



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

February 18, 2020

The Honorable Dolores G. Kelley, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: SB 519 – Public Health – Behavioral Health Programs and Health Care Facilities –
Safety Plan – Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) submits this letter of information for SB 519 – Public Health – Behavioral Health Programs and Health Care Facilities – Safety Plan. SB 519 requires licensed behavioral health programs to establish and implement a plan for the safety of individuals served by the program and the community surrounding the program.

Safety plans that protect the individuals served are already required for behavioral health programs, including opioid treatment programs (OTP). Programs require an accreditation-based license to operate in the state and are therefore subject to federal, state, and accreditation standards. For example, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), which accredits the majority of community programs, requires that its programs maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize the risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

The Department believes that the safety of the community that surrounds a licensed program is essential and encourages programs to work with appropriate law enforcement agencies, stakeholders, and community members to address safety concerns.

I hope this information is useful. If you have additional questions, please contact the Director of Governmental Affairs, Weber Ye at (410) 260-3190 or webster.ye@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Neall
Secretary