

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Wes Moore
Governor

Betsy Fox Tolentino
Secretary

Date: April 2, 2026
Bill Number/Title: SB 524 Juvenile Records - Access by Baltimore City Mayor's Office
Committee: Judiciary
DJS Position: Favorable

The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) supports SB 524, as amended. SB 524 expands access to confidential juvenile records under § 3-8A-27 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article to permit specified Baltimore City Mayor's Offices to obtain and use those records when providing services to a child. As amended, the bill reflects a carefully structured and narrowly tailored approach to information sharing that aligns with longstanding principles of juvenile confidentiality while supporting coordinated service delivery.

Historically, § 3-8A-27 included a limited provision authorizing the Baltimore City Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice (now the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement) to access confidential juvenile records for service coordination purposes. That provision sunset in 2025. The amended bill appropriately restores and modernizes this authority while maintaining the balance between access and confidentiality.

As amended, SB 524 ensures that any disclosure of juvenile records:

- Is strictly limited to purposes directly related to treatment, rehabilitation, reentry planning, or continuity of care;
- Is governed by a written memorandum of understanding between DJS and the receiving agency that clearly defines the scope, purpose, and limits of the disclosure;
- Requires parental or guardian consent prior to disclosure;
- Prohibits redisclosure and requires compliance with all applicable state and federal confidentiality laws; and
- Establishes accountability by holding the receiving agency responsible for any unauthorized release.

DJS has a longstanding and productive partnership with Baltimore City and remains committed to working collaboratively to connect youth and families with services that interrupt cycles of violence and promote long-term stability. Thoughtful, well-governed information sharing is an important tool in that effort.

At the same time, juvenile records are confidential for a reason. Protecting the privacy of young people is central to rehabilitation, fairness, and long-term opportunity. The amendments adopted in SB 524 appropriately safeguard these protections by ensuring that access is limited, purposeful, and subject to clear accountability measures.

By incorporating these guardrails, the bill preserves the integrity of Maryland's juvenile confidentiality framework while enabling effective coordination of services for youth.

For these reasons, DJS respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 524.

