



RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT NOTE

DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES
MARYLAND ▪ GENERAL ▪ ASSEMBLY

2026 Session
SB0689

Task Force to Study Postrelease Services and Requirements (Bri's Law)

Bill Summary

This bill establishes the Task Force to Study Postrelease Services and Requirements, staffed by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS). The task force must study (1) each type of release from incarceration in the State and (2) for each type of release, postrelease programs and requirements designed to prevent individuals released from incarceration from recidivating. The task force must also make recommendations for improving postrelease programming and requirements based on its findings, which must be reported to the Governor and the General Assembly by July 1, 2027.

Racial Equity Impact Statement

Meaningful equity research is reliant on the continuous, effective, and uniform collection of data for use in informed decision making by policymakers. The establishment of a Task Force to Study Postrelease Services and Requirements could provide new insight into the equity impacts of programs designed to meaningfully reduce recidivism. While the bill has no direct equity impacts, the task force's activities may provide the foundation for successful policies and programs that will directly benefit those most affected by the societal consequences of incarceration. Any programmatic improvements as a result of recommendations from the task force would likely benefit Black inmates to the greatest extent, as they are overrepresented in the carceral population.

Analysis

Release from Division of Correction

The Commissioner of Correction must adopt regulations (1) establishing a release plan for incarcerated individuals upon release from confinement in a State correctional facility to help identify resources to assist incarcerated individuals following release, including the provision of transportation from the facility for an incarcerated individual upon release and (2) implementing provisions concerning issuance of an identification card to incarcerated individuals on release from confinement in a State correctional facility.

Current regulations specify that, when feasible, a parole release plan must be completed before a parole hearing. A release plan must include the name of the parolee's employer or evidence of other legitimate means of financial support, the location at which the parolee will reside, and the nature of any community services necessary to meet the special needs of the parolee.

Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services

Chapters 936 and 937 of 2024 established the Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services, staffed by DPSCS. The task force must (1) identify and assess the reentry services that exist in the State; (2) identify gaps in reentry services; (3) assess the markers of successful reentry; (4) ensure that the recommendations of the task force equally consider returning citizens regardless of gender; (5) develop a plan to establish a Division of Returning Citizens within DPSCS for specified purposes; and (6) develop a plan to expand specified services for individuals after release from incarceration. The task force is currently scheduled to submit its final report by October 31, 2026.

Types of Releases from Incarceration

According to DPSCS, there are different types of releases from incarceration, which carry different re-entry preparation and conditions:

- release upon expiration of sentence – indicates that the inmate was in custody until the latest date dictated by their sentence length;
- release onto continued supervision – occurs after a parole or probation revocation hearing;
- release due to a court order – can occur at any time by direction of the court;
- release to mandatory supervision – occurs before the latest sentence expiration date, and is projected based on earned diminution credits;
- parole release – occurs after parole is approved and all conditions are met; and
- administrative release and medical parole.

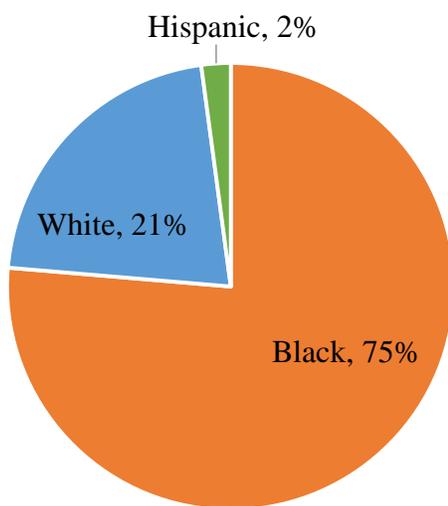
Impacts of the Bill

According to DPSCS, in fiscal 2025, a total of 3,455 incarcerated individuals returned to the community from State custody. Parole and mandatory supervision accounted for 72% of all

releases. Of those released in fiscal 2025, 69% of males and 88% of females received reentry planning services. Some of the services offered include Medicaid enrollment, vital document assistance, health care coordination, behavioral health referrals, housing support and assistance, education and skill development, transportation assistance, employment and workforce development, financial literacy education, and mediation services.

Exhibit 1 shows the demographic breakdown of individuals released from State custody in fiscal 2025. Black inmates are 75% of this population and, accordingly, are most likely to benefit from policies or programs that improve the reentry process.

Exhibit 1
Individuals Released from State Custody by Race and Ethnicity
Fiscal 2025



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

Source: Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Reentry program development and recidivism reduction are complex processes and there is no proven formula for reliable results and improvement. Policy discussions highlight the need for more evidence-based data collection and more targeted programs that distinguish between the varied needs of the incarcerated population.

Access to various resources following release from incarceration can significantly impact one's likelihood of recidivism. State post-release services, such as reentry units, social work services, legal aid, and employment/education programs, are designed to reduce the risk of reoffending by providing access to resources like vocational skills, medical interventions, and assistance with daily living needs.

Conclusion

Recommendations by the task force established by the bill could lead to development of the necessary data infrastructure that would identify and measure the equity implications of various State reentry services. The nature and magnitude of any resulting equity impacts will be indirect and partly determined by whether and how any recommendations are implemented.

Information Sources: Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Department of Legislative Services

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Appendix – Maryland Demographics

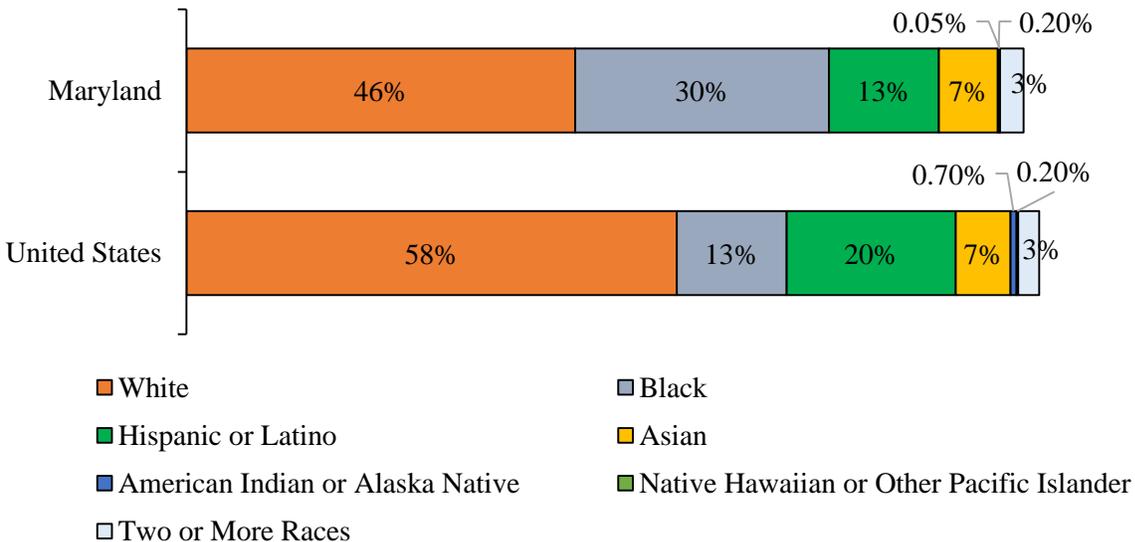
Race and Ethnicity of the Maryland Population

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