compared to their share of the overall State population, Black victims and victims who identify as some other race are overrepresented in domestic violence incidents. **Exhibit 2** shows the disproportionality and disparity ratios by race and ethnicity from the DSP data. The disproportionality ratio for Black individuals and individuals categorized as other races is 1.80 and 1.86, respectively. This means that these individuals are nearly twice as likely to be a victim of domestic violence in Maryland, given their share of the adult population in the State. The disproportionality ratio for Asian individuals of 0.21 is significantly less than 1.00, which means these individuals are considerably less likely to be victims of domestic violence compared to their share of the overall adult population.

The disparity ratio illustrates inequities in outcomes by comparing one or more racial or ethnic groups in a dataset to the white population in the same dataset. Exhibit 2 shows that the disparity ratio for Black victims is 1.92. This means that Black individuals are almost two times more likely to be victims of domestic violence relative to their white peers. Individuals identified as other races are also significantly more likely to be victims compared to white individuals, with a disparity ratio of 1.99.

Exhibit 2
Disproportionality and Disparity Ratios
Victims of Domestically Related Crimes
2024



Source: Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

Domestic Violence Offenders

Demographic data is limited regarding domestic violence offenders in part because Maryland does not have a specific crime of domestic violence. Thus, domestic violence offenders are arrested, charged, and convicted of various underlying crimes connected to a domestic incident, including breaking and entering, destruction of property, motor vehicle theft, disorderly conduct, and arson. As stated above, assault is the largest category of offenses associated with domestic violence. Demographic data for assaults in 2024, including aggravated assault, shows that Black offenders account for approximately 56% of all assaults, compared to white offenders who accounted for 32%. Since one of the largest groups of victims of domestic violence is Black women, it is likely that Black offenders comprise a meaningful portion of domestic violence offenders. Additional data would be needed to determine the specific demographics of domestic violence offenders. The bill would not require a registrant's race or ethnicity to be entered into the registry, but it does require a digital image of the registrant.

Critics of a registration system point out some of the unintended consequences and limitations of domestic violence registries, including that abusers are not always physically violent or able to be

convicted in the courts, potentially leading to a false sense of security for individuals that rely on a registry to avoid relationships with potential abusers. In addition, in jurisdictions with primary aggressor laws, arrests can be made based on law enforcement's perception of the violence initiator, which sometimes results in the arrest of a victim exercising physical self-defense. Dual arrests can have significant consequences for victims, including potential impacts on child custody, employment, and access to support services. Critics advocate instead for other criminal justice responses that they believe would better serve victims or potential victims, such as training law enforcement in best practices when responding to domestic or intimate partner violence calls. Despite any potential unintended consequences, the bill's registration requirement would likely have a significant beneficial impact on victims of domestic violence by documenting past domestic violence incidents. Additionally, individuals who are not victims of domestic violence would be able to protect against potential future domestic related crimes through the use of the online registration information as a prevention tool.

Conclusion

For the individuals overrepresented as victims of domestically related crimes, the bill's establishment of a public Internet site listing persons convicted of multiple domestically related crimes would be particularly beneficial. Other benefits include the ability of individuals who are not victims of a domestically related crime to use the public site to prevent potential future incidents. That said, the bill also has the potential to negatively impact Black individuals in the State who may comprise a substantial amount of domestic violence offenders, given their high rate of arrest for assault, aggravated assault, and other crimes that underlie domestically related crimes. It is unknown to what extent the creation of the online offender registration information system would have on various demographic groups without more detailed data on those charged, arrested, and convicted of crimes that are domestically related, as well as historical data regarding repeat offenders of these crimes.

Information Sources: Administrative Office of the Courts; Department of State Police; Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy; Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence; Department of Legislative Services

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Appendix – Maryland Demographics

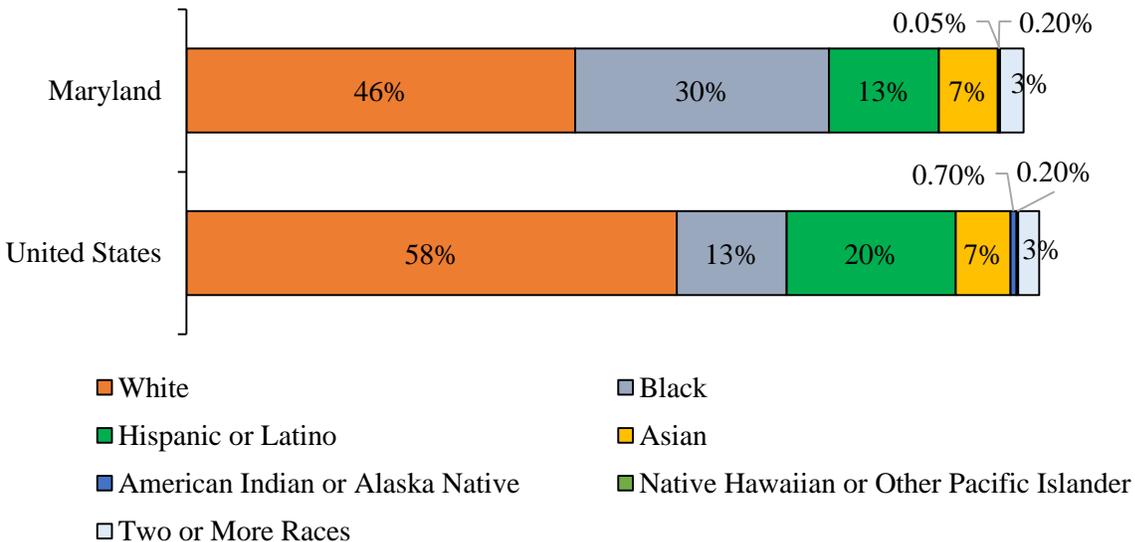
Race and Ethnicity of the Maryland Population

Maryland’s 2020 census population is 6,177,244, a 7% increase from the 2010 census count and approximately 2% higher than the 2019 census population estimates. Maryland remains one of the most racially and ethnically diverse states in the nation and is ranked as the fourth most diverse state by the U.S. Census Bureau’s [Diversity Index](#). While no single racial or ethnic group constitutes a majority, racial minorities as a group constitute a majority of the State’s population. This diversity underpins the analytical framework used in racial equity impact notes (REIN), which seek to identify potential disparities that may be exacerbated or created by proposed criminal justice legislation.

Methodology Update

Beginning in 2025, REIN will use annual population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Population Estimates Program (PEP) as the basis for disparity and disproportionality calculations. This methodological update reflects best practices in demographic analysis, as PEP data incorporate births, deaths, and migration to provide the most current population counts between censuses. Although the estimates are more temporally responsive, they do not materially change the proportionate racial and ethnic breakdown observed in the 2020 census. Instead, they conservatively reflect population changes since 2020 while preserving the overall demographic composition of the State.

**U.S. and Maryland Population by Race and Ethnicity
2024 Population Estimates**



Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau