



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**HB 740**

**DATE: February 18, 2026**

**SPONSOR: Delegate Stinnet, et al.**

**ASSIGNED TO: Ways & Means and Health**

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**POSITION: INFORMATIONAL (Department of Health and Human Services)**

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### **Public Schools - School-Based Mental Health Services - Full-Time Therapist**

House Bill 740 requires each public school to employ a full-time therapist to provide school-based mental health services to students during the instructional day. The therapist must be licensed and certified by the Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services would like the committees to be aware of the following information.

The requirement for each public school to have a therapist is not clearly defined and could create significant financial challenges for school districts, especially given the current shortage of licensed therapists and the scale needed to staff approximately 1,400 schools in a county such as Montgomer. Limiting eligible providers to those licensed by the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists excludes other qualified professionals, such as Clinical Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, who already play an important role in school settings.

Additionally, the requirement that therapists be employed directly by the school district, without flexibility for partnerships (for example, agreements with other County entities such as the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services) may pose operational challenges. This could also make it difficult to ensure appropriate clinical supervision and oversight for high-quality services.

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services appreciate the intent behind the bill and fully supports expanding access to mental health services for students. However, the provisions in House Bill 740 may need further consideration to ensure they are practical and sustainable.