



HB 737 – Emergency Services – Exposure to Contagious Diseases and Viruses – Notification and Other Requirements

MIEMSS Position: Support

Bill Summary: HB 737 (1) amends three Health General statutes to add the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-CoV) to the list of contagious diseases or viruses, the exposure to which must be communicated by a medical care facility that diagnoses the disease, to emergency medical services personnel, firefighters, law enforcement personnel, correctional officers and other persons; and (2) permits medical care facilities that must make the required notification to enter into an agreement with the State-designated Health Information Exchange to facilitate the required notification.

Rationale:

- HB 737 will make permanent certain notification requirements set forth in the “Directive and Order Regarding Notification of Certain Persons about Exposure to 2019 Novel Coronavirus,” issued March 16, 2020, by the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health.
- The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-CoV) is highly contagious and known to spread predominantly by close contact with an infected person and through respiratory droplets.
- By the nature of their work, public safety personnel are at increased risk for exposure when they treat or transport individuals with suspected or confirmed 2019-CoV or individuals who may be asymptomatic carriers.
- Rapid notification to public safety personnel of exposure to an individual diagnosed with 2019-CoV permits public safety services to determine the degree of risk and what steps must be taken to mitigate risk, prevent further spread and control the trajectory of the disease.
- Rapid notification can be significantly enhanced via the State-designated Health Information Exchange (HIE). Specific to EMS, the HIE links information from pre-hospital EMS care records (eMEDS®) to laboratory data confirming the patient’s positive 2019-CoV test.
 - EMS infection control officers are notified that EMS personnel have had an encounter with a positive patient and can take appropriate actions to determine if an exposure occurred during the encounter, to mitigate risk and to control the spread of the virus.
 - Using this rapid notification system, over 140,000 encounter notifications were sent to Maryland’s jurisdictional EMS infection control officers during the April – December 2020 period.

MIEMSS Strongly Supports HB 737 and asks for a Favorable Report

State of Maryland

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