



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Ryan Moran, Dr.PH, Acting Secretary

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Senate Bill (SB) 751 - Health Facilities - Assisted Living Programs - Family Councils
- Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this Letter of Information for Senate Bill (SB) 751 -Health Facilities - Assisted Living Programs - Family Councils.

SB 751 provides for the composition of a family council for assisted living programs which may be created by the owner, operator, or staff of an assisted living program. The assisted living program is required to provide new and prospective residents information about the family council and create and maintain processes for a public correspondence file and grievances/communications.

On January 24, 2025, a complete overhaul of COMAR 10.07.14 Assisted Living Program regulations was published in the [Maryland Register](#). Included in Regulation .13 Administration of this revision is regulatory guidance on assisted living program family councils. This language was the result of discussion and consensus with a broad group of stakeholders, a process that started in 2015.

As such, OHCQ believes the intent of this bill is encompassed within the proposed regulations which MDH plans to adopt following the completion of the public comment period. The Department's family council regulations apply to all assisted living programs regardless of bed size, resident councils, and allow for 30 days to respond to grievances. SB 751 only applies to assisted living programs with 15 or more beds, does not address resident councils, and requires a response to a grievance within 14 days.

The process of promulgating regulations for assisted living was a complex undertaking. OHCQ involved hundreds of stakeholders, and multiple in-person and online public meetings were held seeking input from all stakeholders. In addition to family councils, the revisions address abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation protections; provision and posting of a Resident Bill of Rights;

stiffer penalties for programs operating without a license; and the requirement for awake overnight staff for assisted living programs that have Alzheimer's Special Care Units.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs for the Maryland Department of Health at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ryan B. Moran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Ryan B. Moran, Dr.P.H., MHSA
Acting Secretary