



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

March 13, 2026

The Honorable Heather Bagnall
Chair, House Health Committee
241 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: House Bill 1107 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Required Coverage for Aesthetic Services and Restorative Care for Victims of Domestic Violence (Healing Our Scars Act) – Letter of Information

Dear Chair Bagnall and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of information for House Bill (HB) 1107 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Required Coverage for Aesthetic Services and Restorative Care for Victims of Domestic Violence (Healing Our Scars Act). HB 1107 requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) to provide medically-necessary coverage of aesthetic services and restorative care related to scars or scarring for the treatment of physical injuries to victims of domestic violence.

The Department supports HB 1107's intent. In November 2025, the Maryland Health Care Commission published a report on 2025 HB 381/SB 808 - Required Coverage for Aesthetic Services and Restorative Care for Victims of Domestic Violence (Healing Our Scars Act), which did not pass during the 2025 legislative session. This report identified several limitations to developing an estimate, including the inability to identify claims related to domestic violence, and the general underreporting of domestic violence. The report evaluated the medical, social, and financial impact of the legislation and found that fiscal impact to Medicaid may amount to between \$1.3 million total funds and \$9.4 million total funds, with the aforementioned limitations driving the large cost range.¹

The Department recognizes the impact domestic violence has on the lives of Marylanders. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that 38.0 percent of women and 35.0 percent of men in Maryland have been a victim of physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.² Studies indicate that intimate partner violence is more prevalent in lower-income communities and thus may disproportionately impact Medical Assistance participants.^{3,4}

¹ https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/plr/plr/documents/2025/sb508_hb381_healing_our_scars_act.pdf

² Smith SG, Khatiwada S, Richardson L, Basile KC, Friar NW, Chen J, Zhang Kudon H, & Leemis RW. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 State Report. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/NISVS-2016-2017-State-Report-508.pdf>.

³ Bonomi AE, Trabert B, Anderson ML, Kernic MA, Holt VL. Intimate partner violence and neighborhood income: a longitudinal analysis. *Violence Against Women*. 2014 Jan;20(1):42-58. doi: 10.1177/1077801213520580. Epub 2014 Jan 28. PMID: 24476760; PMCID: PMC5486977. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5486977/>.

⁴ Fox GL, Benson ML. Household and neighborhood contexts of intimate partner violence. *Public Health Rep*. 2006 Jul-Aug;121(4):419-27. doi: 10.1177/003335490612100410. PMID: 16827443; PMCID: PMC1525351. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC1525351/>.

Certain services are covered today and would be budget neutral. To the extent that treatment of scars or scarring restores physiologic function or improves a functional impairment, the treatment is likely covered. In addition, services that address injuries that occur during a physical altercation such as broken bones, sprains, or wounds are covered by Medicaid. To the extent an injury is sufficiently severe that it requires reconstructive surgery, such as an injury to the nose or facial bones, services would be considered medically necessary.

To the extent the intent of HB 1107 is to require coverage of additional services, the Department would realize a potentially significant fiscal impact. Cosmetic services that are intended to improve a patient's physical appearance, but do not restore or materially improve a body function are not eligible for reimbursement. As a result, certain services for new injuries, such as superficial bites, burns, scratches, and lacerations that only require immediate treatment in an emergency department setting, and treatment of healed injuries from domestic violence in the past, such as scarring to the face, neck, or body, would not be considered medically necessary under existing policy in most cases. Additionally, in the event of significant damage to the teeth, the adult dental benefits package does not cover partial or full dentures or dental implants.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Meghan Lynch, Director of Government Affairs at meghan.lynch@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Meena Seshamani', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D.
Secretary of Health