COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

2025 Legislative Session

Bill No. CB-104-2025

Chapter No. 71

Proposed and Presented by Council Member Watson

Introduced by Council Members Watson, Oriadha and Hawkins

Co-Sponsors Council Member Fisher

Date of Introduction October 21, 2025

BILL

AN ACT concerning

Enforcement and Referral to the Board of Ethics

For the purpose of requiring a mandatory review by the Prince George's County Board of Ethics for any person found in violation of Prince George's County Code, Subtitle 2. Section 2, Division 46, Community Inclusiveness.

BY adding:

SUBTITLE 2. ADMINISTRATION
Section 2-528,
The Prince George's County Code (2023 Edition; 2024 Supplement).

BY repealing and reenacting:

SUBTITLE 2. ADMINISTRATION
Section 2-297(f),
The Prince George's County Code
(2023 Edition; 2024 Supplement).

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED by the County Council of Prince George's County, Maryland, that Section 2-528 of the Prince George's County Code be the same is hereby added:

SUBTITLE 2. ADMINISTRATION.

DIVISION 46. COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS.

Sec. 2-528. Enforcement

(a) A violation of any provision in this Division shall result in a mandatory referral to the Prince George's County Office of Ethics and Accountability and the Board of Ethics, pursuant to Section 2-292(i) and 2-296 of Division 17, Subtitle 2, and Section 3-303 of Division 17A, Subtitle 2.

(b) The referral shall be made by the head of the affected agency or department or any supervisory official with knowledge of the violation.

(c) The Board of Ethics shall review the matter in accordance with the procedures outlined in Sections 2-292 through 2-294 of Division 17, Subtitle 2, for violations of the County Code of Ethics.

SECTION 2. BE IT ENACTED by the County Council of Prince George's County, Maryland, that Section 2-297(f) of the Prince George's County Code be the same is hereby repealed and reenacted:

SUBTITLE 2. ADMINISTRATION.

DIVISION 17. CODE OF ETHICS.

Sec. 2-297. Enforcement

(a) (1) Upon a finding of a violation of any provision of this Division, the Board may:

(A) Issue an order of compliance directing the respondent to cease and desist from the violation;

(B) Issue a reprimand; or

(C) Recommend to the appropriate authority other appropriate discipline of the respondent, including censure or removal if that discipline is authorized by law.

(2) If the Board finds that a respondent has violated Section 2-295 of this Division, the Board may:

(A) Require a respondent who is a registered lobbyist to file any additional reports or information that is reasonably related to the information that is required under Section 2-295 of this Division;

(B) Impose a fine not exceeding One Thousand Dollars ($1,000) for each violation; and

(C) Suspend the registration of an individual registered lobbyist if the Board finds that the lobbyist has knowingly and willfully violated Section 2-295 of this Division or has been convicted of a criminal offense arising from lobbying activities.

(b) Upon direction by the Board or the Council, the County Attorney may file a petition for injunctive or other relief in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County, or in any other court having proper venue for the purpose of requiring compliance with the provisions of this Division. The Court may:

(1) Issue an order to cease and desist from the violation; or

(2) Void an official action taken by an official or employee with a conflict of interest prohibited by this Division when the action arises from or concerns the subject matter of the conflict and if the legal action is brought within ninety (90) days of the occurrence of the official action, if the court deems voiding the action to be in the best interest of the public, provided, however, that the court may not void any official action appropriating public funds, levying taxes, or providing for the issuance of bonds, notes, or other evidence of public obligation; or

(3) Impose a fine of up to One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) for any violation of the provisions of this Division, each day upon which the violation occurs constituting a separate offense.

(c) Any person who knowingly and willfully violates the provisions of Section 2-295 of this Division is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction, is subject to a fine of not more than One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) or imprisonment for not more than six (6) months, or both. If the person is a business entity and not a natural person, each officer and partner of the business entity who knowingly authorized or participated in the violation is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, is subject to the same penalties as the business entity.

(d) In addition to any other enforcement provisions of this Division, a person who is subject to the provisions of this Division and who is found by the Board, Council, or a court to have violated its provisions may be subject to termination or such other disciplinary action as may be warranted, or may be suspended from receiving payment of salary or other compensation pending full compliance with the terms of an order of the Board, Council, or a court.

(d) Any person who is subject to the provisions of this Division shall obtain and preserve all accounts, bills, receipts, books, papers, and documents necessary to complete and substantiate any reports, statements, or records required to be made pursuant to this Division for three (3) years from the date of filing the report, statement, or record containing these items. These papers and documents shall be available for inspection upon request by the Board or the Council after reasonable notice.

(f) For any [ethics-related] violation of Subtitle 2, Division 46 (Community Inclusiveness), the head of the agency or department responsible for implementing Division 46 provisions, or any supervisory official with knowledge of the violation, shall refer the matter to the Office of Ethics and Accountability and the Board of Ethics for review in accordance with Sections 2-292 [and] 2-294 and 3-303.

SECTION 3. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the provisions of this Act are hereby declared to be severable; and, in the event that any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the remaining words, phrases, clauses, sentences, subparagraphs, paragraphs, subsections, or sections of this Act, since the same would have been enacted without the incorporation in this Act of any such invalid or unconstitutional word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, subparagraph, subsection, or section…

SECTION 4. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Act shall take effect forty-five (45) calendar days after it becomes law.

Adopted this 18th day of November, 2025.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Edward P. Burroughs III
Chair

ATTEST:

_____
Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council

APPROVED:

DATE: 12/8/2025 BY: _____
Aisha N. Braveboy
County Executive

KEY:
Underscoring indicates language added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate language deleted from existing law.
Asterisks *** indicate intervening existing Code provisions that remain unchanged.