

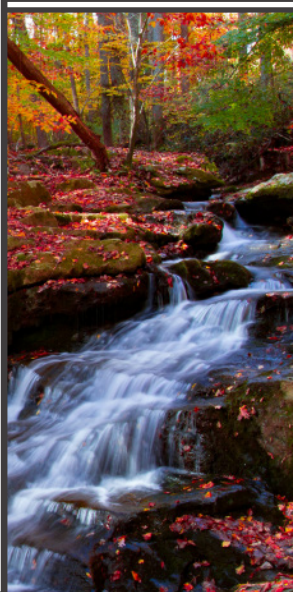


LEGISLATIVE  
HANDBOOK  
SERIES

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VOLUME I

MARYLAND  
LEGISLATOR'S  
HANDBOOK



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# **Maryland Legislator's Handbook**

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**Legislative Handbook Series  
Volume I  
2022**

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## Foreword

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The *Maryland Legislator's Handbook* is designed to give members of the General Assembly an overview of State and local government, the legislative process, the organization of the General Assembly, and the services and facilities available to legislators.

This is the first of nine volumes of the 2022 Legislative Handbook Series prepared by the staff of the Office of Policy Analysis in the Department of Legislative Services. The material for this volume was updated by Library and Information Services staff. Helpful review and comments were also received from other staff throughout the department.

As the nonpartisan staff agency for the Maryland General Assembly, the department hopes that this volume and the entire series of handbooks will be of assistance to both legislators and all persons interested in Maryland State government. As always, the department welcomes comments on ways future editions may be improved.

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Annapolis, Maryland  
November 2022





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# Overview

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While serving as a general guide for newly elected legislators, the *Maryland Legislator's Handbook* is also a comprehensive resource for State and local officials, the public, and members of the media. This handbook provides a general overview of the responsibilities and duties of the Maryland General Assembly; discusses in some detail the specifics of legislation and representation; and reviews the day-to-day functions that constitute the working activities of the members of the State legislature. These activities span both the 90-day annual legislative session and the interim period between sessions.

The handbook is divided into nine chapters and one appendix.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the General Assembly and discusses powers and duties, limitations on legislative power, appropriations, taxation and debt, selection of the State Treasurer, powers of investigation and impeachment, membership qualifications, elections, apportionment, vacancies, legislative organization, the committee system, and the General Assembly leadership.

Chapter 2 outlines a typical legislative day for members of the General Assembly and describes such activities as committee hearings and meetings and floor sessions. The chapter summarizes legislative compensation, expenses, benefit programs, office space, staff, supplies, electronic equipment, telephone and mail services, parking, and allowances for district offices. It also discusses legislative ethics law, financial disclosure requirements, and the regulation of gifts. Chapter 2 includes a discussion about the differences between legislative session activities and interim activities. Press and other media coverage of the General Assembly is also mentioned, as well as the award of legislative scholarships.

Chapter 3 reviews types of legislation and the legislative process. It presents a step-by-step description of how a legislator introduces a bill or resolution and how that bill or resolution proceeds through committee review and second and third readings in both houses of the General Assembly. The chapter summarizes the veto and override process.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the budgetary process. It explains the operating budget process and the process by which the State's capital program for construction projects is funded. The concepts of "spending affordability," capital debt affordability, and "PAYGO" (pay-as-you-go) are also covered in this chapter.

Chapter 5 reviews the mechanisms by which the oversight function of the General Assembly with respect to the Executive Branch of the State government is carried out. The chapter deals with program evaluation, regulations analyses, audit activities, budget analysis, and other formal and informal activities that are part of legislative oversight work.



Chapter 6 describes the services and resources of the Department of Legislative Services – the staff agency for the General Assembly. It also summarizes the Attorney General's duties as counsel to the legislature.

Chapter 7 reviews the many publications and electronic resources that can be used as learning guides and working tools by members of the legislature. These include the Maryland Constitution, the Annotated Code, Session Laws, Senate and House Journals, rule books, calendars, schedules, rosters, committee reports, budgetary and fiscal documents, and the Legislative Handbook Series, among others.

Chapter 8 describes the buildings in the State House complex and the facilities available to members such as office suites, mail room, bill room, library, snack bars, tunnels, and parking space. Security procedures for the legislative complex are also reviewed.

Chapter 9 is a history of the Maryland General Assembly from 1635 to the present. It chronicles the development of the bicameral legislature and the apportionment of membership over the centuries. Recent construction and technological improvements in the legislative complex are also covered.

Appendix 1 contains maps of the legislative districts.

# Chapter 1. The General Assembly of Maryland

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## History

The General Assembly of Maryland has remained a part-time “citizen legislature” for more than 380 years. Unlike the United States Congress which meets year-round, the General Assembly meets annually for a 90-day session. It is an evolving entity that began with a membership composed of farmers, tradesmen, and attorneys. Today, many occupations are represented in the General Assembly. While there are still farmers, small business owners, and attorneys who serve as members, the General Assembly now consists of individuals working in many diverse professions and roles including educators, accountants, public safety, real estate, and nonprofit professionals. There are also several members who have retired from their professions.

The first legal session of the General Assembly of Maryland convened on January 25, 1638. This was the second session held. The first, which convened on February 26, 1635, was not recognized by the Proprietary’s representative, Governor Leonard Calvert, and its records were either lost or not kept at all. Both sessions took place at the original Maryland capital in St. Mary’s City. It was there in 1649 that the Act of Religious Toleration was enacted, making Maryland the only place in the world at that time where freedom of religion was granted under law. In the opposite direction of freedom, the first law legalizing slavery in Maryland was passed by the General Assembly in the 1663-1664 session. In 1694, the General Assembly designated Anne Arundel Town (now known as Annapolis) as the capital of Maryland and held its first session at that location in 1695. See “Chapter 9. The General Assembly of Maryland – Historical Summary” for a more detailed history of the General Assembly of Maryland.

Maryland became the seventh state of the United States on April 28, 1788, when it ratified the U.S. Constitution in the Old House of Delegates Chamber in the Maryland State House.

## Overall Mission

The General Assembly of Maryland, as the legislative body directly representing the electorate, passes public general and public local laws, raises revenues and appropriates funds to pay for State government services, and oversees the operation of State executive agencies. In much of this activity, the legislator plays a major role in developing the public policy of the State.

## **The Annual Session**

The annual session of the General Assembly begins on the second Wednesday in January and meets for 90 consecutive days. During this period the legislature typically considers over 2,600 pieces of legislation, including the State's annual operating budget. The General Assembly may extend its session up to an additional 30 days by resolution passed by a three-fifths vote of the members in each house. However, if the State budget does not pass by the eighty-third day, the Governor must issue a proclamation extending the session. If the budget bill is not passed by the ninetieth day, the session is automatically extended, and the General Assembly continues to meet but may deal only with the budget bill and the costs of the extended session. The last extended session occurred in 1992 to pass the State budget.

## **The Legislative Interim**

During the period between the annual sessions, known as the legislative interim, the General Assembly carries out a wide range of activities, including follow-up on legislation, and in-depth study and hearings on significant issues in the State or proposals that may require legislative action. In addition, site visits are made to State government agencies, hospitals, correctional institutions, transportation facilities, State universities and colleges, and other governmental and nongovernmental facilities and locations. These activities help legislators gain a better understanding of the operational functions of State government and how State funds are used.

## **Special Sessions**

From time to time, issues requiring official legislative action arise during the interim. The State constitution requires the Governor to issue a proclamation convening a special session of the legislature when a majority of the members of each house joins in a petition for a special session. Other provisions of the constitution permit the Governor to call a special session of the legislature or the Senate only. A special session is limited to 30 days and may consider any topic or purpose with which the General Assembly may be concerned at a regular session. Since 1970, the General Assembly has met in 19 special sessions, the latest in December 2021.

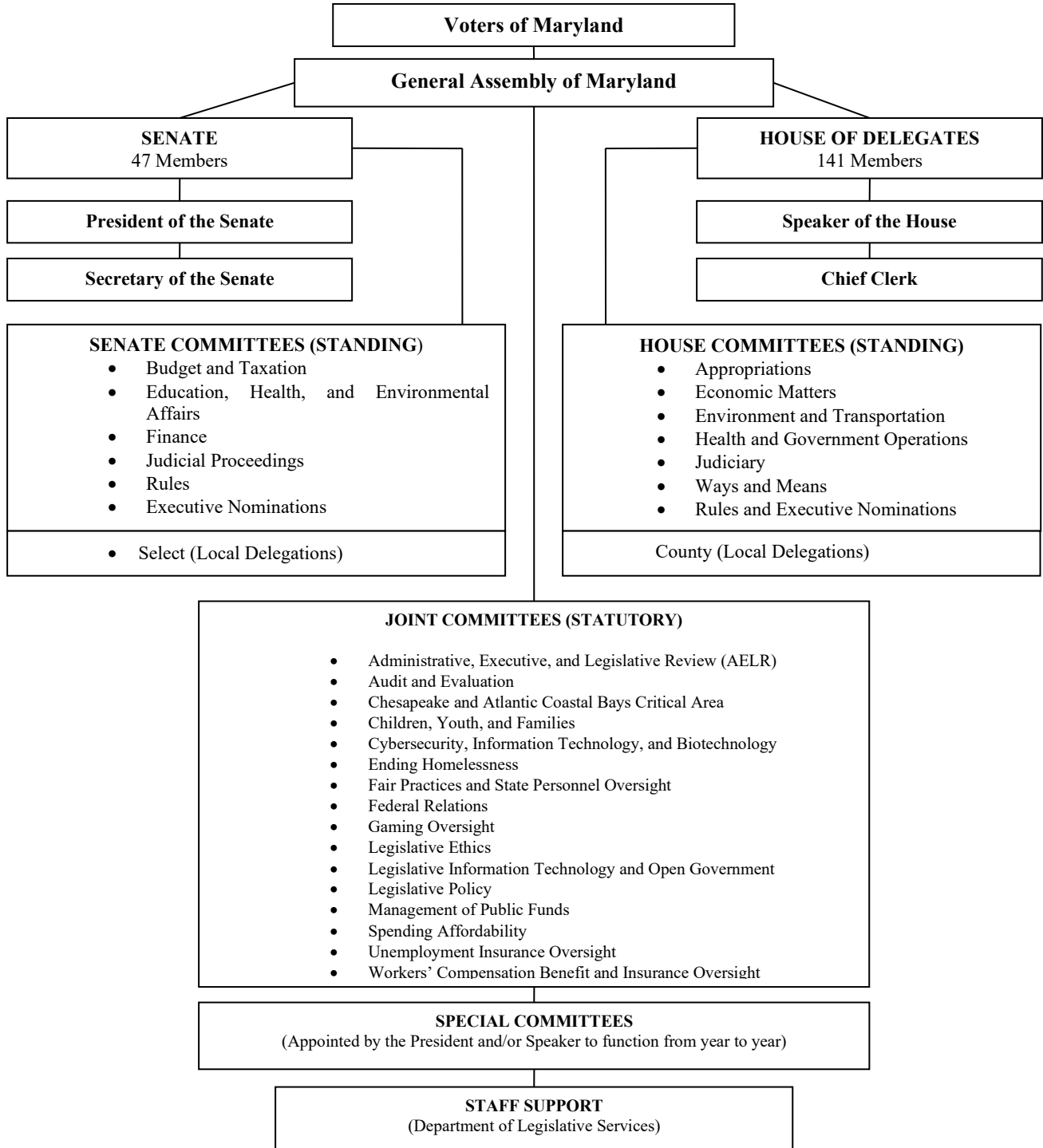
Beginning in fiscal 2024, the Governor may veto items in the budget bill, added by the General Assembly, related to the Executive Department. If the General Assembly wishes to override the Governor's veto, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates jointly shall issue a proclamation specifying a date, within 30 days after the date of the veto, on which to convene in extraordinary session to consider whether to override the veto.

## **Organization**

The General Assembly is divided into two houses: the 47-member Senate; and the 141-member House of Delegates. The organizational arrangement of each house results from a combination of constitutional requirements, rules of procedure adopted by each house, and legislative custom. The General Assembly is further organized into standing, statutory, special, and select committees, the latter usually known as local delegations. The Department of Legislative Services is also a part of the Legislative Branch and provides nonpartisan staff and other support to the Maryland General Assembly. The organizational structure is detailed in **Exhibit 1.1**.



## Exhibit 1.1 Legislative Branch of Maryland



Source: Department of Legislative Services

## **Powers and Duties**

The powers of the General Assembly are plenary and generally unrestricted unless specifically limited by the U.S. Constitution or the Constitution of Maryland. Some limitations are outright prohibitions; others merely define a specific restriction on the authority of the legislature to pass laws. Other provisions of the State constitution maintain a system of checks and balances among the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of government.

The duties and powers vested in the General Assembly include the following: pass laws for the general welfare of the State; pass the annual State operating budget; levy taxes; impose fees; propose State constitutional amendments to be submitted to the voters for ratification; advise and consent to certain Executive Branch and Judicial Branch appointments made by the Governor; impeach officials; select the State Treasurer; and override gubernatorial vetoes of legislation. The General Assembly also has the power to pass public local laws. It shares this power with Baltimore City; the 17 counties that have either a charter or code home rule form of government; and the municipal corporations in the State, all of which have home rule powers as granted by the State constitution. The power to regulate elections and to license and regulate the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages is reserved exclusively to the General Assembly.

## **Limitations**

Many provisions of the Maryland Declaration of Rights, like the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution, place a series of restrictions on the government for the protection of citizens of the State from incursions against their civil liberties. The Maryland Declaration of Rights provides that the General Assembly has no power to deny or diminish these individual liberties. It may not pass laws abridging free speech, freedom of the press, or freedom of religion. It cannot deny a person the right to a speedy and impartial trial by jury, and it cannot deny an individual counsel nor require a person to give self-incriminating testimony. The legislature must protect individuals against cruel and unusual punishment, unwarranted search and seizure, and excessive bail. It cannot deny the right to assemble peaceably and to petition the legislature for a redress of grievances. It may not pass laws inflicting punishment without trial or making an act criminal after the act was committed. The legislature may not deprive a person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor may it abridge equality of rights under the law because of gender.

Under Article III of the Constitution of Maryland, the General Assembly is denied the power to enact legislation in other areas. For example, the legislature “shall pass no Law suspending the privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus,” a procedure that is used to require a detained prisoner to be brought before a judge. The General Assembly may not pass any law that violates the prohibition against imprisoning a person for indebtedness. The legislature is prohibited from passing laws authorizing the taking of private property for public use “without just compensation.” With certain exceptions, it cannot increase or decrease the compensation of public officers during their term of office.

Article III of the State constitution also prohibits the General Assembly from passing a special law for which provisions have been made by an existing general law. This provision is designed to protect the public from the influence of special entities on the General Assembly. The legislature is also prohibited from creating corporations by special laws.

### **Passage of Laws**

Many sections of the State constitution begin with the words, “The General Assembly shall pass laws....” These are specific constitutional mandates for the legislature to act in addition to its otherwise plenary powers. For example, “The General Assembly ... shall by Law establish throughout the State a thorough and efficient System of Free Public Schools; and shall provide by taxation, or otherwise, for their maintenance” (Article VIII, Section 1). Similar directions appear throughout the constitution. The General Assembly shall pass laws preserving “the purity of Elections” (Article I, Section 7), protecting from execution a reasonable amount of the property of debtors (Article III, Section 44), providing a uniform system of fees for clerks of courts and registers of wills (Article III, Section 45), and establishing penalties for bribery (Article III, Section 50). In some instances the constitution merely exhorts legislative action. A provision in Article 43 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights provides that the legislature “ought to encourage the diffusion of knowledge and virtue, the extension of a judicious system of general education, the promotion of literature, the arts, sciences, agriculture, commerce and manufactures, and the general melioration of the condition of the People.”

### **Appropriations**

The State constitution specifies that no expenditure of State funds may take place without an appropriation by the General Assembly (Article III, Section 32). The budget process is set forth in Article III, Section 52. The appropriation power is exercised through the passage of the operating and capital budget bills, supplements to the operating budget bill, and bond initiatives that are incorporated into the capital budget. The constitution requires a balanced budget. “Chapter 4. Appropriations” summarizes the budget process, and *Volume IV – Maryland’s Budget Process* provides a more detailed explanation.

### **Taxation and Debt**

The State constitution imposes severe restrictions on the General Assembly in the exercise of its powers to create debt, extend the State’s credit, and levy taxes. Article 14 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights states that no taxes shall be levied in the State without the consent of the legislature. Article 15 prohibits poll taxes; commands the General Assembly to provide for the uniform assessment of land, improvements to land, and personal property; and provides that all taxes levied on property by the State, the counties, or the City of Baltimore must be uniform.

The constitution also declares that the General Assembly may not contract a debt unless the act authorizing the debt provides a tax specifically devoted to the payment of principal and

interest on that debt and limits its maturity to 15 years (Article III, Section 34). This tax need not be collected if sufficient funds to pay the principal and interest are appropriated for such purpose in the annual budget. The same section prohibits the extension of the State's credit to "any individual, association, or corporation." These provisions are designed to protect the State's credit and prevent the State from incurring debt that it cannot repay.

These limitations on legislative authority have been modified considerably by case law. The courts have held, for example, that revenue bonds, as opposed to general obligation bonds, do not constitute a "debt" in the constitutional sense because both the authorizing statute and the revenue bonds issued under it state expressly that they do not pledge the faith and credit of the State or local government that will issue the bonds. The courts have also held that "cash is not credit," and under this holding, the General Assembly has been able to appropriate money for the use of private institutions and agencies where a "public purpose" is involved.

## **Local Governments**

The General Assembly has the general power to create counties, subject to the consent of voters affected by such change and in accordance with other procedures (Article XIII, Sections 1 and 2).

The legislature maintains overall general control of local governments. The constitution provides, however, that a county may exercise home rule authority by obtaining a charter or by becoming a code county by using the processes provided in the constitution and laws for this purpose. All municipal corporations have charters and exercise home rule authority. The General Assembly must by general law grant express powers to chartered counties; it may not thereafter pass local laws for those counties in conflict with the express powers. It also may pass general laws applicable to the code counties. In essence, the General Assembly has limited authority to pass local laws applicable to individual charter and code counties but is not limited as to its authority to adopt general laws affecting all municipalities, chartered counties, or code counties.

The power of the legislature to pass laws for slum clearance and urban renewal in all of the counties and municipal corporations and for land redevelopment, off-street parking, and port development in Baltimore City is set forth in the State constitution (Article III, Section 61, Articles XI-B, XI-C, and XI-D).

## **Selection of Governor**

Under provisions that date back to the first Constitution of Maryland, in the case of a tie in the voting in a gubernatorial election, or in the case of a vacancy in the governorship resulting from death, resignation, or removal from office, the General Assembly was required to elect a qualified person as Governor. This system of election by the General Assembly in cases of vacancies remained effective until the adoption of an amendment in 1970 creating the office of Lieutenant Governor. The Lieutenant Governor now succeeds in case of a vacancy. The old system of election by the Senate and House of Delegates continues in the case of a tie vote, in the



event one or both persons having the highest number of votes for Governor and Lieutenant Governor is declared ineligible, or if vacancies in the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor exist at the same time.

In case of a tie vote in a gubernatorial election, the Senate and House of Delegates choose one of the “sets of persons” having the highest number of votes to be Governor and Lieutenant Governor. If either person elected as Governor or Lieutenant Governor is ineligible, the Senate and House of Delegates elect a replacement. If vacancies occur simultaneously in the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the two houses elect a Governor, who, in turn, names a Lieutenant Governor, subject to confirmation by a majority of all members of the General Assembly. Questions of the eligibility or the election of Governor and Lieutenant Governor are determined by the House of Delegates.

The General Assembly, by a three-fifths majority of all its members in joint session, may adopt a resolution declaring that the Governor or Lieutenant Governor is unable, because of physical or mental disability, to perform the duties of office. If adopted, the resolution is delivered to the Court of Appeals, which makes the final determination whether the disability exists.

### **Selection of Treasurer**

Electing (or “appointing”) the State Treasurer by the legislature dates to the Constitution of 1776. Under that first constitution, the House of Delegates “appointed” a Treasurer for the Eastern Shore and for the Western Shore. The Constitution of 1851 specified that the State Treasurer be “appointed by the two houses of the legislature at the beginning of each four-year term of the General Assembly” and eliminated the dual-treasurer model. This provision remains in the current State constitution. The two houses meet in joint session and vote as a single entity. Prior to the election of the Treasurer in 1987 and thereafter at the beginning of each new term, an ad hoc committee was appointed by the President and Speaker to consider the individuals seeking this position. The next selection of the State Treasurer will be at the 2023 session.

### **Contested Elections**

Under Article I, Section 8 of the State constitution, the General Assembly has the power to decide the outcome of contested elections of public officers.

### **Override of Veto**

The executive veto is deeply imbedded in Anglo-American governmental tradition. Throughout the colonial period, the Proprietary in Maryland had an absolute veto power over acts of the General Assembly. When Maryland became a state, it shied away from the practice for nearly a century. Finally, however, the Constitution of 1867 granted the Governor the limited veto power that exists today and empowered the legislature to override a veto by a three-fifths majority of the two houses. In addition to vetoes of acts, the Governor has line-item veto power

with respect to items in the operating budget added by the General Assembly related to the Executive Department, as well as in the annual capital budget (the general consolidated capital bond loan) for construction and renovation of State buildings and facilities. The veto is discussed further in “Chapter 3. Legislation.”

### **Advice and Consent**

Another of the “checks” on the Executive Branch by the legislature is the “advice and consent” provision that is attached to the Governor’s appointing authority. The State constitution provides that the Governor nominates and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoints all civil officers and officials of the State whose appointment or election is not otherwise provided in the constitution or in the laws. Between sessions, the Governor may nominate civil officers and officials who may assume their duties but who must be confirmed by the Senate by the end of the next ensuing session of the General Assembly. While Senate confirmation of the Governor’s nominations is the norm, on occasion the Senate will reject a nominee. In such a case, the nominee may not serve in the position and the Governor must nominate a successor, again subject to Senate confirmation. The General Assembly has adopted legislation to limit the amount of time an individual may serve in an office that is subject to Senate confirmation without that individual being confirmed. Furthermore, under specified circumstances, an individual who was appointed to fill a vacancy during the recess of the Senate or who was nominated to fill a vacancy in an office during a regular session of the Senate may not (1) be nominated for the same office at the same session, unless requested by the Senate; (2) be appointed to the same office during the recess of the Senate; or (3) continue to serve in the office or be designated to serve in an acting capacity for the same office after the adjournment of the regular session of the Senate at which the nomination is made.

On occasion the House of Delegates confirms executive nominations as authorized by statutory law, generally in cases when there is no resident senator from the county in which the nominee lives.

### **Impeachment Power**

Impeachment, the authority of a legislature to bring an accusation against and try public officials for misconduct, is another legacy of the English parliamentary system. In the U.S. Constitution and in the constitutions of many states, this translates into a practice in which the lower house (the House of Delegates in Maryland) has the power to impeach and the Senate has the authority to conduct the trial. Impeachment in Maryland requires a majority vote of the elected membership of the House, and conviction requires a two-thirds majority of the elected senators (Article II, Section 7). In practice, the impeachment power has seldom been used in Maryland.

## Investigative Powers

The General Assembly by law has established a code of procedures for the operation of investigating committees (Title 2, Subtitle 16 of the State Government Article). The statute allows both the Senate and the House to pass a resolution vesting an investigating committee with broad powers of investigation. An investigating committee created under this authority has the power to summon and examine witnesses and to compel the production of documents and records regarding any aspect of governmental processes or operations. An investigating committee may hold persons in contempt for failing to comply with its subpoenas or for refusing to testify under oath and may apply to a court for a contempt citation. Last used in 1983, an investigating committee was created to address allegations of violations of election and ethics laws by members of the General Assembly.

The Legislative Policy Committee, by law, has the power to issue subpoenas to compel the appearance of witnesses and documents without the necessity of having a resolution passed to vest the committee with those powers. Standing committees also have subpoena power, but it may be used only on the approval of the Legislative Policy Committee.

The State constitution (Article III, Section 24) requires the General Assembly to create at each session a joint standing committee that is empowered to examine purchases for public offices and alleged abuse in expenditures. In practice, the General Assembly has relied on the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee, along with the standing committees of both houses, other statutory joint committees, and special committees to consider matters relating to the examination and oversight of expenditures and activities in the Executive and Judicial branches of the State government.

## Grand Inquest

The House of Delegates may sit as the Grand Inquest of the State, with broad powers to summon and hear witnesses and inquire into “complaints, offenses, and grievances” and other affairs relating to the public interest. The House, acting as the Grand Inquest, may “commit any persons, for any crime, to the public jail, there to remain, until discharged by due course of law” (Article III, Section 24).

## Federal Limitations

Under the principle of enumerated powers in the federal system, certain powers have been delegated to the national government by the U.S. Constitution. State legislatures may not adopt laws that conflict with this delegation of sovereignty. In this category are powers relating to war, coinage of money, and regulation of interstate and foreign commerce.

The states are specifically prohibited from passing certain laws. They may not enact laws that impair the freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. Along with the United States Congress, the states are directly prohibited from passing *ex post facto* laws, bills of attainder, and laws

granting title of nobility, levying export duties, or depriving persons of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

Certain powers are specifically denied states by the U.S. Constitution. These include entering into treaties or alliances, passing laws impairing the obligation of contracts, coining money, passing laws abridging the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States, and denying to any person the equal protection of the laws.

The federal government and the states exercise certain concurrent powers; however, the states do not have jurisdiction in those areas in which there has been preemption by federal government. An example of federal preemption of authority is the regulation of the television and radio broadcasting industry.

## **Officers**

### **Presiding Officers**

Each house of the legislature has a Presiding Officer. The President is the Presiding Officer of the Senate, and the Speaker is the Presiding Officer of the House of Delegates. They are elected by a majority of the membership of their respective houses. In practice, the President and the Speaker are selected at party caucuses preceding the opening of a session. Traditionally, the representatives of each political party in each house selected a candidate for Presiding Officer, but in recent years the minority party has not formally nominated a leader to be Presiding Officer. In a contested election, party members normally vote en bloc, and the candidate of the majority party becomes the Presiding Officer.

The Presiding Officers serve as co-chairs of the Legislative Policy Committee. The leadership role of each Presiding Officer also includes appointing committee leadership, appointing members to committees, assigning bills to committees, conducting leadership meetings to establish legislative agendas, and scheduling briefings for members of the legislature so that they may effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities. The Presiding Officers are responsible for preserving order and decorum during sessions in their chambers. They decide all points of order.

The President and the Speaker are the principal administrative officers of their respective bodies and appoint the staff of their houses. Together they supervise the sizable administrative organization of the General Assembly, both during and between sessions. They jointly appoint the Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services.

The State constitution requires that the President and the Speaker be present at the signing of bills by the Governor and that they receive the annual budget bill from the Governor and introduce it into the legislative process.



In elections of the Governor in the case of a tie vote, the sealed returns are addressed to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, who opens them in the presence of both houses at the opening of the General Assembly following the election. If vacancies occur simultaneously in the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the President of the Senate becomes acting Governor until the General Assembly elects a successor.

### **Pro Tem Presiding Officers**

Each house of the legislature elects a pro tem presiding officer. The President Pro Tem of the Senate and the Speaker Pro Tem of the House of Delegates preside over their houses in the absence of the Presiding Officers.

### **Floor Leaders**

The majority floor leader and the minority floor leader in each house coordinate the legislative efforts of the members of their respective political parties. By rule in the Senate, the President selects the majority leader. In turn, the President and the majority leader jointly designate the majority whip and deputy majority leader. The members of the minority party designate the minority leader and minority whip.

The rules of the House of Delegates do not provide for the selection of party leaders. For the majority party, the Speaker designates the leader. The members of the minority party select the minority leader.

### **The Leadership**

Not a part of the formal structure of the General Assembly, but an essential part of its organization and operation, is an entity known simply as “the leadership.” The leadership of each house generally consists of the Presiding Officer, the pro tem presiding officer, floor leaders, chairs and vice chairs of committees, and other legislators designated by the Presiding Officer. The Senate leadership and the House leadership are creations of the Presiding Officers, designed to assist them in considering matters with respect to legislative policy and procedures.

### **Desk Officers**

The Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Delegates keep the files and records of their respective houses and prepare the journals of proceedings. They are responsible for generally supervising the progress of bills and resolutions through the legislative process.

In the Senate, the Secretary of the Senate is appointed as the lead desk officer and also serves as the Parliamentarian of the Senate. In the House, the Chief Clerk is appointed as the lead desk officer. The Speaker appoints a member of the House to serve as Parliamentarian.

Each house also appoints other desk officers. These include:

- Journal Clerk – prepares and compiles the journal of the floor proceedings.
- Reading Clerk – calls the roll and reads all bills, resolutions, and other papers.
- Sergeant-at-Arms – aids in the enforcement of order and enforces all processes issued under the authority of the Senate or House. In recent years, members of the State Police unit assigned to the General Assembly during the legislative session have served as the sergeants-at-arms and doorkeepers.
- Chief Page – responsible for the distribution of bills and resolutions and other materials and the performance of other services for the Presiding Officer and the membership. Pages are high school students selected from throughout the State to serve two week-long periods during the legislative session.

### **Legislative Employees**

Administrative assistants, legislative aides, clerks, messengers, and other employees work in the committees, legislators’ offices, and other support offices of the Maryland General Assembly. These individuals are hired with the approval of the Presiding Officers.

In addition, employees of the Department of Legislative Services assist the members and committees in their work. The responsibilities of this agency are detailed in “Chapter 6. Legislative Services.”

## **Membership**

### **Qualifications**

To qualify under the constitution as a member of either house, a person must be a citizen of Maryland and a resident of the State for at least one year. If the legislative district in which a candidate is seeking election has been created for at least six months prior to the election, then the candidate must have resided in the district for six months. If the district was established less than six months prior to the election, then the candidate must have resided in it for as long as it has been established. Senators must be at least 25 years of age on the date of election. Delegates must be at least 21 upon election.

### **Legislative Districting**

Legislative districts are redrawn every 10 years after the federal census to ensure equal representation based on the concept of “one person, one vote.” Geographical size of the districts varies according to population density. The present apportionment was determined in 2022 and

adopted under the authority of Article III, Section 5 of the State constitution. This section, approved by the voters in 1972, requires reapportionment after each decennial census, not later than the second year following the census.

Under provisions of the 1972 constitutional amendment, the State is divided into 47 legislative districts, each electing one senator and three delegates. A legislative district may be subdivided into three single-member delegate districts or into one single-member delegate district and one two-member delegate district. Currently, 18 of the 47 districts use subdistricts for the election of delegates. Districts must consist of adjoining territory and be compact in form and of substantially equal population. Due regard must be given to natural boundaries and the boundaries of political subdivisions. Based on the 2020 census, the ideal population of a senatorial district and a three-member delegate district is 131,391. The ideal population of a delegate district is 81,875 for a two-member district and 40,938 for a single-member district.

Population data is also adjusted in Maryland to comply with Chapter 67 of 2010, which requires population counts used to create legislative districts for the U.S. Congress, General Assembly, and county and municipal governing bodies to exclude incarcerated individuals who were not State residents prior to their incarceration in either State or federal correctional facilities. Further, the law requires that incarcerated individuals who were State residents prior to their incarceration be counted at their last known address.

The State constitution requires the Governor to present a legislative districting plan to the General Assembly in the form of a joint resolution by the first day of session in the second year following the decennial census. The General Assembly may adopt its own legislative districting plan, but if a plan has not been adopted before the end of the forty-fifth day of session, the Governor's plan becomes law.

Ordinarily, redistricting data is received from the U.S. Census Bureau in early April in the year after the census is conducted. Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, 2020 census data was received in Maryland in August 2021, a nearly five-month delay, which substantially shortened the time available for drawing redistricting maps.

In July 2021, the Presiding Officers of the General Assembly appointed the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission to recommend a State legislative districting plan for consideration by the General Assembly in the 2022 session. Following public hearings across the State and numerous work sessions, the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission submitted its final recommendation on January 7, 2022. The Governor also appointed the Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission by executive order on January 12, 2021, to hold public hearings and recommend legislative districts. That commission held hearings from May to November 2021. The Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission submitted a recommended legislative district map to the Governor on November 5, 2021. In accordance with the State constitution, the Governor submitted the plan recommended by the Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission to the General Assembly on the first day of the 2022 session. The General Assembly, however, approved the plan recommended by the Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission (Joint Resolution 1 of 2022). The plan is effective for purposes of electing

all members to the General Assembly in the primary and general elections to be held in July and November of 2022, respectively.

### **Lawsuits Challenging Legislative Redistricting**

Article III, Section 5 of the State constitution provides that upon petition of any registered voter, the Court of Appeals of Maryland has original jurisdiction to review a districting proposal “and grant appropriate relief,” if it finds the proposal does not meet the requirements of the U.S. Constitution or the Constitution of Maryland. Four petitions were filed before the Court of Appeals challenging some or all of the legislature’s 2022 legislative districting plan. The petitions variously asserted claims under the State constitution (Articles 7, 24, and 40 of the Declaration of Rights, Article I, Section 7, and Article III, Section 4) as well as under the U.S. Constitution (due process and equal protection).

A special master was appointed and conducted a hearing on March 23, 2022. On April 4, 2022, the special master issued a report recommending to the court that all challenges to the redistricting plan be denied. The Court of Appeals agreed, issuing an order dismissing all petitions on April 13, 2022. **Appendix 1** contains maps of the State’s current legislative districts.

### **Congressional Redistricting**

Under federal case law, congressional district boundaries must be redrawn every 10 years after the decennial census to adjust for population changes; they must also conform to the requirements of the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and related case law. The Governor has traditionally presented a congressional map along with the State legislative district plan to the General Assembly but is not required to do so by the State constitution or other State statute. The General Assembly may pass its own congressional plan in lieu of the Governor’s, but unlike with the legislative plan, there is no deadline set in statute for this to happen.

Maryland was apportioned eight congressional districts following the 2020 census. Under federal law, congressional district populations must be as equal as practicable, a stricter standard than for legislative districts. Based on Maryland’s adjusted population, the ideal population for each congressional district is 771,925.

The Legislative Redistricting Advisory Commission and the Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission recommended congressional district maps to the General Assembly in November 2021 and a special session took place in December 2021 to finalize congressional districts for the 2022 primary election cycle. On December 9, 2021, new congressional districts were established under Chapter 32 of the 2021 special session after a gubernatorial veto override.

### **Lawsuits Challenging Congressional Redistricting**

In 2018, a lawsuit was filed in federal court against the 2011 congressional map, specifically challenging the drawing of congressional district 6. In November 2018, a federal

district court upheld the challenge and invalidated the map. The decision was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and consolidated with a similar case in North Carolina. On June 27, 2019, the Supreme Court overturned the lower court decision(s) on the basis that partisan gerrymandering claims were political questions beyond the reach of federal courts. The court also stated that state courts and state constitutions would be the appropriate venue for these types of challenges.

After enactment of the 2021 congressional map, two lawsuits challenged the congressional districts in the Anne Arundel County Circuit Court. The consolidated challenges alleged that the congressional map violated (1) Article III, Section 4 of the State constitution requiring redistricting maps to give due regard to natural boundaries and the boundaries of political subdivisions; (2) Article 1, Section 7 of the State constitution requiring the General Assembly to pass laws necessary for the preservation and purity of elections; (3) Article 7 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights, which guarantees free and frequent elections; (4) Article 24 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights protecting various individual liberties and privileges; and (5) Article 40 of the Declaration of Rights, protecting free speech.

On March 25, 2022, after a trial on the allegations, the circuit court invalidated the map on all legal claims, declaring the 2021 plan an “outlier and a product of extreme partisan gerrymandering.” Subsequently, however, the State’s filed appeal was withdrawn as was the initial enacted plan, and the General Assembly passed a new plan that was signed by the Governor on April 4, 2022 (Chapter 16 of 2022). As a result, the trial court’s earlier findings are considered to be advisory and nonbinding.

## **Vacancies**

In the case of a vacancy in either house, the Governor must appoint the person recommended by the appropriate political party central committee of the county or district in which the vacancy occurs. If no name is submitted within 30 days after the occurrence of the vacancy, the Governor makes the appointment. The person filling the vacancy must be of the same political party that the person vacating the office was a member of at the time of election.

If the vacancy occurs in a district or subdistrict that is totally within a county, the central committee of the county nominates a person from the district or subdistrict to fill the vacancy. If the district or subdistrict comprises all or part of two or more counties, the central committee of each of the counties has one vote in submitting a nominee. When there is a tie vote among the county committees, the list of proposed names is sent to the Governor, who makes the appointment.

## **Elections**

Elections for the Senate and House are held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November every four years. The four-year terms of members begin on the opening date of session (the second Wednesday of January) following the election.

## Committees

Much of the legislature's work is done by its committees. Committees include standing committees, statutory committees, special committees, and select committees (commonly known as county or regional delegations). Special committees are usually temporary and go out of existence when their purposes have been fulfilled. The Department of Legislative Services assigns to the committees policy analysts who draft amendments to legislation and generally facilitate and support the work of the committees. The committee chairs set the agenda of the committees as well as the policies and procedures for hearings and other committee matters.

### Standing Committees

During the session each introduced piece of legislation is referred to a standing committee by the Presiding Officer of the house in which the legislation is introduced. The standing committee holds a public hearing on the legislation and may recommend by a committee vote that the full house pass the bill, not pass it, or pass it with amendments. Between sessions, standing committees consider and hold hearings on topics of concern in the State and may propose legislation for consideration during the next following session. Legislators are appointed by their Presiding Officer to serve on the principal standing committees. In accordance with the Senate and House rules, with the exception of the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee and Senate Rules Committee and the Senate Executive Nominations Committee, a member may be appointed to only one standing committee (Senate Rule 18(b) and House Rule 18(b)).

The Senate has four principal standing committees that generally consider issues in the following areas:

*Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:* State operating and capital budgets, including revenues and expenditures; supplementary appropriations bills; State and county bond initiatives; legislative budgetary procedures; taxation and property assessment matters; education financing; public pension and retirement matters; economic development; lottery and gaming; and procurement.

*Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:* Licensing and regulation of businesses in general, including business, health, and related occupations and professions; alcoholic beverages; natural resources; agriculture and land preservation; environment; energy; ethics and election laws; veterans affairs; fire prevention; primary, secondary, and higher education policy; local government affairs; and State government organization and procedures.

*Senate Finance Committee:* Banks and other financial institutions; behavioral health, including mental health and substance abuse matters; credit regulation and consumer financing; commercial law, including consumer protection; developmental disabilities; economic and community development; insurance; health and welfare matters; social programs; State personnel

issues; transportation; economic development; labor and employment; unemployment insurance; utility regulation; and workers' compensation.

*Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:* Criminal and civil laws, penalties, and procedures; correctional facilities and services; family law; judicial administration and court structure; juvenile justice; law enforcement organizations; legal profession; legal rights and immunities; public safety; real property, including landlord-tenant laws; trusts and estates; corporations and associations; human relations; and vehicle laws, including drunk driving.

The House has six principal standing committees that generally consider issues in the following areas:

*House Appropriations Committee:* State operating and capital budgets; supplementary appropriations bills; State and county bond initiatives; higher education institutions; State and local agency procedures and programs; collective bargaining; economic development; social services; and State personnel and pension matters.

*House Economic Matters Committee:* Banks and other financial institutions; commercial law, including consumer protection; corporations and associations; business regulation; business occupations and professions; electronic commerce; insurance regulation, except health insurance; labor and employment; unemployment insurance; utility regulation; workers' compensation; and alcoholic beverages.

*House Environment and Transportation Committee:* Agriculture, natural resources, and environmental issues, including agricultural land preservation, program open space, and vehicle emissions; ethics; housing, landlord and tenant, and real property, including lead paint; local government, including land use; and transportation, including highways, bridges, mass transit, and vehicle laws.

*House Health and Government Operations Committee:* Health facilities, equipment, and products; long-term care; public health, including Medicaid; health insurance; health occupations and professions; State government organization, procedures, and operations; administrative law; procurement; and human relations.

*House Judiciary Committee:* Judicial administration and court structure; legal profession; correctional facilities and services; criminal and civil laws, penalties, immunities, and procedures; juvenile justice; public safety; family law; drunk and drugged driving; incarcerable motor vehicle offenses; and estates and trusts.

*House Ways and Means Committee:* State and local taxation matters, including assessments and tax credit programs; education financing; primary and secondary education programs; elections; funding of transportation programs; lottery and gaming; economic development; and issues relating to children, youth, and families.

In addition to these principal committees, there are six other committees that are designated as standing committees (two in the Senate, two in the House, and two joint) to which members are appointed:

*Senate Executive Nominations Committee* examines all nominations for appointments made by the Governor that require Senate confirmation. The committee reports its recommendations to the Senate, which subsequently votes to confirm or reject the nominees.

*Senate Rules Committee*, which includes the majority and minority floor leaders, the chairs of the principal standing committees, and other members of the leadership, considers proposals concerning the rules, organization, and procedures of the Senate or the legislature. Senate bills introduced after the bill introduction deadline and House bills that cross over to the Senate after the sixty-ninth day of session are referred to the Rules Committee for a decision on whether to re-refer those bills to the appropriate principal standing committees for their consideration.

*House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee*, which includes the Speaker, the majority and minority floor leaders, the chairs of the principal standing committees, and other members of the leadership, has the combined functions of the Senate Rules and Senate Executive Nominations committees. However, the House of Delegates is required to consider relatively few executive nominations as mandated by statute.

*House Consent Calendars Committee*, consisting of the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader, determines the bills and joint resolutions to be included on consent calendars.

*Joint Investigation Committee* inquires into abuses in public fund expenditures when referred by resolution of either the House or Senate. Membership consists of five senators and five delegates. The committee's origin is based on Article III, Section 24 of the State constitution, but historically, it has rarely met.

*Joint Protocol Committee* organizes, plans, and schedules the social activities of the General Assembly.

## **Select Committees**

In each house, legislation that affects only one local jurisdiction may be considered by a select committee. In the Senate, select committees are identified by number, as follows:



**Senate Select Committee****Counties**

No. 1	Allegany, Garrett, and Washington
No. 2	Carroll and Frederick
No. 3	Harford
No. 4	Baltimore County
No. 5	Howard
No. 6	Montgomery
No. 7	Prince George's
No. 8	Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's
No. 9	Anne Arundel
No. 10	Eastern Shore
No. 11	Baltimore City

Note: There are instances in which a particular senator may serve on more than one select committee because the senator's district straddles more than one county.

In the House of Delegates, each county and Baltimore City has its own select committee, usually referred to as the "county delegation" or the "Baltimore City delegation," as the case may be. Select committees of counties having three or more delegates are comprised of the delegation of the county. Select committees of counties having fewer than three members are composed of the delegate or delegates of the county, together with a delegate or delegates from an adjacent county, for a total of three members. Delegates from the Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, and Western Maryland also serve on delegations based on those geographic regions.

It should be noted that, in accordance with current practice, all local bills are referred to the appropriate standing committees, but the select committees may consider and vote on them and submit to the standing committees their recommendations to pass, with or without amendment, or reject the bills. The standing committees generally accept the recommendations of the select committees under the "local courtesy" protocol and vote to report the bills to their respective houses pursuant to those recommendations.

The activities of select committees are discussed further in the local legislation section of "Chapter 3. Legislation."

**Conference Committees**

During the session, conference committees are appointed when the two houses pass different versions of the same bill. With the exception of the conference committees on the operating and capital budgets, conference committees consist of three delegates and three senators generally appointed by the chairs of the two committees that considered the bill. A conference committee goes out of existence when a resolution of the differences is reached and the conference committee report is delivered to each house. The operation of conference committees is discussed further in "Chapter 3. Legislation."

## Statutory Committees

The *Legislative Policy Committee* was created by legislation enacted in 1976. It replaced the Maryland Legislative Council, which had guided the interim activities of the General Assembly since 1939. The Legislative Policy Committee consists of 28 members, with the Senate and House equally represented and the Presiding Officers serving as co-chairs. In addition to the President, the Senate members are the President Pro-Tem, the chairs of the four Senate standing committees, the majority and minority leaders, and 6 members appointed by the President and approved by majority vote of the Senate. In addition to the Speaker, the House members are the Speaker Pro-Tem, the chairs of the six House standing committees, the majority and minority leaders, and 4 members appointed by the Speaker with approval of a majority of the House. If a vacancy on the committee occurs while the General Assembly is not in session, a successor is appointed by the appropriate Presiding Officer.

The functions of the Legislative Policy Committee are specified in Title 2, Subtitle 4 of the State Government Article and are as follows:

- review the work of the standing committees;
- collect information about the government and general welfare of the State;
- study the operation of and recommend changes in the constitution, statutes, and common law of the State;
- study the rules and procedures of the Senate and the House and recommend changes that would improve and expedite the consideration of legislation by the General Assembly;
- coordinate and supervise generally the work of the General Assembly when it is not in session;
- prepare or endorse a legislative program that includes the bills, resolutions, or other recommendations of the committee that are to be presented to the General Assembly at its next session;
- carry out its powers and duties under the Maryland Program Evaluation Act; and
- at least every two years, review and update as necessary the antiharassment policy and procedures of the General Assembly to create and maintain an environment in which all members and employees are treated with respect and are free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

The law details methods by which the Legislative Policy Committee may carry out these functions. Specifically, it provides that the Legislative Policy Committee, or, with its approval,

the standing committees functioning when the General Assembly is not in session, may administer oaths, issue subpoenas, compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents, and take depositions. Persons failing to comply with subpoenas or refusing to testify are subject to prosecution for contempt in State trial courts.

In practice, the Legislative Policy Committee has focused its attention on scheduling the legislative work during the interim period and on considering policy items that require legislative review and approval or legislative review and comment. For example, requests for funds for extraordinary economic development opportunities (Sunny Day funds) intended to retain or expand jobs in Maryland require review and approval by the Legislative Policy Committee. On the other hand, the Legislative Policy Committee has a review and comment role on various policy items, including requests for transfers of funds from certain accounts to State agencies for specific purposes, (e.g., the Dedicated Purpose Account), information technology proposals involving resource sharing that are valued at \$100,000 or more, and applications for the designation of a Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise (RISE) Zone. Additionally, a number of State agencies are required to make annual or periodic reports to the Legislative Policy Committee about the agency's activities.

The Department of Legislative Services supports the work of the Legislative Policy Committee in a variety of ways. The Office of Policy Analysis provides professional staff who assist the committee with its various duties, including processing requests to review and approve or review and comment on certain policy items. Staff also assist with organizing and planning meetings, compiling required reports, researching issues, and drafting legislation pertaining to the committee.

The *Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review* (AELR) (Title 2, Subtitle 5 of the State Government Article) is a joint statutory committee of the Senate and the House of Delegates. It consists of 10 senators and 10 delegates, appointed respectively by the President and the Speaker. The President and the Speaker name the Senate chair and the House chair, respectively. The presiding chairmanship and co-chairmanship alternates annually between the Senate and House.

The committee's primary function is to review all regulations proposed by executive units, with committee approval required for the emergency adoption of regulations. For the most part, the committee meets as needed; that is, its meeting schedule is generally governed by the timing of proposed regulations. In addition, under a continuing eight-year cycle, the AELR Committee receives from each unit of the Executive Branch a review and evaluation of the unit's regulatory program. "Chapter 5. Legislative Oversight" elaborates on the AELR Committee's powers of regulatory review.

The committee also has the authority to examine the performance of officers and employees of any of the three branches of State government to determine compliance with State laws. It may review the operation of executive units and agencies and may make recommendations for improvements. The committee is required to report at least once a year to

the Legislative Policy Committee and to the General Assembly, accounting for its work and studies and reporting on any recommendations.

The *Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee* (Title 2, Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article) consists of 10 members of the Senate appointed by the President and 10 members of the House appointed by the Speaker. Members of the committee must be appointed on the basis of demonstrated ability and interest in the functions of the committee. In making appointments, the President and Speaker must provide for representation from the major areas of the State. The President and the Speaker jointly appoint the chair and the vice chair of the committee.

The committee is responsible for reviewing audit reports issued by the Office of Legislative Audits and performance evaluations conducted by the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability and making recommendations to the General Assembly with respect to issues raised in the audit reports and performance evaluations. The committee also reviews the audit and performance evaluation processes and procedures and provides recommendations to the Presiding Officers, the Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services, the Legislative Auditor, and the Director of the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability.

The *Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area* (Section 2-10A-01 of the State Government Article) was created in 1984 with an initial mandate to meet with the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission “to review development and implementation of the criteria for program development”; however, the joint committee’s mandate has been expanded to include the review of any aspect of the critical area protection program, which, in 2002, was extended to include land around the Atlantic coastal bays. The commission was renamed to reflect that expansion, as was the committee. It includes 10 members: 5 senators appointed by the President; and 5 delegates appointed by the Speaker. The President and the Speaker jointly appoint a senator and a delegate each to serve as co-chairs, and each co-chair serves as the presiding chair in alternating years.

The *Joint Committee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Biotechnology* (Section 2-10A-13 of the State Government Article), first established in 2000 as the Joint Technology Oversight Committee, was renamed and codified in 2009 to reflect additional responsibilities. The committee was renamed and its responsibilities were expanded again in 2014. Currently, the committee works to broaden the support, knowledge, and awareness of advances in cybertechnology, information technology, and biotechnology, and evaluates related issues. By December 1 of each year, the committee is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, Legislative Policy Committee, Senate Finance Committee, and House Economic Matters Committee. Membership consists of six senators appointed by the President and six delegates appointed by the Speaker. The Presiding Officers appoint jointly a senator and a delegate to serve as co-chairs who alternate in serving as the presiding chair of the committee each year.

The *Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families* (Section 2-10A-06 of the State Government Article) with membership of 20, consists of the majority and minority leaders of the

Senate, 2 members from each of the four Senate standing committees, the majority and minority leaders of the House, and 8 other delegates appointed by the Speaker from among the members of the House committees that deal with issues affecting Maryland children, youth, and families. Senate and House committee chairs are appointed by the President and the Speaker, respectively.

The committee is charged with investigating the problems that jeopardize the well-being of children, youth, and families; identifying State policies and actions that can work to achieve conditions of well-being for these groups; reviewing and making recommendations with regard to related State statutes, regulations, programs, services, and budget priorities; searching for interdepartmental gaps, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies in the implementation or attainment of related State policies and actions; serving as an informational resource to the House and the Senate; and improving public awareness of the special needs of Maryland children, youth, and families. The committee submits an annual report to the General Assembly each December.

The *Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness* (Section 2-10A-15 of the State Government Article) consists of 16 members, 8 each from the Senate, appointed by the President, and the House, appointed by the Speaker. The President and the Speaker appoint a Senate chair and House chair, respectively.

The committee's mandate is to ensure that public resources, programs, and policies are coordinated and effective in preventing, mitigating the effects of, and ending homelessness. The committee is required to study issues related to homelessness including housing, income, health care, education, government supports, and veterans experiencing homelessness. As part of its study, the committee is directed to consult with governmental agencies; community-based organizations; and other stakeholders to identify State policies, programs, and actions that should or could prevent, lessen the effects of and end homelessness in the State. The committee is required to submit a report to the General Assembly on or before December 1 each year.

The *Joint Committee on Fair Practices and State Personnel Oversight* (Section 2-10A-08 of the State Government Article), first created in 1996, continues to review and evaluate equal employment opportunity policies and practices in State government. In 2009, the committee was renamed, and its mandate expanded to include oversight of the employment policies and personnel systems in the Executive Branch, including the State Personnel Management System, the Maryland Department of Transportation's Human Resources Management System, and the personnel systems of State institutions of higher education. The committee is composed of four senators appointed by the President and four delegates appointed by the Speaker. The President and the Speaker jointly appoint the co-chairs.

The *Joint Committee on Federal Relations* (Title 2, Subtitle 9 of the State Government Article) was established in 1983 when the Maryland General Assembly reconstituted and renamed the Maryland Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation. This change recognized that the "new" federalism required the General Assembly to increase its attention to the activities of the federal government, particularly in the area of budget allocations for financial aid to the states and the shift of responsibilities to the states.

The committee includes 16 members, 8 members of the Senate appointed by the President and 8 members of the House appointed by the Speaker.

The committee focuses on issues that involve relations between the State and the federal government, or relations between the states. The committee gathers information on those issues on behalf of the General Assembly through committee briefings and information requests. The committee also periodically reviews the State's membership in various interstate compacts to determine whether the State's membership in the compacts continues to serve the interests of the State and whether any legislative changes to the compacts are needed.

The *Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight* (Section 9-1A-38 of the State Government Article) was authorized in 2012 and consists of four senators appointed by the President and four delegates appointed by the Speaker. At least one senator and one delegate must be a member of the minority party. The President and the Speaker appoint a senator and a delegate to serve as co-chairs. The committee is charged with examining the status of and recommending potential improvements to the State's gaming program. A report is required annually in December to the Governor and the General Assembly.

The *Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics* (Title 2, Subtitle 7 of the State Government Article) is composed of six senators appointed by the President and six delegates appointed by the Speaker. Additionally, the President and Speaker serve as nonvoting *ex officio* members. One of the members from each chamber is designated a co-chair, and they alternate each year as presiding chair. Minority party members are appointed, in proportion to their membership in their chamber, upon the recommendations of the respective minority leader. The counsel to the committee, who also serves as the Ethics Counsel to each member of the General Assembly, is appointed by the Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services, subject to the approval of the President and the Speaker.

The committee issues ethics opinions and guidelines that interpret the Maryland Public Ethics Law and describe the standards of legislative ethics. A legislator may request that the committee issue a confidential advisory opinion regarding the ethical implications of actions taken or contemplated by the legislator. In addition, the committee enforces the Maryland Public Ethics Law and the standards of legislative ethics. "Chapter 2. The Legislator" further discusses the activities of the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics.

The *Joint Committee on Legislative Information Technology and Open Government* (Section 2-10A-14 of the State Government Article) was created in 2014 by consolidating the Joint Committee on Transparency and Open Government and the Joint Advisory Committee on Legislative Data Systems into one joint committee. This committee was tasked with studying and making recommendations related to legislative information technology systems; transparency and access to government resources, publications, and actions; and policies or actions to enhance the security of State information technology systems and information held by State units.

The *Joint Committee on the Management of Public Funds* (Title 2, Subtitle 8 of the State Government Article) is comprised of four members of the Senate appointed by the President and

four members of the House appointed by the Speaker. The President and the Speaker jointly designate a chair and a vice chair. This committee reviews policies and procedures for the investment and management of all State funds except retirement funds. Generally, the committee meets during the interim period, receives reports from State officials on investment of State funds, and analyzes data with respect to cash management practices.

The *Spending Affordability Committee* (Title 2, Subtitle 10 of the State Government Article) was created in 1982. Membership includes the Presiding Officers, the chairs of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, the majority and minority leaders of each house or their designees, and an equal number of Senate and House members selected by the Presiding Officers. The Presiding Officers each designate co-chairs from their respective chambers. Co-chairs preside in alternate years. The committee is assisted by a citizen advisory committee named by the President and the Speaker.

The Spending Affordability Committee each year submits a report to the Governor and the Legislative Policy Committee recommending a level of State spending, debt authorization, and personnel. It also makes a recommendation as to the use of any anticipated budget surplus and any other appropriate fiscal measures. The committee typically meets during October and November, and its findings are due by December 20. The activities of the Spending Affordability Committee are discussed in greater detail in *Volume IV – Maryland's Budget Process*.

The *Joint Committee on Unemployment Insurance Oversight* (§ 2-10A-11 of the State Government Article) was formed in 2005 to examine the condition of the unemployment insurance system in the State that resulted from the implementation of Chapter 169 of 2005. The committee was reestablished in 2007 and given permanent status by legislation enacted in 2010. Today, in addition to its original charge, the committee is tasked with considering how best to maintain the fairness of the unemployment insurance system in the State and the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund's ability to pay benefits. The committee's 15 members include 3 members of the Senate; 3 members of the House; the Secretary of Labor, or the Secretary's designee; the Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary's designee; 1 member each from the Maryland Retailers Association, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, and the Job Opportunities Task Force; 2 representatives of union labor; and 1 representative of the academic profession knowledgeable in unemployment insurance law. The President and the Speaker appoint a Senator and a Delegate, respectively, to serve as co-chairs. To assist the committee in its work, the Department of Labor reports to the committee on the condition of unemployment insurance in the State. The committee is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on December 31 of each year in which the committee meets.

The *Joint Committee on Workers' Compensation Benefit and Insurance Oversight* (Section 2-10A-03 of the State Government Article) was established in 1987 and is tasked with examining and evaluating the condition of the workers' compensation benefit structure and laws in the State. The committee's 16 members include 2 members of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate; 2 members of the House, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and 12 members appointed jointly by the President and the Speaker. The 12 jointly appointed

members include 1 member each representing the business community, labor organizations, building and construction labor organizations, a self-insured local government entity, the insurance industry, the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland, a workers' compensation rating organization, and a certified rehabilitation provider; 2 members of the public; and 2 attorneys. The President and the Speaker jointly appoint a Senator and a Delegate to serve as co-chairs. To assist the committee with its work, the Insurance Commissioner and the Workers' Compensation Commission report to the committee on the condition of workers' compensation benefits and insurance in Maryland.

### **Special Committees**

The Legislative Policy Committee periodically establishes special committees for particular purposes. These committees function during the interim between sessions of the General Assembly. Each is reviewed annually at the end of the legislative session by the Legislative Policy Committee, which decides whether the committee should continue its work or cease to function. A committee membership roster is published each summer.

Special committees that were active during recent interim periods are as follows:

- Joint Committee on Pensions
- Joint Subcommittee on Program Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation

### **Task Forces and Commissions**

Periodically, the General Assembly passes legislation that creates task forces and commissions to study specific issues and concerns. Usually, these groups consist of legislative members and others appointed by the Governor to represent appropriate interests in the public and private sector. The groups generally function over a relatively short period of time.

Examples of task forces and commissions in recent years include:

- Commission to Establish a Maryland Women Veterans Memorial;
- Law Enforcement Body Camera Task Force;
- Joint COVID–19 Response Legislative Work Group;
- Juvenile Justice Reform Council;
- Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Commission;
- Maryland Veterans Commission;



- Sports Wagering Application Review Commission;
- State Park Investment Commission; and
- State Transparency and Accountability Reform (STAR) Commission.

## **Caucuses**

There are a number of caucuses in the Maryland General Assembly consisting of members of both the House and the Senate that are officially recognized by each chamber.

### **Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland**

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland was founded in 1970 as the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus and adopted its present name in 2002. Since its inception the caucus has influenced many types of legislation. In 1973 it assisted in securing Maryland's ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment (extension of the right to vote to African Americans) to the U.S. Constitution. For over 50 years, it has worked to stop experimentation on prisoners, advancing minority businesses and communities, and increased funding for the development of historically black institutions of higher education. The Legislative Black Caucus meets regularly during the session and the interim and elects its officers in April for two-year terms.

### **Women Legislators of Maryland**

The Women Legislators of Maryland was formed in 1972. The Women's Caucus first worked to obtain leadership roles for women legislators in the General Assembly. Today, the Women Legislators of Maryland work on a variety of issues ranging from health care, sexual harassment, and improving schools and colleges to domestic abuse and child support tax credits. The group meets regularly during the session and the interim and elects its officers for annual terms each April.

### **Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus**

The Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus was created in December 2014. The primary purpose of the caucus is to improve the quality of life of Maryland's Latino communities by advocating on their behalf and promoting greater participation in the political affairs of the State of Maryland. The caucus seeks to be an effective voice in developing public policy that will positively affect constituents.

### **Maryland Asian-American and Pacific Islander Caucus**

The Maryland Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Caucus was created in January 2015, and officially reorganized as a caucus in October 2016. The caucus seeks to engage the

Asian-American and Pacific-Islander communities in Maryland and ensure that their legislative and policy goals are represented within the General Assembly.

### **Veterans Caucus**

The Maryland Veterans Caucus was created in January 2004 to preserve and promote the interests of veterans. On behalf of veterans in Maryland, the caucus studies, develops, and promotes legislation designed to improve their quality of life to include access to benefits, employment, education, training, and health care services.



## Chapter 2. The Legislator

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The job of the Maryland legislator is a year-round responsibility. During the 90-day session beginning the second Wednesday of each January, this responsibility becomes full-time in nature. During the interim between sessions, the pace of activities usually becomes considerably slower for the legislator. Thus, because of the overall nature of the responsibilities, Maryland legislators are considered “citizen legislators.” Most legislators have active careers in addition to their responsibilities as members of the General Assembly.

This chapter outlines the activities of a typical day during both the legislative session and the interim, summarizes a legislator’s compensation and expense allowances, including legislative scholarships, and discusses the operation of offices in Annapolis and legislative districts. Finally, the chapter summarizes the requirements of the State ethics law.

The General Assembly functions in two distinct periods: the legislative session from January until April; and the interim from April to January. The workload during the session is issue- and process-oriented and is carried out at a more dynamic pace. Floor sessions and committee and delegation meetings consume most of the time of a legislator. Members also handle constituent requests, a part of each legislator’s year-round work.

### **The Legislative Day During the Session**

The two pivotal times in a legislator’s day around which all other activities must be scheduled are the floor sessions and committee meetings. Both chambers hold their sessions in the morning, except for Monday when floor sessions convene at 8:00 p.m. The later time on Mondays allows members to devote time to their nonlegislative employment and constituent service in their home districts or in their Annapolis offices. It also gives members who live some distance away time to travel to Annapolis. On Tuesday through Thursday, session begins at 10:00 a.m. On Friday, the Senate and the House convene at 11:00 a.m. to give the delegations in the House time to meet beforehand. Senate delegations meet at various times during the week. During the final weeks with the press of business, the schedule often reverts to 10:00 a.m. on Friday, and additional late afternoon, night, and weekend sessions as needed to complete the work on the floor of both houses.

Committee hearings are generally held after the floor sessions, with the meeting times announced on the floor by the committee chairs at the end of each day’s session. During the early weeks, hearings typically begin at 1:00 p.m. As the work increases, meetings are often held immediately following session. During the last weeks, members often go back to committee after an afternoon floor session to continue hearings, and additional hearings and meetings are sometimes held on weekends.

For many legislators, session is not their day’s first order of business. Many attend early breakfast meetings with constituents or other legislators to discuss issues of importance to them.

They may meet with members of the press to inform their constituents about legislative activity. This could be followed by working with staff to prepare for bill hearings or meeting with other constituents in the office. The time prior to session is also frequently used for leadership meetings or local delegation meetings.

Depending on time, lunch after session may involve a meeting with constituents or representatives of a group or organization. Lunch might also be in the office while meeting with staff or other legislators before committee meetings start. Since every legislator is assigned to a standing committee and may serve on several special committees or subcommittees, the afternoon is typically spent in hearings. In addition, legislators will often testify before other committees on legislation, especially regarding bills that they sponsor.

In the evening, members often attend receptions or dinners hosted by organizations or groups or may schedule dinner meetings with representatives of local governments or State agencies. These functions allow interaction between legislators and constituents, lobbyists, representatives of local governments, community activists, and gubernatorial and executive agency staff. Individuals and groups use this time to discuss issues or legislation that they are supporting or opposing. Some legislators return to their offices to respond to mail, return telephone calls, or review some of the many documents or reports distributed to the members.

## Floor Sessions

Floor sessions generally last less than an hour early in the session. As session progresses, they may last three hours or more with a recess just before committee meetings are scheduled to begin. Toward the end of session, a chamber often recesses and reconvenes in the late afternoon or evening in order to clear the legislative calendar.

Although the Presiding Officer may alter the order of business to allow for particular circumstances, a typical floor session consists of the following business:

- *Call to order.* The Presiding Officer takes the chair and calls the body to order. There is an opening prayer followed by a roll call to determine if a quorum is present. In the House of Delegates, the Speaker is authorized to call the House into a pro forma session unless objected to by a majority of the House. For a pro forma session, a quorum is deemed to be present if the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader (or their designees) are present. When meeting in a pro forma session, the House is limited in the business it may conduct. In the Senate, a pro forma session may be called only if the Senate has adopted a Senate Simple Resolution finding that a state of emergency exists and that modified procedures are necessary to protect the health or safety of members, staff, or the public.
- *Reading of the journal.* The journal of the previous day's activities is approved. The journal is not actually read in its entirety.

- *Petitions, memorials, and other papers.* The Maryland Constitution guarantees citizens the right to bring petitions to the General Assembly. This time is set aside to receive such petitions, although this very rarely occurs. This time is also used for special presentations or recognition of individuals.
- *Presentation of orders.* Legislative orders are used at the beginning of the 90-day session in organizing the body and infrequently thereafter. Orders are used to appoint the desk officers and members of committees and to adopt rules.
- *Introduction of bills and resolutions.* The reading clerk reads the short title of bills introduced that day and indicates the committee to which they have been assigned. This constitutes the first of three readings of legislation required by the Maryland Constitution. The first reading is sometimes accomplished through the use of a consent calendar.
- *Introduction of visitors.* At this point the Senate acknowledges special visitors to that day's session. The House of Delegates introduces visitors just before adjournment of the day's session. The chair of the protocol committee usually coordinates the introductions.
- *Unfinished business.* Any business taken up but not resolved at a prior floor session is in order at this point. Business is rarely left unfinished except toward the end of the 90 days.
- *Laid over bills.* The legislators consider bills that were laid over from the previous day's floor session. A legislator may request a bill with a pending amendment be "laid over" under the rules (a procedural mechanism used to delay the consideration of the bill). Generally, when this occurs, the Presiding Officer orders the bill and the amendment to lie over for one day. In the Senate, during the last 10 days of the session, the bill may be postponed for one hour, or until the conclusion of the third reading calendar; during the last 25 days in the House, the bill may be postponed for one hour. The motions for a one-hour delay can be denied if the denial is supported by a majority of the senators or delegates present.
- *Committee reports and second reading.* Chairs of committees or their designees present their committees' recommendations on legislation. Bills are reported as favorable, unfavorable, favorable with amendments, or with no recommendation. The presentation usually includes an explanation of the bill and any amendments and, on occasion, comments about testimony offered on the bill when it was heard in committee. In the House, by custom, if a committee reports a bill favorably with no amendments, there is no explanation or discussion of the bill. After the presentation of a committee report, members may question the chair or floor leaders about the bill or the committee's recommendation, and they may propose additional amendments. Votes (generally voice votes) are taken on the committee's amendments, and another vote is taken on the favorable committee report on the bill. Amendments offered by members from the floor are then considered. After all amendments are considered, the bill is said to have passed second reading and is ordered

printed for third reading in the chamber of origin, incorporating any adopted amendments. It is then scheduled for a final vote, usually within the next two legislative days.

- *Special orders.* If a matter of legislative business (usually a bill or amendment) is made the subject of a motion to special order (delay) to another day or time and the motion carries, the matter will be taken up on a special order calendar on the day or at the time to which the matter was delayed.
- *Third reading.* Bills that passed on second reading on a previous legislative day are considered for a third reading vote. The third reading vote is required by the Maryland Constitution and is part of our system of lawmaking that is designed to guard against the hasty enactment of legislation. Members may also ask questions relating to the bills; however, no amendments are allowed to be offered on third reading except on bills that originated in the opposite house. The third reading vote is taken by recorded roll call using the electronic voting boards.
- *Messages.* Messages from the opposite house or the Governor may be received at any point in the order of business. These messages can be notification of legislation passed by the opposite house, requests for the formation of conference committees, the delivery of the Governor's proposed budget, submission of gubernatorial appointments, or other official business.
- *Adjournment.* After the conclusion of the day's business, announcements about committee meetings and notices of general interest to the members are made, and the body is adjourned until the next legislative day unless a majority of the members present object.

All documents relating to the business of the day's session are available to members on their laptop computers. Print copies may also be available on the floor.

## Committee Meetings

During session, committee meetings are generally scheduled to begin in late morning or early afternoon. The committees devote most of their time to public hearings on bills. Each committee prepares a schedule setting forth the bills to be heard each day. Usually, committees attempt to schedule bills dealing with similar subjects on the same day. The dates and times of committee meetings and bill hearings are available on the Maryland General Assembly website under the "Meetings" tab and are updated as bills are scheduled for a hearing.

At bill hearings, the committee takes testimony from the bill's sponsor and other parties supporting or opposing the bill. Amendments to the bill may also be proposed during hearings. The two budget committees (the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee) allocate much of their time for budget hearings. Each day's hearings are devoted to the budgets of specific units of State government. Since the 2011 session, committee hearings have been broadcast online through the General Assembly website. Since the 2015

session, live video of both House and Senate hearings has been available through the website. Additionally, the committee hearing for a Senate or House bill may be accessed on the bill's summary page on the General Assembly website.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, committee meetings were moved online and conducted virtually beginning in the 2020 interim. In February 2022, the Senate committees returned to in-person meetings while House committees remained virtual. As of the 2022 interim, House committees have returned to in-person meetings with virtual testimony.

Occasionally committees request briefings on issues of special concern. These briefings may afford the committee greater familiarity with a complex issue or highlight an issue of controversy. Testimony may be received from the Department of Legislative Services, representatives of executive agencies, and other appropriate individuals. These meetings may be held in person in standing committee hearing rooms in the House and Senate office buildings, or virtually. Live video streaming can be viewed on the General Assembly website.

Voting sessions are another function of committee meetings. The chair prepares a list of bills for committee votes. At the voting session, the committee discusses and debates the proposed legislation and considers amendments. After discussion, formal votes are taken and recorded. The committee's recommendation of favorable, unfavorable, or favorable with amendments becomes part of the committee report to be considered on the floor during second reading action on bills. Committee votes are forwarded to Library and Information Services in the Department of Legislative Services and are posted on the General Assembly website. Senate committee votes are also recorded in the Senate Journal.

## **The News Media**

The citizens of Maryland rely primarily upon the print and broadcast press as well as coverage through websites as sources of information about the activities of the General Assembly. An array of reporters representing newspapers, television and radio stations, and the Associated Press wire service provide coverage of the legislature. Major newspapers and other media outlets also provide coverage through their websites. While the daily happenings in the General Assembly during the 90-day session creates a large volume of news due to the daily sessions and committee activities, the volume of news decreases in the interim when official legislative activities decrease.

The major daily newspapers of the Baltimore, Washington, and Annapolis areas maintain staff, in varying numbers, at the State House while the legislature is in session. The newspapers published weekly or semi-weekly and the local circulation dailies vary in the extent of their coverage, often relying on a wire service. Some send their reporters from time to time to Annapolis, mostly for events affecting the areas in which they circulate. In addition, publishers of online newsletters and websites reporting on legislative activities send reporters that write about legislative activities and members.



Maryland Public Television (MPT) and some of the television and radio stations in Baltimore and Washington have crews of reporters and cameramen in Annapolis several times a week during the session. Most radio stations and the smaller television stations use wire services on a daily basis, sending reporters to cover special events. MPT records selected committee hearings and floor sessions during the legislative session for rebroadcast later that day.

In January of each year, press credentials for attending the sessions of the Senate and House are issued by the Department of General Services (Maryland Capitol Police). In both the House and the Senate, a limited number of reporters are permitted on the floor of the chamber. Others are accommodated in a press section in the gallery. Working quarters for the press are provided in rooms on the ground floor of the State House.

## **The Legislative Day During the Interim**

Although the legislature is considered part-time, members are involved in legislative activities during the interim. Members engage in various research and study projects, attend committee, joint committee, or task force meetings virtually or in Annapolis (usually on Tuesdays and Wednesdays), and participate in visits to State universities, correctional facilities, transportation facilities, construction projects, and other sites. Significant time is also spent working with community groups and on constituent issues and attending community events.

An example of a legislative day during the interim may begin with a morning meeting with local government officials, community organizations, or constituents. This could be followed by a committee meeting to study a specific issue. Committees and individual members often make site visits to tour public and private institutions, businesses, or view the State's natural resources. These kinds of activities help legislators gain knowledge and understanding of various issues facing the legislature from around the State. Legislators obtain a broader perspective, one that assists them in interacting more effectively with other legislators in seeking statewide solutions. Activities during the interim often generate ideas for new legislation in the following legislative session.

## **Legislative Scholarships**

Under State law, senators and delegates select recipients for senatorial and delegate scholarships, respectively. Both programs are established in statute and are administered through the Office of Student Financial Assistance in the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

### **Senatorial Scholarships**

The Senatorial Scholarship Program is set forth in Title 18, Subtitle 4 of the Education Article. Prior to July 1, 2019, each senator could award \$138,000 in scholarship funds each year to students attending institutions of higher education, \$34,500 of which could be initial year awards. Since July 1, 2019, that amount grows annually by the increase in tuition and mandatory

fees over the previous year at the University System of Maryland institution with the highest annual expenses for a full-time resident undergraduate student other than the University of Maryland Global Campus and University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus. Senators representing legislative districts comprised of more than one county must divide the scholarship units as equally as possible among applicants from each county.

A senatorial scholarship may be awarded in \$100 increments, but an award for a single year may not be less than \$400, or more than the equivalent annual tuition and mandatory fees of an undergraduate program at the four-year public institution of higher education within University System of Maryland, other than University of Maryland Global Campus and University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus, with the highest annual expenses for a full-time resident undergraduate.

Senatorial scholarship applicants are required to take either the SAT or the ACT examination and must be accepted for admission in an undergraduate, graduate, or professional program at an eligible institution in the State or be enrolled in a two-year certificate program in which the course work is acceptable for transfer credit to an accredited baccalaureate program in an eligible institution. An applicant is exempt from these requirements if the applicant is or was enrolled in a certificate or license program, course, or sequence of courses at a community college that leads to certification or licensure. An applicant is exempt from the competitive examination requirement if he or she (1) has completed a year in good standing at an eligible institution; (2) graduated from high school at least five years before making the application; (3) is attending or planning to attend a Maryland community college; or (4) is accepted for admission at an accredited postsecondary private career institution. In general, an applicant must be eligible for in-State tuition and reside in the legislative district from which the scholarship is sought.

An applicant must demonstrate definite financial need to the Office of Student Financial Assistance. Each senator must also consider the financial need of each applicant and is the final judge of the financial need of an applicant. Each senator may award no more than 10% of the funds made available under the program to applicants planning to attend accredited institutions outside of Maryland, provided that an applicant (1) will be studying in an academic area not offered in an accredited program at any institution in the State; or (2) is a hearing impaired person who will be studying out-of-state at an institution that makes special provisions for the hearing impaired not available in the State; or (3) is an individual who is on active duty with the U.S. military who is domiciled in this State. Otherwise, a senatorial scholarship may be used only at any community college or undergraduate, graduate, or professional school in the State.

A recipient may hold the scholarship for four undergraduate academic years and four graduate academic years, as long as the individual is a full-time student, remains eligible for in-state tuition, is enrolled in a degree program, and takes at least 12 semester hours of courses as an undergraduate or nine hours of courses as a graduate student. A part-time student may hold a scholarship for eight years, if the individual remains eligible for in-state tuition, is enrolled in a degree program, and takes at least six semester hours of courses. Under specified conditions, a recipient of a senatorial scholarship can request, and a senator can award, a scholarship for a fifth

undergraduate academic year or for a semester subsequent to the end of a fourth undergraduate academic year.

## **Delegate Scholarships**

Under the Delegate Scholarship Program, set forth in Title 18, Subtitle 5 of the Education Article, each delegate may choose one of two different methods to award scholarships. Recipients of the scholarships may be selected on any basis that the delegate considers appropriate, and the delegate may select any individual who is eligible for in-state tuition as a recipient. Each delegate may also authorize the Office of Student Financial Assistance to award all or a portion of the funds in this program to eligible recipients of an Educational Excellence Award who reside in the delegate's legislative district. The annual allocation of awards is related to the cost of tuition at selected institutions.

One method of awarding the scholarships allows each delegate, during each four-year term in office, to award the equivalent of four four-year full-time scholarships; each scholarship may be awarded for one, two, three, or four years. Each scholarship awarded under this method pays the tuition and mandatory fees at any eligible State institution; however, for applicants attending public or private institutions or graduate and professional programs, the annual amount of the scholarship may not exceed the cost of tuition and fees of a full-time undergraduate in-state student at certain University System of Maryland institutions.

Two part-time scholarships may be awarded by each delegate for each full-time scholarship available under this method, as long as the recipient carries at least six semester hours of courses each semester in a degree program.

Alternatively, each year in office, each delegate is authorized to award scholarships in an amount equal to four times the tuition and fees for a full-time undergraduate in-state student at the University of Maryland, College Park during the academic year beginning in that year. Scholarships awarded under this method may not be made in amounts less than \$200, nor more than half of the delegate's total scholarship funds authorized for that year. Scholarships made under this method may be used at an eligible institution and may be used by an undergraduate, graduate, or professional student, or by a student at an approved private career school. A student enrolled in a certificate or license program, course, or sequence of courses at a community college that leads to certification or licensure may use a delegate scholarship for certain educational expenses.

Scholarships may be awarded to students attending accredited institutions outside the State if the applicant (1) will be studying in an academic area that is not offered in an accredited program at any institution in the State; (2) is disabled and comparable special provisions are not available at an in-state institution; or (3) is an individual who is on active duty with the U.S. military who is domiciled in this State.

## Compensation and Expense Allowances

Article III, Section 15 of the Constitution of Maryland provides that legislators receive compensation and expense allowances as established by the General Assembly Compensation Commission. The commission meets every four years to determine the compensation and expense allowances to be paid to members of the General Assembly during the next following term of office. The commission must submit its recommendations by formal resolution within 15 days after the beginning of the last regular session of a four-year term. The General Assembly may reduce or reject, but may not increase, any item in the resolution. Unless the General Assembly acts affirmatively to reduce or reject the recommended amounts, the commission's recommendations automatically take effect and have the force of law.

### Compensation

The commission's 2022 resolution increased legislative salaries by 4% in 2023 and 2024 and by 2% in 2025 and 2026 for the 2023-2026 term. The annual salary for the 2023-2026 term is \$67,986, \$70,705, \$72,119, \$73,562 (calendar year 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, respectively) for the Presiding Officers and \$52,343, \$54,437, \$55,526, \$56,636 (calendar year 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, respectively) for all other members of the General Assembly.

Members of the General Assembly receive an annual salary, with payments in 12 monthly installments. All members receive the same salary except for the Presiding Officers. Legislators may take advantage of the State's direct deposit program and have their compensation placed directly into their bank accounts. Human Resources in the Department of Legislative Services processes payroll for members, their staff, and employees of the department.

### Expenses

Legislators are entitled to reimbursement of expenses for meals and lodging when:

- attending regular, extended, or special sessions of the General Assembly or scheduled committee or subcommittee meetings;
- attending scheduled meetings of the Legislative Policy Committee, its committees and subcommittees, or other statutory committees;
- attending scheduled meetings of commissions, committees, joint legislative/executive committees, task forces, or subcommittees to which the legislator has been appointed by the Governor, the President, or the Speaker;
- attending bill signings;

- attending other official functions in Annapolis directly related to the members' duties and approved by the Presiding Officers; and
- attending official functions, such as seminars, that take place outside of Annapolis if authorized by the Presiding Officers.

### **Meals and Lodging**

The daily reimbursement for in-state meals is subject to the allowance provided in the Standard State Travel Regulations for State employees, as established by the Department of Budget and Management (\$56 in fiscal 2022).

Members will be reimbursed for actual meal and lodging expenses incurred in connection with authorized out-of-state travel at an amount not to exceed the most current published federal General Services Administration (GSA) daily per diem rates for meals and lodging for the location to which they traveled. The Presiding Officers are authorized to allow reimbursement of lodging at the published conference rate if higher than the appropriate federal GSA rate.

To receive reimbursement for lodging during session, members must submit an expense voucher along with required documentation to Finance Services in the Department of Legislative Services. Reimbursement for in-state lodging is subject to limits equal to the amount set for Annapolis by the GSA for federal per diem travel allowances (approximately \$106 in fiscal 2022), which changes periodically.

Reimbursement for expenses when attending authorized committee or subcommittee meetings in the interim are verified against attendance records maintained by the legislative staff and forwarded to Finance Services.

### **In-state Travel**

Members are reimbursed for travel from home to meetings or activities for which expenses are allowed. The rate of reimbursement is the same as that paid under the Standard State Travel Regulations (58.5 cents per mile on and after January 1, 2022) if by automobile, or the actual cost if by means other than automobile, but not to exceed the rate paid under the Standard State Travel Regulations.

### **Within-district Travel**

Each January during the 2023-2026 term of office, legislators will receive a \$750 lump-sum in-district travel allowance. This payment is intended to cover the costs of traveling to meetings with local government officials and constituents and other appropriate functions within a member's legislative district.

### **Out-of-state Travel**

Legislators must apply to the Presiding Officers for reimbursement of expenses prior to attending a meeting, conference, or similar function outside Maryland. Prior written approval from both Presiding Officers is required, and the function must be directly related to or likely to substantially enhance the performance of the member's duties as a legislator.

### **Benefit Programs**

Legislators are eligible to participate in benefit programs generally available to State employees. The State of Maryland provides a subsidized health benefit package with a wide range of benefit options. Benefits offered for legislators and their dependents include medical insurance, which includes vision and mental health coverage; prescription coverage; and dental coverage. A pre-tax flexible spending account may be established for dependent day care or qualified health care expenses. Group rates for term life insurance and an accidental death and dismemberment plan are also provided.

Through payroll deduction, legislators may also participate in other voluntary insurance plans, credit union services, deferred compensation in 457 and 401(k) programs, and the Maryland Charity Campaign. Legislators may not participate in the State's unemployment insurance program, including those former legislators who have been unseated by the elective process. Legislators do not accrue any type of leave. Details on how members may participate in these benefit programs are available from Human Resources in the Department of Legislative Services.

The General Assembly Compensation Commission resolution of 2014 mandated membership in the legislative pension plan for members of the Maryland General Assembly. Participants in the legislative pension plan must contribute 7% of their annual salary to the plan, which is deducted from their monthly paychecks. This continues in the 2022 resolution.

Legislators must have eight years of legislative service to qualify for a retirement allowance. Members with creditable service before January 14, 2015, must be age 60, and members with no creditable service before January 14, 2015, must be age 62 to receive full benefits (normal service retirement allowance). For members with creditable service prior to January 14, 2015, a retirement allowance may be received at age 50, but is reduced by 0.5% for each month the former legislator is short of age 60 (6% annual reduction). For members with no creditable service prior to January 14, 2015, a retirement allowance may be received beginning at age 55, but it is reduced by 0.5% for each month the former legislator is short of age 62 (6% annual reduction). The normal service retirement allowance is 3% of the annual salary of a current legislator for each year of service up to 22 years and three months. Legislative service of more than 22 years and three months is not applicable to retirement, and the member's contribution is not required after that time.

In addition, a member forfeits the benefits of his or her legislative pension if the member is convicted of or pleads *nolo contendere* to a crime, committed during the member's term of

office, that is a felony or is an incarcerable misdemeanor that relates to the member's public duties and that involves moral turpitude. The convicted member will be entitled to a return of the member's contributions, plus interest, but less any benefits already paid in the case of a retired member. The benefits would be restored if the conviction is overturned.

Upon the death of an active member who has completed eight years of service or upon the death of a retired member, the member's surviving spouse, regardless of age, is entitled to a retirement allowance of 50% of the amount that would have been payable to the active member or was received by the retired member. If an active or retired member has no spouse, surviving beneficiaries may be designated. However, designated beneficiaries cannot receive the 50% survivor benefit until attainment of age 60 (or between ages 50 and 60 subject to the actuarial reduction of 0.5% per month short of age 60) or 62 (or between 55 and 62 subject to the same actuarial reduction) depending on the timing of creditable service. If a member dies while in office with less than eight years of service, only a lump sum benefit is available to a surviving spouse or designated beneficiaries.

Specific information regarding the legislative pension plan may be obtained from the Maryland State Retirement Agency or Human Resources in the Department of Legislative Services.

## **Annapolis Office**

A legislator's Annapolis office is his or her center of operations for legislative business during the session. Each senator has a suite in the Miller Senate Office Building or the James Senate Office Building that includes a private office and an area for staff. Offices are allocated to senators by the President. The delegates' offices in the House Office Building may be part of a suite of offices containing a private office for each of the delegates and an area for staff. The House Office Building also contains individual office suites for members, each containing a private office and an area for staff. Offices are allocated to delegates by the Speaker. Offices for the Senate standing committees are located in the Miller Senate Office Building, while those for the House standing committees are located in the Taylor House Office Building. Senate and House chairs and vice chairs of the standing committees are assigned office space adjacent to the committees' hearing rooms.

## **Office Staff**

Funds are appropriated in the annual budget for the Legislative Branch each year to finance the cost of office personnel for the General Assembly, its committees, and its individual members. A full-time administrative aide is authorized for each senator. Delegates receive regular house account funds for staff support. The budget also provides for a session secretary for senators and delegates. House members who share the same suite or represent the same legislative district may choose to use these funds in combination with up to two other members to share a secretary. The funds also may be used for year-round clerical staff.

In addition, there is an annual district office allowance for all members. Additional allowances are provided for the leadership. In the Senate, the President, the chairs of the principal committees, and the floor leaders receive additional allotments. In the House, the Speaker, the chairs of the standing committees, the floor leaders, and the chairs of the larger delegations receive additional allotments.

## **Supplies and Equipment**

Equipment and supplies for the committees and for the Annapolis offices of the senators and delegates are procured and distributed by Procurement and Supply in accordance with policies developed by the Presiding Officers. Personalized stationery and envelopes are available to all members through Graphics and Printing Services in the Department of Legislative Services.

## **Personal Computers**

The General Assembly will provide each member with up to three personal computers for legislative office use within a four-year term, including all costs associated with PC hardware. Additional computer equipment for legislative offices may be purchased with funds from the district office expense allowance with prior approval of the President and the Speaker. Legislators may purchase the equipment through Information Systems in the Department of Legislative Services. All computer equipment purchased must meet or exceed specifications of equipment offered by Information Systems. Information Systems also provides training and technical support for approved equipment and software.

## **Mail and Telephone Services**

The General Assembly Mail Room handles incoming and outgoing mail of the legislature and of its individual members. Members may use the postage meter in the mail room only for legislative business. Postage for outgoing mail processed through the General Assembly Mail Room during the legislative interim period will be charged to the respective member's district office expense allowance.

Telephones are installed in offices of senators and delegates and in the delegation and committee staff rooms for the use of the members and staff. Senators have phones at their desks in the chamber and in the Senate lounge. In the House, phones are available at most desks and in the lounge. Telephone staff is provided by Telecommunications located in the legislative complex.

## **District Office**

Each member of the General Assembly is allocated a district office expense allowance from funds appropriated in the annual budget for the Legislative Branch. Legislators may use the allowance to maintain an office in their district and for related expenses. For many legislators, the district office is integral to the job of representing their constituency. Typically, a legislator keeps



regular hours in the district office, meets with constituents or local government officials, and has staff available to address concerns of constituents.

The publication entitled *Guidelines for Compensation and Expenses for Legislators* explains in detail the expenses that may and may not be paid from the district office expense allowance. Generally, district office funds may be used for office rent, secretarial and clerical services, newspapers, telephones used only for legislative business, supplies, postage, utilities, and approved furniture and equipment. The guidelines and reimbursement vouchers are available on the SAP ESS Timesheet site. All vouchers for expenses funded by the district office expense allowance must be submitted to Finance Services along with required documentation, such as original invoices, to initiate the reimbursement process.

## Ethics

The Maryland Public Ethics Law sets out requirements, prohibitions, and procedures that affect all members of the General Assembly. The law is based on the recognition that “our system of representative government is dependent upon the people maintaining the highest trust in their government officials and employees” and that “the people have a right to be assured that the impartiality and independent judgment of those officials and employees will be maintained.” Furthermore, “[i]t is evident that this confidence and trust is eroded when the conduct of the State’s business is subject to improper influence and *even the appearance of improper influence*” (Section 5-102 of the General Provisions Article).

### Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics

The Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics (Ethics Committee) is composed of six members of the Senate and six members of the House. The Ethics Committee has exclusive jurisdiction over ethics-related complaints and ethics matters affecting members of the General Assembly. The only exception is the comprehensive financial disclosure statement that each member must file annually, which is under the jurisdiction of the State Ethics Commission, an independent Executive Branch agency.

A legislator who is in doubt as to an ethics issue may request a written opinion from the Ethics Committee. Such an opinion is confidential unless the legislator chooses to make it public. The Ethics Committee also prepares general opinions that broadly explore ethical situations and supplement the ethics law.

### General Assembly *Ethics Guide*

Each year the Ethics Committee publishes an *Ethics Guide* that discusses and interprets the Ethics Law at length, sets out the text of generally applicable Ethics Opinions, and contains a set of the forms that are used for making various disclosures to the Ethics Committee.

## Ethics Counsel

The General Assembly employs a full-time Ethics Counsel who staffs the Ethics Committee and is also responsible for counseling individual legislators regarding the application of the Ethics Law and other standards of legislative ethics. The law requires the Ethics Counsel to meet personally with each member of the General Assembly at least once each year.

The relationship between the Ethics Counsel and each member is one of attorney and client, and all communications are confidential unless the member chooses to make them public. The Ethics Counsel does not participate in any investigatory or prosecutorial function of the Ethics Committee.

The Ethics Counsel can provide written or verbal advice about any aspect of the Ethics Law. Additionally, the Ethics Counsel will assist a member in preparing a request for a formal opinion of the Ethics Committee.

## Annual Financial Disclosure Statement

By April 30 of each year, and by the last date to withdraw one's candidacy in an election year, a legislator is required to file a comprehensive financial disclosure statement. The statement covers the preceding calendar year and includes information about real property holdings, interests in businesses, gifts received, debts, employment, and family members employed by the State. Details and official interpretations concerning the annual disclosure are available from the State Ethics Commission. A legislator must file the statement online.

If there has been a change of employment, marital status, or an interest in real property during the prior calendar year, a legislator must also file a *preliminary* disclosure by the seventh day of the session. Alternatively, a legislator may file an annual financial disclosure statement by the seventh day of session disclosing these changes. If there is no such change, a legislator need not file a preliminary statement.

## Conflicts of Interest and Disclaimers of Conflict

Most members of the General Assembly have interests relating to their lives outside the legislature that might appear to conflict with their ability to deal impartially with legislative matters. The appearance of conflict may arise from outside employment, substantial stockholdings in a business, membership on a nonprofit organization's board of directors, or other circumstances. When a conflict-of-interest situation arises, the Ethics Law resolves the overwhelming majority of situations by means of a publicly disclosed "disclaimer of conflict." By filing the appropriate form with the Ethics Committee, the member acknowledges the possible appearance of conflict and asserts that the member can participate in legislative action "fairly, objectively, and in the public interest." The Ethics Committee reviews these forms and, in rare instances, may direct that the legislator does not participate in the relevant legislative action.

It is important for legislators to examine their outside interests from the perspective of an average member of the general public to determine if anything presents the appearance of a conflict. Additionally, certain relationships or interests create the legal presumption of a conflict of interest. A legislator with a presumed conflict must either abstain from legislative action relating to the issue or file a disclaimer. If in doubt, a legislator should consult with the Ethics Counsel to determine whether a particular issue should be the subject of a disclaimer or recusal.

Situations involving an especially direct conflict may *require* that the legislator abstain from participation in action on a bill, or class of bills, or other legislative action. Members may voluntarily abstain from participation in legislative action, even if not required, though the Ethics Committee discourages this. When abstaining on a legislative issue, the legislator must file with the Ethics Committee a form that specifies the matters and states the reason for abstention.

### **Additional Disclosure of Interests**

In addition to filing disclaimer statements and the annual financial disclosure statement, a legislator must file separate public disclosures with the Ethics Committee disclosing any:

- representation of a person for compensation before a State or local governmental agency, except in a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding;
- representation of a State or local government agency for compensation;
- financial relationship, including a position of employment, with a State or local government agency;
- ownership of more than a certain threshold of stock of a corporation that is subject to regulation by a State agency;
- ownership of an interest in a business entity subject to regulation by a State agency;
- details of any transaction with the State or a local government that involves a monetary consideration;
- clients, if the legislator is assisting the client in seeking a State or local government contract, license, or other competitive award and will receive a direct financial benefit as a result of the award;
- primary employment or business interest of the legislator, other than employment as a legislator, and of the legislator's spouse; and
- financial relationship with quasi-governmental entities or the University of Maryland Medical System.

Forms for these disclosures are contained in the *Ethics Guide* and on the General Assembly floor system.

## Ethics Files

Financial disclosure statements filed by legislators with the Ethics Committee and the Ethics Commission are maintained for public inspection and copying during normal business hours. The Ethics Committee and the Ethics Commission maintain a record of the name and home address of any person who examines or copies a financial disclosure statement. Financial disclosure statements that legislators file on or after January 1, 2019, are available to the public on the State Ethics Commission website through an online registration program. Legislators may note on their financial disclosure statements if they wish to be notified if someone reviews their statements.

The public may review other disclosures and disclaimers filed with the Ethics Committee during normal business hours, as provided under the Maryland Public Information Act. Specified forms filed on or after January 1, 2013, are available on the Maryland General Assembly website through an online registration system. Legislators may contact the staff of the Ethics Committee if they wish to be notified whenever a person reviews their files.

## Gifts

A member of the General Assembly may not solicit any gift for themselves or others, except for charitable fundraising as discussed below. In addition, unless the gift is specifically exempted, a member may not knowingly accept a gift from certain persons. Legislators may consult the Ethics Counsel regarding the acceptance of gifts.

The regulation of gifts starts with determining which potential gift-givers are subject to the Ethics Law's restrictions. For gifts to legislators, the restricted givers consist essentially of lobbyists, which includes the employers/clients of lobbyists; a person that does or seeks to do business with the General Assembly; an association, or entity acting on behalf of an association, that is only engaged in representing counties or municipal corporations; and any other person whose specific interest may be impacted by legislative action in a manner distinguishable from the general public. The conditions under which gifts may be received from these restricted givers include the following:

- *Meals and Beverages:* Generally, a legislator may only accept meals and alcoholic beverages as part of a reception or meal to which all members of a "legislative unit" have been invited. A legislative unit is defined as the entire General Assembly, one chamber, a standing committee, or a county or regional delegation that is designated by a Presiding Officer. Each member of the legislative unit must receive a written invitation, and the event is published in a notice prepared by the Department of Legislative Services. Legislators need not report their attendance at these events, and the lobbyist need not report the names of legislators attending. The acceptance of non-alcoholic beverages and *food that does not*

*constitute a “meal”* is implicitly permitted under a general provision allowing acceptance of unsolicited gifts not exceeding \$20. The *Ethics Guide* describes additional circumstances in which a legislator may accept meals and beverages.

- *Tickets and Free Admission:* A legislator may accept free tickets for a charitable, cultural, or political event from the sponsor of the event. A legislator may not accept sports tickets from a restricted giver but may purchase such tickets for full price. A legislator need not report gifts of tickets and free admission if the value does not exceed \$20, unless the legislator accepts multiple tickets or free admissions from the same lobbyist with a cumulative value of \$100 or more in a calendar year. If the sponsor of the event invites all members of a legislative unit, a legislator need not report acceptance of a ticket or free admission, regardless of value unless the legislator accepts two or more tickets for free admissions in the calendar year and the cumulative value is \$100 or more.
- *Conferences:* A legislator who is a scheduled speaker or scheduled panel member at a conference may accept reasonable expenses for food, travel, lodging, and scheduled entertainment. If the anticipated value of the expenses is \$500 or more and is being paid by a lobbyist or an entity that employs a lobbyist, the legislator must notify the Ethics Committee by letter prior to attending the conference. Refer to the *Ethics Guide* for other provisions dealing with attending conferences.
- *Ceremonial Awards or Gifts of Insignificant Monetary Value:* A legislator may accept a plaque or similar award that is purely ceremonial regardless of value but must disclose the gift if the value appears to be greater than \$20.
- *Miscellaneous Unsolicited Gifts:* A legislator may accept an unsolicited gift that does not exceed \$20 in cost, unless the gift is a prohibited meal, alcoholic beverages, or sports tickets.
- *Personal and Private Gifts:* Gifts from family members are not regulated, nor are gifts that have no actual or apparent connection with the legislator's public office. Other personal gifts may be exempted by the Ethics Committee under special circumstances.
- *Gifts from Governmental Entities:* Gifts from a governmental entity, whether in Maryland or outside the State, are not regulated under the Ethics Law.

### **Gifts – Solicitation for Charitable Purposes**

Legislators are prohibited from directly soliciting or facilitating the solicitation of a gift, on behalf of another person. However, subject to certain restrictions, legislators may engage in fundraising for nonprofit community organizations, nonprofit educational entities, and charitable institutions and causes. A legislator may not solicit or facilitate the solicitation of a charitable donation from an individual regulated lobbyist but may solicit contributions from non-lobbyists,

including entities that employ lobbyists for charitable contributions. Legislators may not solicit on behalf of other entities or individuals. When soliciting charitable contributions, a wide range of activity is permitted. Members should consult the *Ethics Guide* for more information on this issue.

### **Prohibited Employment and Compensation**

The Ethics Law contains several restrictions on a legislator's outside employment. The two main classes of restricted employment are compensated work for the State or a local government in the State, and certain kinds of compensated representation of clients in matters before a government entity in the State.

The Ethics Law includes exceptions to both of these prohibitions. The Ethics Counsel can provide guidance concerning specific job situations to address their permissibility under the law. Employment that a new legislator already held prior to filing for office is generally "grandfathered" under the law and may be continued.

### **Use of Prestige of Office**

Under the Ethics Law, intentional use of the "prestige of office" for personal gain or that of another is prohibited, but the performance of usual and customary constituent services without compensation is allowed.

Generally, it is necessary to refrain from using one's legislative title (Senator or Delegate), or prominent identification as a legislator, for the legislator's private financial gain or the private gain of another. However, a legislator may note service in the General Assembly in a resume, employment-related biographical description, or public notice of the legislator's new employment. Official General Assembly letterhead may only be used for official General Assembly business or customary constituent services.

### **Use of Public Resources for Nongovernmental Purposes**

The law specifies that "public resources may be used by members of the General Assembly only for public purposes" but it allows "incidental use of public resources for nonpublic purposes." The Ethics Committee has determined that resources such as telephones, computers, email, and fax machines should not be used in any systematic way for business, personal, or political campaign purposes. Occasional use for business or personal use (especially when the need for timely communication reasonably precludes use of nonpublic resources) is permissible but should be guided by each member's common sense as to what is "occasional and incidental" versus "systematic." Campaign-related content is not allowed in communications on General Assembly stationery or the legislature's email system. A legislator or legislator's staff should never use public resources as part of a campaign fundraising function.



## Chapter 3. Legislation

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Consideration of legislative proposals is among the most important functions of the members of the General Assembly. During the 90-day session, the members typically introduce and consider over 2,600 bills, legislative bond initiatives, and joint resolutions (**Exhibit 3.1**). This chapter identifies the various types of legislation considered each year and explains the process by which they are reviewed.

### Types of Legislation

The legislature expresses its will and intent through bills, resolutions, amendments, motions, orders, and messages. By motions and orders, the legislature takes actions, orders something done, or expresses its opinion. Messages are used to communicate between the two houses and with the Governor. But the most important actions of the General Assembly take the form of bills and resolutions.

#### Bills

A bill is the principal form by which legislative will, with respect to the passage of laws, is expressed. Article III, Section 29 of the Maryland Constitution decrees that “all Laws shall be passed by original bill,” and requires all bills to include the language “Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland.” This provision also states that every law enacted shall embrace but one subject, which shall be described in its title, and provides that no law or section of law shall be amended or restored by reference to its title or section only, thus making it necessary that new laws be set out in their entirety.

The concept of the “original bill” is an integral part of the process. The original bill is the physical introductory version of the legislation that has been prepared and is stapled between stiff-papered backings (white in Senate/blue in House) on which the reading clerk and other desk officers make notations of action. It is sent to the committee assigned the bill, signed by the chair reporting the committee actions on the bill, and used as the basis of second reading consideration. If a bill passes the house of origin, a printed version of the third reader is then used as the original bill and is considered by the second house. The original bill (the first reading and the third reading versions) must be in the possession of the Senate or the House and present in the chamber before action on it can be taken.



**Exhibit 3.1**  
**Legislation – Regular Sessions**

<b><u>Legislation Introduced</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>	<b><u>2018</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Senate Bills	942	1173	1200	1269	1051	1081	967	1011
Senate Joint Resolutions	6	7	8	12	5	6	7	11
Total Senate	948	1180	1208	1281	1056	1087	974	1022
House Bills	1292	1644	1661	1832	1430	1664	1379	1487
House Joint Resolutions	8	8	10	14	11	12	6	8
Total House	1300	1652	1671	1846	1441	1676	1385	1495
Total Bills	2234	2817	2861	3101	2481	2745	2346	2498
Total Joint Resolutions	14	15	18	26	16	18	13	19
<b><u>Legislation Passed By Both Houses</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>	<b><u>2018</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Senate Bills	297	381	408	403	403	323	392	375
Senate Joint Resolutions	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	4
Total Senate	297	382	411	404	404	324	393	379
House Bills	385	453	527	486	461	357	424	454
House Joint Resolutions	0	1	2	2	1	0	0	3
Total House	385	454	529	488	462	357	424	457
Total Bills	682	834	935	882	864	680	816	829
Total Joint Resolutions	0	2	5	3	2	1	1	7
<b><u>Action by Governor</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>2016</u></b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>	<b><u>2018</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
Bills Vetoed	197	101	86	39	95	45	45	64
Bills Enacted	495	734	857	855	768	635	767	762

Source: Department of Legislative Services

Most bills propose changes in the Annotated Code of Maryland, the State's body of codified law. In cases where a bill has a temporary effect and in other specialized instances, the bill, or sections of it, may be uncodified. For example, the annual operating and capital budget bills and bond authorization bills are not codified but are published in the *Laws of Maryland* of the year enacted. Some bills propose changes to the codes of public local laws of various counties that are not home rule counties. Counties that do not have authority to enact changes to their local codes must look to the General Assembly to do so.

## Resolutions

A resolution is an expression of legislative intent. There are three types of resolutions: joint resolution, simple resolution, and resolution. A joint resolution requires passage by both houses, while a resolution and a simple resolution normally require only a majority vote in the house of origin.

Resolutions expressing congratulations or condolences ordinarily are not referred to committees, do not require separate readings, and usually are adopted on the day they are introduced. The simple resolution is the vehicle used when a single house needs to state a policy or take official action independent of the other house. In the House of Delegates and the Senate, a resolution expressing congratulations, condolences, or appreciation is called a House/Senate Resolution, while a resolution expressing a substantive policy affecting only one chamber is a House/Senate Simple Resolution.

There are two types of joint resolutions. One type expresses the sense of the General Assembly on a public issue. In the other, the General Assembly takes official action, in accordance with the Maryland Constitution and the law, different from the enactment of statutory laws but having the effect of law.

Joint resolutions of the first type do not have the force and effect of law. They can be significant, however, because they reflect the judgment and the will of the legislature on matters of public policy. The other type of joint resolution does have the force and effect of law, and, in some instances, is codified as a part of Maryland's body of laws. Usually, these joint resolutions are prescribed by the constitution, by statute, or by court interpretation of the laws. For example:

- In the apportionment of the membership of the General Assembly after each decennial census, the State constitution requires that the Governor present a plan of apportionment to the President and Speaker who shall introduce it as a joint resolution. The joint resolution becomes the law if no other plan, which also must be introduced as a joint resolution, is adopted by the General Assembly.
- The Governor has the authority under the constitution to reorganize the Executive Branch of the government. However, if the reorganization changes the existing law or creates new governmental programs, the changes must be submitted to the General Assembly by executive order in statutory form. If the General Assembly does not disapprove the order

within 50 days of the date of its submission, the order becomes law. If the General Assembly disapproves, it does so by joint resolution.

- Salaries of the members of the legislature, the Governor, and judges are established by a formal resolution of separate compensation commissions. The General Assembly may accept, decrease, or reject the proposed salaries but may not increase them. It does this by joint resolution.

As with bills, joint resolutions must be read on three different days in each house and require approval by a majority of the elected members of each house. Approval by the Governor of joint resolutions is not required.

## Legislative Bond Initiatives

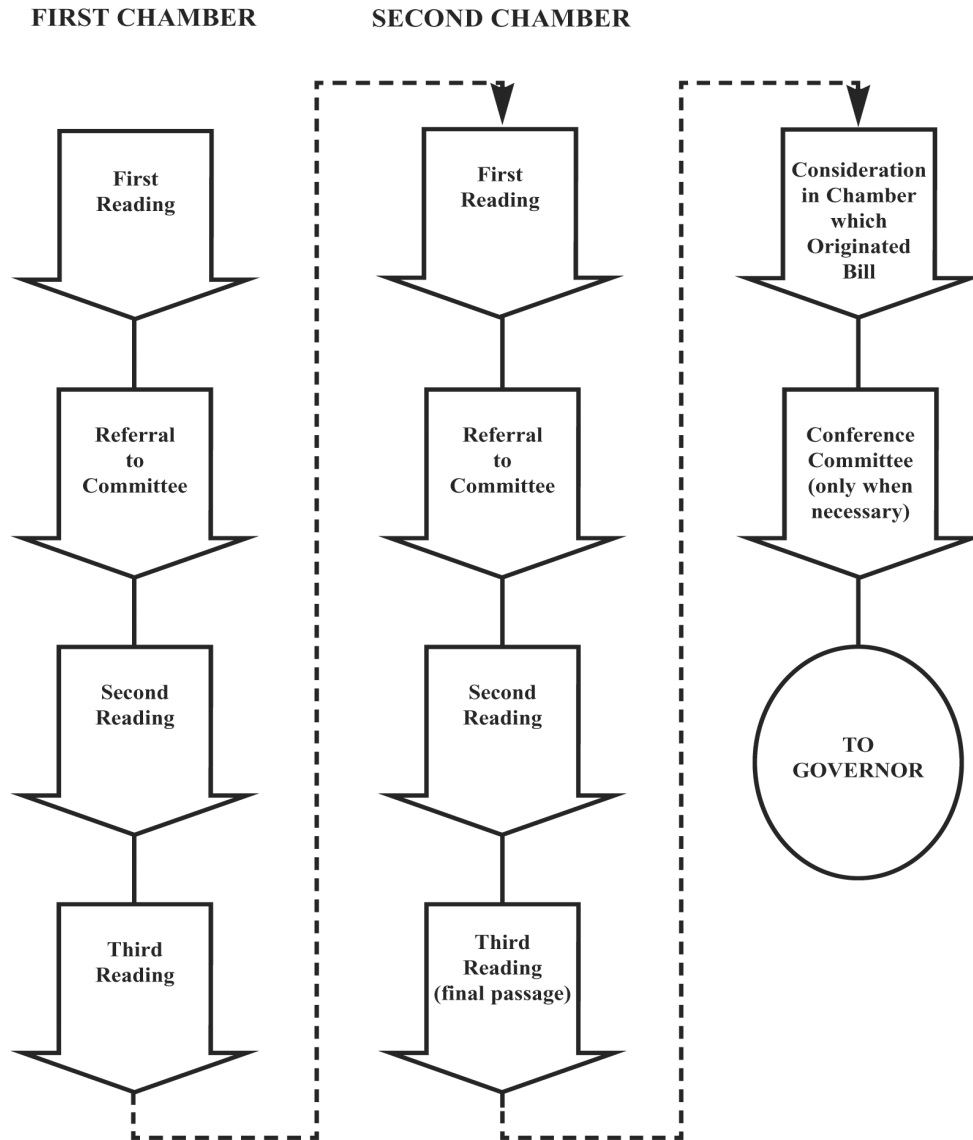
Members may sponsor requests for capital funds for local community projects as legislative bond initiatives, which are introduced and are referred to budget committees. Initiatives are not passed individually but instead may be incorporated as items funded in the capital budget. Additional information on the appropriations process may be found in Chapter 4 of this handbook and in *Volume IV—Maryland's Budget Process* in the Legislative Handbook Series.

## The Legislative Process

For a bill to become a law or for a joint resolution to be adopted, it must be introduced by a member and “read” three times in each house. **Exhibit 3.2** provides an overview of the legislative process. Article III, Section 27 of the Maryland Constitution provides that no bill shall become law “until it is read on three different days of the session in each House, unless two-thirds of the members elected to the House where such bill is pending determine by yeas and nays....” that the bill will have two readings on the same day.

By a constitutional amendment adopted in 1972, each house by rule may adopt a “consent calendar” procedure allowing bills and resolutions to be voted on as a single group on second and third readings. Legislators must receive reasonable notice of the bills to be placed on each consent calendar. Any bill or resolution placed on a consent calendar can be removed by the request of any member. In 1988 the use of consent calendars was extended to the first reading of bills and the consideration of vetoed bills.

### Exhibit 3.2 The Legislative Process



Source: Department of Legislative Services

For the first reading requirement, bills are not read in full. The reading clerk merely reads the first part of the title to comply with the constitutional mandate. Consideration of a favorable or unfavorable report by a standing committee on a bill constitutes the second reading. As a matter of “legislative courtesy,” committee reports and amendments are available to legislators one session in advance of floor action on them. This allows members time to consider the bill, amendments, and committee report prior to voting. Some members prefer printed copies of these materials, while others access electronic copies of them on their laptop computers. The “24-hour courtesy rule” is discontinued in the final days of the legislative session in the interest of expediency.

A bill or resolution that passes second reading is printed and placed on the third reading calendar. One of the printings – which are called third reading file copies – becomes the official copy of the bill. The Presiding Officer determines the date on which the bill will appear on the third reading calendar, usually a day or two following the second reading activity on the bill.

## **Introduction of Legislation**

The concept for new legislation may come from a number of sources, including a legislator, the Governor, an individual citizen or a citizens’ group, a study committee, or legislation passed in other states; however, requests must be made by a legislator or the Governor’s office. Drafting of legislation must be provided by the Department of Legislative Services (department). The Office of the Attorney General or a staff member of a State agency or the Governor’s office usually drafts departmental or administration measures and they must also be reviewed and processed by the department. County or municipal officials sometimes provided initial drafts of local laws which are then prepared by the department. For some counties, there are specific deadlines in the fall for considering proposals of local legislation. Legislators may provide draft legislation with an initial request, but the drafts must then be reviewed by a legislative drafter and processed by the department’s bill preparation unit. The final section of this chapter discusses legislative drafting.

Filing of a bill in the office of Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate located in the State House, known as dropping the bill in the “hopper,” initiates the legislative process. Legislative sponsors personally file the necessary copies before the convening of the session at which the bill or resolution will receive its first reading. Before being introduced, the original copy must be approved for form and codification by the department. The bill receives a number and is prepared for its first reading printing. Sponsorship of a bill requires one or more members. By custom and courtesy, the President and the Speaker introduce administration bills and committee chairs introduce departmental bills.

The original copy of a bill or joint resolution is attached to a durable backing, white for the Senate and blue for the House. Backings contain space for inserting the names of the sponsor or sponsors, the number, and the title of the bill or resolution. A bill that is a “Constitutional Amendment” or “Emergency Bill” must be so labeled.

The State constitution provides that “no bill shall originate in either House during the last thirty-five calendar days of a regular session, unless two-thirds of the members elected thereto

shall so determine by yeas and nays” (Article III, Section 27). However, the Senate and the House have established deadlines for the introduction of bills relatively early during the session. As a result, most legislation is usually introduced within the first three to four weeks of the 90-day session. In the Senate, all bills and resolutions introduced after the twenty-seventh calendar day are referred to the Senate Rules Committee. In the House, after the thirty-first calendar day all bills and resolutions are referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee. Bills referred to the respective Rules committees are generally re-referred to the appropriate standing committee unless introduced after the fifty-fifth calendar day at which time a member must provide a reasonable explanation as to why a bill was introduced after the introduction dates and the rules must be suspended to allow the bill to proceed through the process.

### **First Reading**

After a bill is introduced, it is “read across the desk” the first time and assigned to a standing committee or select committee. On the day a bill receives its first reading, a brief, one paragraph summary of the bill is included in the Synopsis document that is prepared by the department each day and available on the General Assembly website.

After the first reading, the “first reading file bill” (usually called the “first reader”) is prepared and printed. Copies of the bills are distributed to legislators and committees.

State law specifies that a bill cannot be voted on unless a fiscal and policy note accompanies the bill. Fiscal and policy notes are therefore prepared on all bills and joint resolutions prior to a public hearing. The Office of Policy Analysis of the department prepares the fiscal and policy notes, which analyze the bills’ impact on State and local government revenues and expenditures over a five-year period and identify any mandate on local government. The notes also include analyses of the economic impact of the bills on small businesses. The analysis section of the note summarizes the bill, describes current law, and often provides background information on the issue. For some bills, a racial and equity impact note may be prepared as well, which discusses potential racial disparities that may be exacerbated or created by the legislation.

Prior to the hearing on a bill, the fiscal and policy note is delivered electronically to the sponsor of the bill and to the standing committee assigned the bill. The notes also are available to all members on their laptop computers. If an amendment adopted by the first house modifies the original estimate, a revised fiscal note is prepared for the bill hearing in the second house. The fiscal note and any revisions also become a part of the legislative history of each bill and are available on the General Assembly website.

### **Committee Action**

The Presiding Officer assigns bills to one of the principal standing committees. This stage of a bill’s progress is crucial. Unfavorable committee action usually ends a bill’s chance of becoming law. Committees, however, do not have unlimited authority because, under certain circumstances defined by House and Senate rules, a bill on which action has not been taken may be petitioned to the floor from a standing committee by 32 members of the Senate, if the bill is a

Senate bill, and 71 members in the House, if the bill is a House bill. In practice, this rarely occurs.

Usually, all bills receive public committee hearings in their house of origin. Hearings are scheduled by the committee and notice of upcoming hearings is published in a committee hearing schedule maintained by the department on the General Assembly website. At the hearing, any interested party or member of the public may testify. People testifying may urge the bill's approval or its rejection. They may suggest amendments. In some cases, testimony is purely informative or clarifying, with the person taking no specific position on the bill. Persons wishing to testify on a bill or resolution are required to sign up before the hearing through the General Assembly website, and written testimony must also be uploaded through the website in electronic form. At the discretion of the committee chair, a time limit may be imposed on testimony, or testimony may be restricted to information not previously heard by the committee. Members of the public may also watch and listen to the committee hearing on a particular bill on the General Assembly website.

If any amendments to the bill are to be considered by the committee, they generally are drafted by the Office of Policy Analysis committee staff or by the staff of the department's Amendment Office located in the State House.

At some time after the hearing, the committee chair may schedule the bill for a voting session. After deliberating on the bill, including consideration of any proposed amendments, the committee takes a roll call vote on a recommendation for the bill. The recommendation may be favorable, favorable with amendments, unfavorable, or re-referral to another standing committee. The roll call vote on the final committee action on a bill is filed in the committee, is available from the department's Library and Information Services unit, and is posted on the General Assembly website.

## **Second Reading**

When a committee reports a bill to the floor, the reading clerk reads its title for the second time. At this point, committee amendments are considered for approval by the full house, and members may offer other amendments for consideration (floor amendments). A vote, usually a voice vote, is taken on the report and any amendments, and the bill is ordered to be printed for "third reading." However, if any roll call votes are taken during second reading, these votes are posted on the General Assembly website. All of this activity comprises the "second reading" of the bill. Once a bill in the house of origin has passed second reading, it cannot be amended during the third reader vote. However, by a majority vote on a motion to reconsider the second reading vote, a bill that has passed second reading may be placed back on second reading for further amendments. This action rarely occurs.

Debate on bills on second reading may be extensive, particularly on major issues of public policy. If the committee has proposed extensive amendments to the bill, a committee reprint, incorporating the proposed amendments, may be distributed at second reading. In both chambers, both the budget bill (operating budget) and the Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan (capital budget) are reported on second reading as committee reprints that may be directly

amended during second reading. In most other instances, committee reprints are distributed for informational purposes only. However, the Speaker of the House may authorize use of a reprint as the original bill for purpose of amendment and debate when doing so would facilitate consideration of the legislation. There is no corresponding rule in the Senate.

### **First House Third Reading**

The State constitution requires that “no bill shall be read a third time unless it shall have been actually engrossed or printed for a third reading.” An engrossed bill is one written in longhand for third reading, a practice now outmoded. All bills are now ordered to be reprinted for third reading at the time they pass second reading in the house of origin. This reprinted bill, the “third reading file bill,” includes any committee amendments or floor amendments adopted on second reading. If any amendments affect the fiscal impact or summary of the bill, the fiscal and policy note and synopsis are revised to reflect the changes and posted on the General Assembly website.

Generally, the vote on third reading occurs two days after second reading, depending on the time involved in reprinting the bill and other items on the schedule. No amendments may be offered on the third reading vote. The vote is recorded, journalized, and posted on the website. On rare occasions, a third reader is printed in advance of second reading activity so that the bill can pass second and third reading on the same day in the house of origin.

If a majority of the total membership votes in favor of the bill, it passes third reading. Constitutional amendments and emergency legislation require approval by three-fifths of the membership. After a bill passes third reading, it is then sent to the opposite house.

### **Second House**

In the opposite chamber, the bill goes through a process very similar to that in the house of origin. The third reader bill is read across the desk the first time and assigned to a committee. At the committee hearing in the second house, testimony may be more restricted than in the house of origin, particularly if the committee has already considered a similar bill. In some cases, testimony may be given only by the bill’s sponsor. The committee may report the bill with a recommendation of favorable, unfavorable, or favorable with amendments. The committee vote is also posted on the website.

After the bill is reported to the floor in the second house, the committee report, the committee amendments, and floor amendments, if any, are considered and voted on; all of that activity constitutes the second reading of the bill. In the second house, the bill is not reprinted after second reading.

The bill is scheduled for a third reading vote, and under the rules of both houses, further amendments to the bill may be considered at that time. The bill must receive a favorable vote from the majority of the total membership to pass. If the second house has not amended the bill, it is sent to the Governor for signing. All roll call votes taken on the floor during second or third reading are posted on the website.



## **Concurrence or Conference**

If the second house amended the bill, it is returned to the house of origin. The committee that originally considered the bill can recommend either to accept or reject the amendments. If the chair of that committee moves to concur in the other house's amendments and the motion is adopted, then a final roll call vote on the bill (as amended) is taken in the house of origin. If it passes, the bill has completed the legislative process and is sent to the Governor. If the chair moves not to concur in the amendments and the motion is adopted, then a message usually requests the opposite house to recede from the amendments or appoint a conference committee. Three conferees are named at this time by the Presiding Officer after consultation with the committee chair.

If the house of origin rejects the amendments, the committee in the opposite house considers whether to recede from the amendments. If the committee refuses to recede, the Presiding Officer in consultation with committee chair of the second house committee also appoints three conferees.

For the conference committee to deliver a report, at least four of the six members must agree on the proposed version of the bill. If agreement cannot be reached, then the bill dies. If no conference committee is appointed, or if the conference committee fails to meet, the bill dies. Alternatively, the conference committee may be requested by the Presiding Officers to meet again, or a new conference committee on the bill may be appointed.

If the conference committee reports a proposal to resolve the differences between the two houses, each house then votes either to accept the report without change or to reject it. Following adoption of the conference committee report, the bill, as amended by the conference committee, is considered to be on third reading again and must be approved in each house by a majority of the total membership in a roll call or recorded vote, which is posted on the General Assembly website.

At this point an "enrolled bill" is printed, reflecting any changes made by the second house or the conference committee. Revised synopses and fiscal notes are posted on the General Assembly website.

## **Enactment**

Bills that pass both houses of the legislature are presented to the Governor by the Presiding Officer of the house in which they originated. Bills are reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General for legal sufficiency and by the Governor's Legislative Office for policy considerations.

All bills passed at regular or special sessions must be presented no later than 20 days after adjournment. The Governor is required to sign a bill within a maximum of 30 days after presentment, if the Governor approves it, or veto the bill. If the Governor does not act within that time, the bill becomes law automatically; there is no "pocket veto" in Maryland. The time limit differs depending on when the presentment is made. If a bill is presented to the Governor in the

first 83 days of the session, the Governor has only 6 days (not including Sunday) to act before the bill automatically becomes law. Any bill presented in the last 7 days of the 90-day session or after adjournment must be acted on within 30 days of presentment. Bills passed by the General Assembly and approved by the Governor are signed by the Governor, the President, and the Speaker. A “chapter” number is assigned to a bill in the order in which it is signed, and it becomes part of the *Laws of Maryland*.

### **Effective Dates**

The usual effective date for new laws is October 1, a date that allows time for laws to be published and made available to the public. Fiscal bills that affect the State budget may have a July 1 or earlier effective date. The earliest a bill may take effect is June 1. Bills may have a delayed effective date but usually not later than January 1 following enactment. Except for the budget bill, which is effective on the day it passes the General Assembly, usually only emergency legislation may become effective prior to June 1. The department publishes, on the General Assembly website, an effective dates list prior to June 1, July 1, October 1, and January 1 of each year.

### **Veto and Overrides**

The Maryland Constitution (Article II, Section 17) gives the Governor veto power. It requires the Governor to return a vetoed bill to the General Assembly with a statement of objections. Most bills are vetoed because they duplicate the effect of other bills the Governor has signed or because the bill lacks legal sufficiency in the judgment of the Office of the Attorney General. Relatively few bills are vetoed for policy reasons. The department prepares a compilation of vetoed bills and gubernatorial messages following each session.

Vetoed bills are returned to the house of origin immediately after that house has organized at the next regular or special session of the General Assembly, except for special sessions to consider budget bill vetoes. The General Assembly may override the Governor’s veto with a vote of three-fifths of the members of each house. However, when a new General Assembly is elected and sworn, the constitution precludes vetoed bills from the previous session from being returned to the legislature. Those vetoed bills are not subject to any further legislative action. A bill enacted over a veto, or a bill becoming law because of the Governor’s failure to act within the prescribed time, takes effect 30 days after the veto is overridden or on the date specified in the bill, whichever is later. An emergency bill passed over the Governor’s veto, however, takes effect immediately.

Beginning with fiscal year 2024, the Governor may exercise a line item veto of items in the budget bill that were added or increased by the General Assembly. In this case, the General Assembly may convene a special session within 30 days after the veto to consider an override, otherwise the item is void. The Governor may also exercise a total veto of or a line item veto in a supplementary appropriations bill. In practice, this means the Governor may strike items in the annual general capital loan bill. In that event, the item vetoed in the capital loan bill is returned to the legislature at the next session unless a new General Assembly has taken office during the intervening period.

## **Special Legislation**

There are some types of legislation for which the legislative process is slightly different.

### **Local Legislation**

Legislation that affects only one local jurisdiction is handled differently than legislation with statewide impact. In the house of origin, the bill is frequently considered by the appropriate select committee, which is a delegation of a particular county or of Baltimore City, as appropriate. When the select committee votes on the bill, it notifies the standing committee that has possession of the bill. As a rule, the standing committee gives deference to the select committee's recommendation as a matter of "local courtesy." In the second house, local bills may be referred to either a select committee or a principal standing committee.

### **Constitutional Amendments**

Bills proposing amendments to the State constitution require approval by three-fifths of the elected membership of each house to pass third reading. A constitutional amendment does not require the Governor's approval, nor is the Governor's veto power applicable to a constitutional amendment. The proposed amendment is then submitted to the voters of the State at the next general election. If a majority of the votes are cast in favor of the amendment, then the Governor issues a proclamation declaring that the amendment is part of the constitution. A constitutional amendment that affects only one county or only Baltimore City must receive a majority of votes cast in that jurisdiction as well as statewide.

### **Emergency Legislation**

The State constitution provides that the earliest a bill may take effect is June 1 following its enactment unless it is an emergency bill. Emergency bills must be clearly marked as such and contain the constitutional language that they are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety. To be adopted, these bills must pass third reading in each house with three-fifths of the elected membership voting in the affirmative. Emergency bills may take effect immediately upon approval by the Governor. The constitution does not allow bills changing the salary of any officer, granting any franchise or special privilege, or creating any special right or interest to be the subject of an emergency effective date.

### **Referendum**

Article XVI of the Constitution of Maryland establishes the power of referendum to enable the voters of Maryland essentially to veto an enactment of the General Assembly. The referendum provision in the constitution was adopted by the General Assembly in 1914 and ratified by the voters in 1915. As originally introduced, the provision would have also provided for the power of voter initiative, but the initiative provisions were stricken prior to final passage. An initiative allows voters to bypass the legislature in creating a new law. Since 1937, when voters exercised the power of referendum for the first time, 21 enactments have been validly

petitioned to statewide referendum. For example, a successful petition to statewide referendum placed a 2012 chapter pertaining to civil marriage on the 2012 ballot as Question 6. The voters approved the question, thereby adopting the 2012 legislation.

The constitution exempts from referendum liquor laws and any appropriations for maintaining the State government or maintaining or aiding any public institution. Maryland courts have applied the exclusion for “appropriations for maintaining State Government” to preclude referendums on enactments that provided funding for Medicaid abortions; established housing for State officers and employees; created an additional motor vehicle fuel tax; and provided for a football stadium in Baltimore City.

To petition legislation to a referendum, voters must follow sharply defined constitutional and statutory requirements. Among them is the requirement that the petition have the signatures of 3% of the registered voters of the State calculated based on the number of votes cast for Governor at the last gubernatorial election. No more than half of the signatures may be from any one county or Baltimore City.

Public local laws may be petitioned to referendum as well. For such laws, a referendum petition must be signed by 10% of the qualified voters calculated based on the number of votes cast for Governor in the county (or Baltimore City) affected by the enactment. If an enactment is adopted by referendum, it becomes effective 30 days after the general election in which it appeared on the ballot.

It should be noted, however, that the General Assembly may not pass a bill (as opposed to a constitutional amendment) that is statewide in effect that contains a provision requiring it to be submitted to a referendum. However, as to a public local law passed by the legislature, a provision requiring the bill be submitted to a local referendum is legally permissible.

## **Drafting of Legislation**

The drafting and preparation of bills, resolutions, and amendments are a vital part of the legislative process and are performed by staff in the Office of Policy Analysis of the department. This section discusses only some of the major considerations in bill drafting.

### **Drafting Services**

The department employs a staff of analysts with legal training to meet the bill drafting requirements of the legislators. Committee analysts both with and without legal training also assist with bill drafting. The function of the drafting staff is similar to that of attorneys who prepare legal documents for their clients; however, the drafting attorneys are nonpartisan staff and are not permitted to lobby for the passage or defeat of legislation.

Requests for drafting legislation are submitted to the Bill Drafting Office in person, by phone, or by email on a form provided by the department. All requests have legislative privilege and are treated with strict confidence and are not discussed outside the immediate staff. Another

person or agency will be consulted to provide the drafter with additional information only if the sponsor gives permission when requesting the legislation or if the drafter assigned the bill receives permission from the sponsor. The legislator is assured that both the request and the bill will be confidential. Drafting requests should be submitted as early as possible before the session to give the staff adequate time to prepare the measures. Every effort is made to handle a request promptly. However, bills may require considerable time for preparation and may occasionally require several drafts and additional information from the legislator.

After a request that a bill be drafted is made to the Bill Drafting Office, the legislator will receive a confirmation email. The instructions a legislator gives the bill drafter vary depending on the complexity and scope of the subject matter and the drafter will reach out to the legislator or their staff if additional information is needed. In many instances, once a bill has been requested, the final copy will be delivered to the sponsor without further consultation.

In order to reduce the number of identical bills introduced in the same chamber, the drafter may contact the various sponsors to inquire whether they are interested in jointly sponsoring a single bill. The first step for the drafter is to inquire whether the sponsor will permit his or her name to be revealed to another sponsor or sponsors.

Once the bill drafter's work is completed, the bill is reviewed by experienced drafters and is processed by staff in the office of Editing and Bill Processing. Copies in a folder called a backing are then delivered to the sponsor. Introduction of the bill is accomplished by the sponsor delivering it with a request for introduction to the Secretary of the Senate or the Chief Clerk of the House.

### **Constitutional Requirements for Bills**

As referenced earlier in this chapter, Article III, Section 29 of the Constitution of Maryland includes several provisions relating to the drafting of bills. All bills must incorporate the language "Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland." The General Assembly, when amending laws, must enact the laws as they would read when amended; an entire section, subsection, or other subdivision of the law must be included with the proposed measure. Laws must be enacted in articles and sections arranged in the same manner as the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Several provisions of the constitution reference a bill's title. One requires that "every Law enacted by the General Assembly shall embrace but one subject, and that shall be described in its title." These few words in the constitution have been argued and reargued in literally hundreds of cases before the Court of Appeals. The main purpose of this requirement is to avoid the possibility of passing a bill that contains unrelated provisions. A second provision specifies that no law or section of law shall be amended or restored by reference to its title or section only. New laws must be set out in their entirety. A third requirement directs that a law shall not be construed by reason of its title to grant powers or confer rights not expressly contained in the body of the act.

## Contents of Bills

Bills are composed of two general parts – the title and the body. The order of a bill by its sections and clauses is as follows: title, body of bill, codified sections, uncodified sections, and effective date clause sections.

The body of the bill may have several sections, and there may be several uncodified sections and effective date clauses.

### Title

The title contains information about where the bill is to be codified in the Annotated Code and a summary of the content and legal effect of the bill sufficient to satisfy provisions of Article III, Section 29 of the Constitution of Maryland that state:

... every Law enacted by the General Assembly shall embrace but one subject, and that shall be described in its title; ... nor shall any Law be construed by reason of its title, to grant powers, or confer rights which are not expressly contained in the body of the Act....

This means that there can be only one subject in a bill, and the title must be at least as broad in scope as the body of the bill. If the title is not as broad as the body, it violates the title requirements of the constitution. On the other hand, a title that is greater in scope than the general subject of the bill will probably be accepted by the courts. Essentially, there has to be a single theme in the title to which all provisions in the bill must be germane.

The main point of titles is to alert the reader as to the contents of a bill. This does not mean that the title must include all of the details of the bill, but simply a fair indication of the bill's subject matter. Titles to legislation have three primary parts: (1) the short title; (2) the purpose paragraph; and (3) the function paragraph(s). Please refer to **Exhibit 3.3**, a model of a first reader bill, for an example of a title.

### Body of a Bill/Resolution

The body of a bill includes successively numbered sections. Each section of a bill begins with an enacting clause. The sections of a bill should not be confused with the section numbers of codified law that may be affected by and set out in the bill.

In the preparation of bills, the part of the law that remains unchanged is typed or printed with normal upper case/lower case usage. New matter to be added to the existing law is printed with every letter in bold small cap font. Matter to be repealed from existing law is enclosed in single brackets. When indicating amendments in third readers and enrolled bills, new text added to the bill is underlined, and new material added by amendment in the opposite house is printed both with underlining and italics. If the new matter adds to existing law, it is underlined with every letter in bold small cap font. All other new matter is underlined and typed or printed with normal upper case/lower case usage. Matter stricken from the bill by amendment is shown by

using strikethroughs. Enrolled copies of legislation are printed with matter added by the opposite house or by a conference committee shown in italics and underlined. **Exhibit 3.4**, a model enrolled bill for a legislative session, demonstrates the use of brackets, bold small cap font, strike-outs, italics, and underlining in legislation.

### **Special Sections**

Frequently, an uncodified section will be added to a bill to condition the application of the legislation, aid in its interpretation, or address matters of short-term duration. These provisions are shown in normal upper/lower case. Examples of uncodified sections include severability clauses, referendum clauses, repeal of inconsistent law clauses, prospective and retrospective effect clauses, contingency clauses, and “sunset” (termination) date clauses. Regardless of how many uncodified special sections are used in a bill, the effective date clause is always numbered as the last section.





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**Exhibit 3.3 – Model First Reading File Bill**

**Bill Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chamber of Origin** \_\_\_\_\_

**File Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prior Introduction (If Applicable)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sponsor** \_\_\_\_\_

**First Reading** \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Assignment** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title of Bill**

**Short Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Purpose Paragraph** \_\_\_\_\_

**Function Paragraph(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

---

Legislative Request (LR) Number (Initial Numeral Indicates the Year)

SENATE BILL 654

2lr1253  
CF HB 279

P1  
SB 948/21 – EHE  
By: **Senator Klausmeier**  
Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2022  
Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Cross-Filed LR or Bill Number (If Applicable)

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Veterans Affairs – Office of Communications and Public Affairs – Veterans**  
3 **Advocacy and Education Act**

4 FOR the purpose of altering the name of the Outreach and Advocacy Program in the  
5 Department of Veterans Affairs to be the Office of Communications and Public  
6 Affairs; requiring the Office, in collaboration with the Maryland Higher Education  
7 Commission, to actively help veterans and their dependents become aware of and  
8 access certain benefits; altering certain responsibilities of the director of the Office;  
9 repealing a certain requirement that the Department develop and maintain a certain  
10 database of veterans in the State; altering certain responsibilities of the Department;  
11 altering certain responsibilities of the Office; and generally relating to the Office of  
12 Communications and Public Affairs.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
14 Article – State Government  
15 Section 9–940 through 9–944 to be under the amended part “Part V. Office of  
16 Communications and Public Affairs”; and 9–946  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (2021 Replacement Volume)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – State Government**

22 Part V. [Outreach and Advocacy Program] **OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND**  
23 **PUBLIC AFFAIRS.**

24 9–940.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.  
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



Line Numbers

Exhibit 3.4 – Model Enrolled Bill

HOUSE BILL 807

C3

(2lr2300)

ENROLLED BILL

— Economic Matters/Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs —

Introduced by Delegate Queen

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this

\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock, \_\_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker.

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Real Estate Brokers, Salespersons, and Associate Brokers – Continuing**  
3 **Education Courses – Verification of Identity**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring an ~~instructor of~~ entity that conducts a continuing education  
5 course for real estate brokers, salespersons, and associate brokers to require an  
6 individual enrolled in a certain course to provide certain documentation to verify the  
7 identity of the individual; and generally relating to continuing education courses for  
8 real estate brokers, salespersons, and associate brokers.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
10 Article – Business Occupations and Professions  
11 Section 17–315(a)(1)  
12 Annotated Code of Maryland  
13 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

Strike out indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment

Underlining indicates amendments to bill

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

*Italics indicate opposite chamber / conference committee amendments.*

Explanation of Symbology



**Body of Bill**

2 HOUSE BILL 807

1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
2 Article – Business Occupations and Professions  
3 Section 17–315(c)  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

**Enacting Clause**

6 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
7 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

8 Article – Business Occupations and Professions ← **Article of Code Affected**

9 17–315. ← **Section of Article Treated**

10 (a) (1) To qualify for renewal of a license under this subtitle, a licensee shall  
11 complete at least 15 clock hours of continuing education instruction, as provided in  
12 subsection (b) of this section, during the preceding 2–year term.

13 (c) (1) Continuing education courses may be conducted by:

- 14 (i) the Maryland Association of Realtors or its member boards;
- 15 (ii) the Real Estate Brokers of Baltimore, Inc.;
- 16 (iii) any similar professional association; or
- 17 (iv) an educational institution approved by the Commission.

**Existing text appears in lower case**

18 (2) Continuing education courses shall be taught by a qualified instructor  
19 who is experienced in the real estate industry.

20 (3) On or before January 1, 2003, the Commission shall adopt regulations  
21 that provide for the conduct of continuing education instruction courses by:

- 22 (i) remote access satellite;
- 23 (ii) closed–circuit video;
- 24 (iii) computer, including transmission over the Internet and the  
25 World Wide Web;
- 26 (iv) home study; and
- 27 (v) any other delivery system approved by the Commission.

28 (4) TO VERIFY THE IDENTITY OF AN INDIVIDUAL ENROLLED IN A  
29 CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE, THE ~~INSTRUCTOR~~ **ENTITY THAT CONDUCTS THE**

**Capitals indicate matter added to existing law**

Exhibit 3.4 – Model Enrolled Bill (continued)

Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments

HOUSE BILL 807

3

1 *CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE* SHALL REQUIRE, AS A CONDITION OF  
2 PARTICIPATING IN THE COURSE, THAT THE INDIVIDUAL PROVIDE:

3 (I) FOR AN IN-PERSON COURSE, A PHOTO IDENTIFICATION;  
4 AND

5 (II) FOR A VIRTUAL OR OTHER REMOTE COURSE, A SIGNED  
6 AFFIDAVIT ATTESTING TO THE IDENTITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
8 October 1, 2022.

Effective Date Clause

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House of Delegates.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate.

## Chapter 4. Appropriations

---

The exclusive power of the legislature to appropriate funds, “the power of the purse,” is a key element in the system of checks and balances among the three branches of State government. The appropriation power is exercised through the passage of the capital and operating budget bills and supplementary appropriation bills. The Maryland Constitution has a balanced budget requirement which means that approved appropriations must equal estimated revenues. A constitutional amendment ratified in 2020 gives the legislature more power in the budget process to move funding within the overall budget introduced by the Governor beginning in the 2023 session than it has had in the past.

This chapter summarizes the legislative aspects of the annual appropriations process and related items. *Volume IV – Maryland’s Budget Process* covers the subject in much greater detail.

### Spending Affordability

The Spending Affordability Committee plays an important role in Maryland’s sound fiscal policy. At the beginning of the 1981 session, the legislative leadership developed and issued a policy statement with the following stipulations:

- The State’s operating budget, on average, should grow more slowly than the State’s economy as measured by such factors as personal income.
- Tax relief should continue to be a primary legislative goal.
- The growth in the number of State employees should be related to new facilities or new programs, not merely expansion of the bureaucracy.
- Surpluses should be used for nonrecurring purposes such as pay-as-you-go capital construction.
- State debt should continue to be managed through the debt affordability process.
- State financial aid to local governments should be evaluated and monitored to reflect prudent and economic use of the funds consistent with State policies.

The Legislative Policy Committee implemented this policy statement by creating the Spending Affordability Committee during the 1981 session. The committee and its membership were officially established by statute at the 1982 session. The efforts of this committee have contributed to Maryland’s maintenance of a AAA credit rating from all three bond rating agencies and designation as one of the best financially managed states in the nation.

## Capital Debt Affordability

Another factor in Maryland's sound fiscal well-being is the Capital Debt Affordability Committee. The concept of debt affordability was developed in response to an analysis prepared by legislative fiscal staff in the mid-1970s, and the Capital Debt Affordability Committee was created as part of the Executive Branch in 1978. The committee is required to review annually the size and condition of the State debt and to submit to the Governor and General Assembly an estimate of the maximum amount of new general obligation debt that prudently may be authorized for the next fiscal year. The Comptroller of the Treasury, the State Treasurer, the Secretary of Budget and Management, the Secretary of Transportation, and a public member appointed by the Governor are members of the committee. The chairs of the capital budget subcommittees of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee serve as nonvoting members.

## Operating Budget

### Introduction of the Budget/Balanced Budget Requirement

The constitution requires the Governor to submit a budget to the General Assembly one week after the opening of the regular session (Article III, Section 52). In a new Governor's first year, an additional two days are provided. The Governor delivers the volumes that comprise the budget and the budget bill to the Presiding Officer of each house. The Presiding Officers then introduce the budget bill into the legislative process. The budget covers the next ensuing fiscal year, which runs from July 1 to June 30, as well as any deficiencies arising in the current fiscal year. Total proposed appropriations in the budget may not exceed total estimated revenues.

Maryland's budget bill appropriates funds for the legislature, judiciary, and all executive agencies. The General Assembly may increase or decrease appropriations.

While the budget bill is introduced into both houses after being received from the Governor, as a matter of practice only one version of the first reading file bill is printed (with both a House and a Senate bill number at the top) to save paper and printing costs. According to conventional practice, the two houses alternate years for beginning consideration of the budget.

The budget bill is referred to the Budget and Taxation Committee in the Senate and to the Appropriations Committee in the House of Delegates. These committees have subcommittees that each handle a portion of the budget based on major budgetary areas (*e.g.*, health, education, transportation), although some items are considered by each of the full committees.

### Hearings

The constitution requires executive officials to appear before the General Assembly to explain and answer questions about their budgets. The budget committees or their subcommittees

hold public hearings on the budget bill following a schedule for various agencies prepared by the Office of Policy Analysis of the Department of Legislative Services and approved by the chairs of both committees. The schedule provides for agency hearings during the third through the ninth weeks of the session. At hearings, representatives of governmental agencies explain their budgets and attempt to persuade legislators of the need for the level of funding proposed by the Governor. Policy matters relating to an agency frequently are discussed at budget hearings as well.

### **Committee/Subcommittee Decisions**

After the budget hearings are completed, decisions concerning the changes to appropriations and expressions of legislative intent and fiscal policy for each agency are made. The decisions concerning changes to proposed appropriations may be applied as specific item reductions or increases, or programmatic reductions or increases. The predominant form of a budget change is the “item” reduction, in which the item being changed is specifically identified, and the resulting change is applied to the appropriate budget program.

In some cases, the committee changes a budget program allowance, leaving the specific functions or items to be affected to the discretion of the agency or department. Similarly, across-the-board changes may be made to specific categories of expenditures across agencies, usually through a separate section in the budget bill. The committees may also propose language for inclusion in the budget bill restricting the expenditure of funds or expressing legislative intent as to the use of funds.

All the committee changes (including those proposed by a subcommittee and accepted by the committee) are included in the appropriate committee’s report to the floor. A committee reprint of the budget bill incorporating the proposed amendments is prepared for the members’ consideration during second reading.

### **Floor Action**

The budget is generally brought to the floor of the house that first moves the budget about the ninth week of the session. Consideration and votes on second and third readings are conducted the same as with other legislation, except that the reprint of the budget bill, with committee amendments incorporated into it, is used as the basis for legislative action.

### **Second House Action**

Concurrent with the first house, the budget committee in the second house undertakes its consideration of the budget. Thus, once the budget bill is received in the second house, it can be referred to committee, reported back for second reading (with the committee amendments), and passed on the floor in a matter of days. Second house action on the budget is generally completed during the eleventh week of the session.



## Conference Committee

There are usually differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget. These differences are resolved by a conference committee of five senators and five delegates. However, conference committee action on the budget bill is limited to the subjects of disagreement between the houses. The conference committee recommendations must be adopted by the eighty-third day, or the Governor must issue a proclamation extending the session should the budget not be passed by the ninetieth day.

## Supplemental Budgets

The constitution provides that the Governor may amend or supplement the budget bill, with the consent of the General Assembly, before final action. These supplemental budgets automatically become part of the budget bill once accepted. The constitution specifies that a budget supplement shall be for the purpose of correcting an oversight, providing funds contingent upon passage of pending legislation, or for an emergency. The restrictions applied to supplemental budgets are reinforced in Section 7-102 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, which states the General Assembly's desire that the Governor use a supplemental budget amendment only to "(i) correct a mechanical error in the proposed budget; or (ii) provide funding for legislation enacted during the session." However, adherence to this restriction has not been strict.

## Enactment

When the budget bill has passed both houses, the actions of the conference committee are applied to the budget bill. The enrolled bill is then presented to the Governor, who can line-item veto additions or increases made by the General Assembly to Executive Branch agencies. Once enacted, the budget bill becomes law, and any deficiency appropriations (for the current fiscal year) contained in the bill become immediately available to the agencies. All other appropriations become available July 1, at the start of the new fiscal year.

## *Joint Chairmen's Report*

The final report detailing every action taken by the General Assembly on the budget bill is called the *Joint Chairmen's Report* and is submitted by the Chair of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the Chair of the House Appropriations Committee. The *Joint Chairmen's Report* contains an explanation of each budget change, statements of legislative policy and intent that were accepted by both budget committees, and the fiscal status of the budget as enacted by the General Assembly. The *Joint Chairmen's Report* is used by each agency to comply with legislative direction in executing its budget and preparing studies or special reports required by the General Assembly. Because it is a statement of legislative intent, committee narrative and explanations associated with actions noted in the *Joint Chairmen's Report* carry implied force without the authority of law.

## **Supplementary Appropriation Bill**

Though rarely used, a supplementary appropriation bill allows the General Assembly to add an appropriation to the State budget. The appropriation in a supplementary appropriation bill must be limited to a single purpose, must include tax revenues to cover the amount of the appropriation, and is subject to the Governor's veto. This is because the annual budget bill must be balanced (that is, the appropriations cannot exceed the revenues that will cover the appropriations). Any supplementary appropriation provided by legislation separate and apart from the budget bill cannot throw the budget out of balance. By the constitutional requirement for a revenue source to be included in a supplementary appropriation bill, the State balanced budget mandate is maintained. The revenue source in a supplementary appropriation bill is usually a tax.

## **Capital Program**

The planning, construction, renovation, and capital equipping of State facilities are principally financed through the issuance of State general obligation bonds approved by the General Assembly and sold by the State primarily to major institutional investors. The proceeds of the sale of the bonds are essentially borrowed by the State to fund the appropriations in the capital budget specified for the construction or renovation of State facilities. The bonds sold are backed by the full faith and credit of the State, thus obligating the State to repay the holder the principal and interest on the bonds when they are redeemed. The State's overall capital program includes many items: (1) State facilities or other capital infrastructure projects with a public purpose authorized in the capital budget bill; (2) State grants for local facilities – schools, community colleges, jails, sewage treatment facilities, flood management projects, and water supply facilities; (3) State grants for providers of services – community health facilities and day care, elderly, and juvenile centers; (4) State grants for economic development and housing programs; (5) State grants for facilities at private colleges, universities, and hospitals; and (6) State grants for other local projects – historic sites, recreational facilities, and museums and other cultural facilities.

The Capital Debt Affordability Committee annually recommends the maximum amount of new general obligation debt to the Governor and the General Assembly. The Department of Legislative Services prepares a separate analysis of debt affordability for the Spending Affordability Committee. This committee also issues a report with recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

## **Consolidated Capital Bond Loan (Capital Budget)**

The Department of Budget and Management reviews all proposed projects and presents recommendations to the Governor for consideration. The final projects are placed into the "consolidated capital bond loan bill," which is synonymous with the "capital budget," and presented to the General Assembly. The consolidated capital bond loan bill is introduced by the

Presiding Officer of each house as an Administration bill. The consolidated capital bond bill sets forth the amount of State debt to be created and details the amount to be allocated to specific purposes for each proposed capital project. It also specifies the source of funds to pay the debt created – the State property tax. The operating budget may also contain general funds to cover the cost of debt service if revenue from the property tax is insufficient to pay debt service. The consolidated capital bond bill is assigned to the budget committees and cannot be passed until the operating budget bill has been enacted.

Both the House and Senate budget committees review proposed projects in the consolidated capital bond loan bill through separate capital budget subcommittees. The committees bring the consolidated capital bond loan bill to the floor in a manner similar to the operating budget bill using a committee reprint.

Members may also sponsor requests for capital funds for local projects which are introduced and heard by the budget committees as bond initiatives. These requests are not passed as individual bills but instead are incorporated as items funded in the capital budget.

The General Assembly has the power to modify the capital budget bill in any manner since it is a supplementary appropriation bill. The projects proposed by the Governor may be deleted, the amounts allocated for specific purposes of a project may be increased or decreased, or the General Assembly may add specific projects and dollar amounts. The capital bill must contain an effective date (usually June 1 of the session year), and it is not enacted until signed by the Governor. The Governor has veto power or may exercise partial (line-item) veto of the capital budget.

### **PAYGO (Pay-As-You-Go) Expenditures**

Some State capital improvements are funded from the operating budget instead of the proceeds of general obligation bonds sold by the State. PAYGO capital items may be budgeted under the Board of Public Works or may be included as part of an agency's budget. Appropriations in this program are used to finance the planning, construction, renovation, and capital equipping of State-owned facilities or for State capital grants and loans. In past years, a substantial part of the general fund surplus was used for PAYGO. Since payment is from current operating funds that do not require coverage of the State's debt service burden, PAYGO projects are, in the long term, less expensive than items financed from bond proceeds. PAYGO appropriations can also include proposed expenditures of special and federal funds for capital purposes.

## Chapter 5. Legislative Oversight

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The Executive Branch is responsible for administering State government, and oversight of executive activity is an important function of the legislature.

The oversight function is continuous and ongoing, and it may occur as a byproduct of other legislative activities. Through the annual appropriations process, for instance, State agencies and administrators are required to justify their proposed expenditures. Likewise, the development of new legislative proposals may require a survey of existing government activities. Since it involves constant monitoring, inquiry, and communication, oversight does not, for the most part, have the formalized processes and forms of the legislative and appropriations functions. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify several mechanisms by which the General Assembly oversees executive action. This chapter discusses four mechanisms: formal; budget-related; legislative; and informal.

### Formal Mechanisms

#### Audits

The Office of Legislative Audits of the Department of Legislative Services is responsible for conducting audits of all agencies within the Executive and Judicial branches of State government. Audit reports are submitted to the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee of the General Assembly, the agency audited, as well as other State officials. Copies of audit reports are also available to the public either in print or through the website of the Office of Legislative Audits ([www.ola.state.md.us](http://www.ola.state.md.us)).

Section 2-1220 of the State Government Article provides that the Office of Legislative Audits must conduct a fiscal/compliance audit of all agencies at an interval ranging from three to four years. These audits determine whether an agency has properly managed its fiscal operations, established effective systems and controls, used State resources as intended, and complied with legal requirements. Electronic data processing operations of State agencies are subjected to review during these audits. The office also is authorized to conduct performance audits. A performance audit may evaluate whether an agency is operating in an economic, efficient, and effective manner or determine whether desired program results have been achieved.

Furthermore, the office may conduct special audits and reviews at the request of the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee. The office also reviews the annual financial statements of local governments, community colleges, boards of education, and library boards.

## Standing, Statutory, and Special Committees

Committees of the General Assembly are continually involved in oversight. Standing committees will often visit State facilities during the legislative interim and meet with officials to discuss how agencies are implementing programs and services. Many statutory committees have been established to let legislators focus on specific areas, such as the management of public funds; unemployment insurance; fair practices and State personnel law; children, youth, and families; legislative information technology; open government; health care delivery; and workers' compensation.

From time to time the General Assembly establishes special committees to monitor executive action or to consider a particular problem. The relevant executive agencies report to the special committee and address any concerns their members express. Examples of special committees created in recent years include those that addressed issues relating to vaccine oversight, economic security, pensions, substance abuse, cannabis referendum and legalization, and agricultural land preservation.

## Oversight of Proposed Regulations

Many executive agencies are authorized to adopt regulations to carry out the laws they administer. Maryland's Administrative Procedure Act (Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the State Government Article) establishes the process for adopting proposed regulations. It provides the legislature a means for overseeing the issuance of regulations and encourages cooperation and discussion between the Legislative and Executive branches.

The Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review is an integral part of the regulatory approval process. The Administrative Procedure Act requires agencies to submit proposed regulations to the committee at least 15 days before the regulations may be sent to the *Maryland Register* for publication. Publication of a proposed regulation triggers a 45-day review period. The agency may not formally adopt a regulation until the review period expires. If the committee cannot complete an appropriate review within 45 days, it may extend the review period.

The committee, through the assistance of the Department of Legislative Services, reviews regulations for conformity with statutory authority, compliance with legislative intent, and fiscal impact. The committee is not required to take any action during the review period. By a majority vote, the committee may oppose the adoption of the regulation. In this case, the agency may withdraw the regulation, propose a modified regulation, or submit the regulation to the Governor with a statement justifying the agency's refusal to modify or withdraw the regulation.

When the committee opposes a regulation and the agency refuses to withdraw or modify it, the law authorizes the Governor to "consult with the Committee and the [agency] in an effort to resolve the conflict" (Section 10-111.1 of the State Government Article). After notifying the

President, the Speaker, and the committee, the Governor may instruct the agency to modify or withdraw the regulation, or may approve its adoption.

The process differs for a regulation proposed for emergency adoption. An emergency regulation may take effect immediately if the adopting agency declares that emergency adoption is necessary, submits the regulation to the committee together with a fiscal impact statement, and receives the committee's approval for the emergency adoption. Committee approval is usually given by a majority vote of the committee, although under exigent circumstances committee approval also may be given by the presiding chair or, if the presiding chair is unavailable, by the co-chair. The committee staff polls the committee in person, by phone, or in writing to obtain the vote of the committee members. If any committee member requests a public hearing on the emergency adoption of a regulation, the committee must hold the hearing, and approval of the emergency adoption may be given only by a majority vote of members present and voting at the public hearing or at a subsequent meeting. Unless the Governor declares that immediate adoption is necessary to protect the public health or safety, the committee may not approve the emergency adoption of a regulation earlier than 10 business days after receipt of the regulation by the committee. As part of its approval of an emergency regulation, the committee may impose any condition, and the committee is required to impose a time limit not to exceed 180 days on each request for emergency status. By majority vote at a public meeting, the committee may rescind approval of an emergency regulation.

In addition to overseeing the issuance of individual regulations, the committee is responsible for the periodic review and evaluation of all State regulations. The purposes of this review and evaluation are to determine whether an agency's regulations continue to be in the public interest and supported by statutory authority and judicial opinions and whether they are obsolete or otherwise appropriate for amendment or repeal. Every eight years each agency is required to prepare an evaluation report that contains proposed amendments, repeals, or reorganizations of the agency's regulations. The committee reviews the evaluation report and may submit comments and recommendations.

The General Assembly also has the power to pass public local laws. It shares this power with Baltimore City; the 17 counties that have either a charter or code home rule form of government; and the municipal corporations in the State, all of which have home rule powers as granted by the Maryland Constitution. The power to regulate elections and to license and regulate the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages is reserved exclusively to the General Assembly.

## **Program Evaluation**

At the direction of the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee, the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability conducts evaluations of government activities and/or units. The office evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy with which resources are used; determines whether desired program results are achieved; determines whether a program aligns with the unit's mission; evaluates whether a program duplicates another program or activity within another unit; evaluates whether the governmental activity or unit operates in an

open, accountable, fair, and nondiscriminatory manner; and determines the reliability of specified performance measures.

The office selects and conducts evaluations at the direction of either the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee or the department's Executive Director. The Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability also develops a workplan, generally annually, in consultation with the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee.

Evaluation reports are publicly available on the Department of Legislative Services website and are provided to, among others, Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee members, the Presiding Officers, and committees of jurisdiction. On occasion, the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee requests a hearing for an evaluation, where both the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability and the subject of the evaluation have the opportunity to present and respond to questions. The office will also present evaluations to relevant committees at their request.

## **Executive Nominations**

Many important Executive Branch appointments require the advice and consent of the Senate. These appointments include all cabinet secretaries and members of various boards and commissions. Judges appointed to the District Court and the appellate courts by the Governor also must receive Senate confirmation.

Nominations are considered by the Executive Nominations Committee in the Senate. House confirmation is limited to local appointments as required by statute, with nominations considered by the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee. Hearings and deliberations on nominations allow the General Assembly to consider the qualifications of the Governor's nominees and examine their perspectives on their roles in the positions to which they are appointed. The committee may recommend for or against confirmation of the nominee. Confirmation by the full Senate (or the House, when necessary) requires approval by a majority of the membership.

## **Budget-related Mechanisms**

There are a few legislative actions associated with the budget process that can serve as oversight mechanisms, such as budget hearings, budget language, and the *Joint Chairmen's Report*. A brief review of these actions follows.

### **Budget Hearings**

Hearings before the budget committees bring executive agencies into contact with legislators on a regular basis. The agencies testify in support of their budgets and, by extension,

their programs. It is not unusual for legislators to question agencies on the policy implications of the programs, not just the budgetary aspects. Budget hearings are conducted only during session.

### **Budget Language**

In some cases, the General Assembly inserts language into the budget bill to impose conditions or restrictions on agency expenditures. As part of the enacted budget bill, this language has the force of law. The conditions imposed in the budget may require reports or involve the passage of related legislation.

### ***Joint Chairmen's Report on the Budget***

As part of the *Joint Chairmen's Report* on the budget bill, the budget committees include "narrative" that expresses the committees' intent. This language may include recommendations or instructions to agencies and usually requests that the agencies report back to the budget committees at specified dates. This narrative is not part of the budget bill, is not passed by the General Assembly, and, therefore, does not have the force of law. Nevertheless, as an expression of the legislature's intent, it has considerable impact on the executive agencies. The legislature's budget staff from the department follows up on items in the *Joint Chairmen's Report* and reports its findings and recommendations to the budget committees.

## **Legislative Mechanisms**

### **Bills**

Often legislative requirements, conditions, or statements of intent are written directly into bills that are reflective of the legislative oversight role. Statements of legislative intent may be included in a bill's uncodified preamble or in a codified or uncodified section of the bill. The text of a bill may include language that places requirements, restrictions, or conditions on the actions of the executive agency responsible for carrying out the legislation. Bills may also contain oversight mechanisms such as special reporting, advice and consent, and special auditing requirements.

### **Joint Resolutions**

The intent of the legislature is sometimes embodied in a joint resolution. Again, as part of its oversight function, the legislature, on occasion, will utilize resolutions to request an executive agency to study a problem or recommend that the Governor and General Assembly either take or refrain from taking a specified action. While most joint resolutions do not have the force of law, they do have a degree of impact because they are passed by both houses of the General Assembly and are expressions of legislative interest and concern. For further discussion of resolutions, please see "Chapter 3. Legislation."



## **Termination Provisions**

In some cases, the legislature includes a termination provision in a bill that will nullify the force and effect of the bill after a specific period of time, usually one to three years. A termination provision allows the legislature to assess the effectiveness of a new law or program before deciding whether to extend it permanently or for another limited period.

## **Contingency Provisions**

When the legislature wishes to impose certain conditions before an enactment can take effect, it will include contingency language (usually uncodified) that delays or prevents the enactment from taking effect until a specific event or occurrence takes place, such as an agency submitting evidence that it has complied with certain federal requirements.

## **Reporting Requirements**

Frequently, the General Assembly exercises oversight by statutorily requiring an executive agency to issue a report that is later reviewed by the legislature (usually through a committee). Many agencies are required to issue regular annual reports on various aspects of their operations. In many cases reports are mandated on specific issues.

Agency reports give legislators the opportunity to be informed about executive action and make further inquiries. In some cases, a committee will hold a hearing at which an agency will respond to inquiries about the findings in a report.

The submission of agency reports to the General Assembly is governed by Section 2-1257 of the State Government Article. Reports are sent to the Department of Legislative Services in both electronic and print form, added to the legislature's library collection, and available electronically through the library's online catalog. Reports are distributed by an agency to all members only with written permission from the President and the Speaker.

## **Legislative Committee Review Requirements**

Occasionally, the General Assembly includes provisions in bills that require legislative review before an executive agency can take an action. This review can take several forms. In some cases, an agency must notify either the Legislative Policy Committee or a specified standing committee before taking action. This notification triggers a review period during which the committee can offer comments or request further information. In other provisions, the approval of the General Assembly is required before the agency may act.

## **Staff Activities**

The Department of Legislative Services has broad statutory authority to review and study the administration and operation of State agencies and to prepare reports for consideration by the General Assembly. The activities, including management studies and performance audits, are carried out by units of the department, usually in conjunction with a legislative committee.

## **Informal Mechanisms**

Legislative oversight does not always occur through a formal process. Instead, legislators influence executive action through informal avenues.

### **Hearings**

Hearings, especially during the legislative interim, are frequently used as a means of focusing attention on an issue of concern to a committee. A committee may use a hearing to ask an executive official to explain a given action or to outline plans for future action.

### **Site Visits**

During the legislative interim, committees will often arrange to visit State facilities and other locations. These site visits express legislative interest in the operations of a facility or program and give legislators the opportunity to view its operations firsthand.

### **Constituent Inquiries**

Legislators and their staff frequently contact executive agencies on behalf of constituents. This constituent service familiarizes legislators with the workings of government programs and may highlight problem areas.

### **Monitoring**

Public meetings or hearings of various executive bodies are frequently attended by legislators or legislative staff. In this way, the General Assembly monitors the activities of these units and reflects its interest in them.

### **Informal Interaction**

Legislators and staff frequently contact executive officials by telephone, mail, email, and in person. This informal interaction promotes consultation between the branches of government, sharing of information and data, and identification of points of dispute.



## Chapter 6. Legislative Services

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The Department of Legislative Services provides central nonpartisan staff services to the General Assembly of Maryland. Departmental staff provides support and assistance to the General Assembly as a whole, to its committees and subcommittees, and to individual legislators. In addition, the Office of Counsel to the General Assembly, which is a part of the Office of the Attorney General of Maryland, provides legal advice to the legislature, individual legislators, and committees.

### The Department of Legislative Services

The organizational structure, responsibilities, and duties of the Department of Legislative Services are codified in Title 2, Subtitle 12 of the State Government Article. In general, the department is responsible for providing:

- budget and fiscal review, analysis, research, studies, and reports;
- legislative drafting and statutory revision services;
- legal research, review, analysis, studies, and reports;
- general research and policy analysis;
- fiscal/compliance, financial statement, and performance audits of units of the State government;
- legislative research, legislative document and material collection and preservation, and other library services;
- public information services about legislative activities;
- document preparation and publication services;
- legislative information systems maintenance, development, and support; and
- administrative support services for the department and, where appropriate, for the General Assembly relating to finance, personnel, distribution, telecommunications, printing and copying, supplies, housekeeping, and maintenance.

The Executive Director of the department serves in a nonpartisan capacity and is appointed jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House in consultation with the House and Senate Minority leaders. Subject to the policies and directives of the Presiding Officers and the Legislative Policy Committee, the Executive Director has overall responsibility and supervision over the offices, functions, personnel, budget, and activities of the department. The department employs approximately 430 people. Except for the Office of Legislative Audits located in Baltimore, all departmental offices are located in the legislative complex in Annapolis.

## **The Executive Director**

The Executive Director is responsible for management, oversight, and direction of the department's four offices: the Office of Policy Analysis; the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability; the Office of Legislative Audits; and the Office of Operations and Support Services. The position of Ethics Counsel, which functions as Ethics Advisor to the General Assembly and the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics, and the department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer also fall under the supervision of the Executive Director.

### **Ethics Counsel**

The General Assembly employs a full-time Ethics Counsel who is responsible for counseling legislators regarding the application of the Ethics Law. Each member is required by law to meet individually with the Ethics Counsel at least once a year. The relationship between the Ethics Counsel and each member is one of attorney and client, and all communications are confidential unless the member chooses to make them public. For more information on the Ethics Counsel's responsibilities, see "Chapter 2. The Legislator."

## **Office of Operations and Support Services**

### **Finance Services**

Finance Services manages all financial services in the department and the General Assembly, including accounts payable and receivable, budgeting, fiscal planning and reporting, inventory, and procurement. Accounting and finance staff processes requests for reimbursement for payment of legislative expenses such as district office rent, nonpayroll related contractual services, telephone and other communication expenses, furniture and equipment, and supplies, as well as in-state and out-of-state travel reimbursement for members of the legislature.

Responsibilities of the procurement unit include the purchase of equipment, supplies, water, and the service of copiers for the department. The inventory unit maintains a complete inventory of items that are the property of the General Assembly, including the furniture and equipment items purchased by members from their district office expense allowance funds.

### **Administration**

Administration has responsibility for Facilities, Graphics and Printing, and Distribution. Facilities provides support for the building and other operational needs of the Senate and House and the department. These include routine maintenance and housekeeping functions, including service calls for heat, air conditioning, lighting, housekeeping, and room setup for the department. The recycling program for the legislative complex also falls under this unit.

Graphics and Printing Services operate as a complete center for design, layout, printing, copying, and production of a variety of printed and digital documents. A full-service printing operation is located in the legislative complex and a copy center is located in the State House while the General Assembly is in session. To assist legislators in using its services, a brochure on Graphics and Printing Services is available.

Distribution staff are responsible for document distribution services for the department and the General Assembly. The Legislative Mail Room manages the receipt and delivery of the U.S. mail and courier mail, as well as internal document distribution. Legislative Bill Room staff are responsible for the storage and distribution of all bills and resolutions. Bills and resolutions are delivered to the Senate and House chambers, all legislators' offices, committee rooms, and certain areas in the legislative complex. Additional copies of all versions of legislation are available to members, staff, and the public from the Bill Room. Rosters, calendars, and other documents pertinent to the legislative process are available at the Information Desk in the legislative complex. Hearing schedules and many documents are also available on the General Assembly website.

### **Human Resources**

Human Resources is responsible for personnel activities for the employees of the department and the General Assembly. Specific functions include recruitment, training and orientation, health and retirement benefits administration, recordkeeping, payroll processing, and related activities required to maintain personnel services. This unit advises management on pertinent employment issues, provides guidance to employees regarding departmental procedures, and maintains oversight of legal issues in the labor and employment area. Other responsibilities include meetings with job applicants to provide general information on employment with the department, General Assembly, and members' offices. Human Resources also coordinates the General Assembly's page and intern programs, which provide opportunities for students from Maryland high schools and colleges to participate in the work of the legislature.

### **Student Intern and Page Programs**

The Legislative Intern Program offers approximately 150 of Maryland's college and university students the opportunity to provide research and staff assistance to legislators during the legislative session and have both an educational and practical work experience in State government. After students have applied to their respective college or university intern

coordinators and have been selected for participation in the program, students interview for placement with legislators, committees, or caucuses. A stipend is awarded to each intern based on the number of days per week that the intern works.

The Student Page Program provides about 105 Maryland high school seniors with insight into the legislative process as they assist senators and delegates during floor sessions in their respective chambers. The Student Page Program is a nonpatronage program and selection is done through the local school systems. Each county has a County Page Coordinator who conducts the process used by the county's public and nonpublic schools to choose the participants. A county is allocated one page and one alternate position and receives additional positions based on its high school senior population. Each selected page serves two nonconsecutive weeks in either the Senate or House and receives a small stipend. Lodging and meal expenses must be paid by the page.

### **Information Systems**

Information Systems is the primary information technology support group for the Department of Legislative Services and the General Assembly. Information Systems staff is responsible for the design, development, maintenance, and support of custom legislative systems such as legislative bill drafting, bill status, budget analysis, fiscal notes, and Senate and House chamber automation. It supports the personal computers and laptops in the Annapolis complex and operates the data center and campus infrastructure, including Dell and Unisys servers, as well as other related facilities. The office is also responsible for telecommunications services, which includes the management of the telephone system of the department and the General Assembly.

Members of the General Assembly are provided laptop computers with an integrated legislative office package, wireless capability, and high-speed Internet service for their Annapolis and district offices. The office has a dedicated user-support and training team that develops and supports legislative applications for the department and General Assembly.

Information Systems also maintains and manages the General Assembly website (<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>). Since 1996, the website has offered access to information about the legislative process to the public, legislators, and staff. The website contains the history and status of legislation, text of legislation, amendments, bill synopses, fiscal and policy notes, written testimony, hearing schedules, and calendars. Also offered are both livestream video and written proceedings for the Senate and House, livestream video of committee hearings and meetings, floor votes, committee votes, and indexes to legislation by sponsor, subject, file code, and statute – updated nightly. The department's library catalog and Maryland statutes are also available.

In addition to the livestreaming of House and Senate proceedings and committee hearings and meetings, Information Systems made available on its website the presentation of meetings via a Zoom platform during the pandemic which, to some extent, is still in use.

## Office of Policy Analysis

The Office of Policy Analysis is the largest group in the department. Staff are assigned to work in one of the following functional areas:

- Budget Analysis – reviews and evaluates the operating and capital budgets of State agencies to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of State programs;
- Fiscal and Policy Notes – estimates the fiscal impacts of each bill introduced during the legislative session and of Executive Branch agency regulations;
- Racial Equity Impact Notes – determines the potential impacts of certain legislation on racial and ethnic groups in the State;
- Legislation – drafts bills and amendments, reviews Executive Branch agency regulations, and staffs legislative delegations;
- Committee Staffing – staffs legislative committees, drafts bills and amendments, and reviews Executive Branch agency regulations;
- Editing and Bill Processing – ensures that bills and other legislative documents are accurate and meet legislative and departmental standards; and
- Library and Information Services – serves legislators, staff, and the public through the operation of the legislative library and the provision of public information services about legislative activities.

In addition to their functional responsibilities, most staff work in policy-related workgroups that operate during the interim to review and analyze issues in subjects such as business, technology, and economic development; courts and criminal justice; education; health and human services; intergovernmental matters; natural resources, environment, and transportation; and taxes and fiscal planning. Through the workgroups, staff further develop their subject area expertise to better support the multidisciplinary research needs of the legislature during the interim and to answer legislative inquiries.

The office generates a number of annual or quadrennial reports to fulfill its statutory charge to conduct general research studies, develop options, make recommendations, and report to the General Assembly on various fiscal and policy matters. Examples of annual reports include *The 90 Day Report*, which is a comprehensive overview of each session's legislative activity, *Issue Papers*, which provides brief summaries of current legislative issues prior to each session, and *Local Government Finances in Maryland*, which is an overview of the general financial condition of local governments in the State. In the final year of each four-year legislative term, the office produces the *Major Issues Review*, which summarizes legislative



activity over the term, and the *Legislative Handbook Series*, which is a multivolume series that provides a comprehensive overview of State and local government finances and activities. Other reports on various policy topics may also be produced periodically relating to subjects of interest to the legislature.

### **Fiscal and Policy Analysis**

Fiscal and policy analysis focuses on analyzing the Governor's operating and capital budgets, estimating the fiscal and economic impacts of proposed legislation, and providing additional support for the budget committees.

During the session, staff is intensely involved with analyzing and reporting on the changes in the budget; identifying and evaluating new initiatives, programs, and policies; making recommendations; presenting findings before the budget committees; and preparing and processing the operating and capital budgets and supporting documentation.

In addition, for each bill that is introduced, staff prepares a fiscal and policy note that contains an estimate of the fiscal effect of the bill on the revenues and expenditures of State and local governments during the year in which the bill is to become effective and for the next four years following that year. If a bill imposes a mandate on a local government unit, the fiscal note also must contain a statement that identifies the imposition of the mandate and an estimate of the fiscal impact of the mandate and, if applicable and if the data is available, the effect on local property tax rates. The note also includes a summary of the bill, a description of current law related to the bill, an estimate of the bill's impact on small businesses, and other background information. Fiscal and policy notes are published and distributed prior to the bill hearings and revised to reflect changes in the bill as necessary.

Fiscal and policy analysis is a year-round process. During the interim, staff review proposed amendments to the budget, revise revenue and expenditure forecasts, determine the fiscal impact of regulations, review agency performance, conduct tax credit evaluations, and prepare analyses of significant fiscal issues.

### **Racial and Equity Impact Notes**

Racial equity has recently emerged as a critical concern for state legislatures as disparities in measures of socioeconomic status and well-being are pervasive across the country by race, ethnicity, and English language proficiency. In 2021, the Presiding Officers requested that the department develop a racial impact analysis initiative to better understand the relationship between race and criminal justice which could aid in developing evidence-based policies related to criminal justice.

A pilot program was conducted during the 2021 legislative session specifically to assess the impact of selected criminal justice legislation on various racial groups. The pilot program published 12 racial and equity impact notes which discussed potential racial disparities that may be exacerbated or created by the legislation.

In 2022, the Racial Equity Impact Note function within the Office of Policy Analysis was created to continue assessing the impact of selected legislation. The unit performs statistical analysis on available criminal justice related data and provides an objective-based assessment of potential disparities among racial and ethnic groups that may be exacerbated or created by the legislation. The assessments are published in the form of a racial equity impact statement, which can be found online as part of a bill's legislative history. Factors that determine whether a racial equity impact note is published for a bill or group of bills include (1) whether there is sufficient data available to provide an objective analysis of the bill's provisions; (2) whether the topics addressed in the bill include current issues of concern for minority residents in the State; and (3) whether providing information surrounding key decision points in the criminal justice system will inform legislators and the public of possible policy implications of legislation.

### **Legislation and Committee Support**

One of the primary duties of the Office of Policy Analysis is legislative drafting, which is encompassed in the broad range of activities of the Legislation and Committee Support functions of the office. Each year, policy analysts draft, review, and prepare several thousand bills and amendments to bills. An experienced drafting staff is available to research, prepare, and discuss with legislators proposed legislation on a year-round basis, although the most active period of bill drafting occurs during the first few weeks of the session.

The Office of Policy Analysis also assists the General Assembly in its oversight of the Executive Branch. Staff of the Legislation and Committee Support functions of the office analyze the legal sufficiency of regulations and other issues relating to regulations proposed for adoption by Executive Branch agencies. The review of proposed regulations and analyses prepared by staff inform the Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review, the statutory legislative committee that is responsible for the review of the State regulatory process, regarding the compliance of the proposed regulations with the agencies' statutory authority and the legislative intent of the General Assembly. Regulations have the force and effect of law; therefore, this process is important to help ensure that proposed regulations are legally sufficient before they are finalized.

Another major function of the Office of Policy Analysis is to provide professional staff support to the 10 standing committees of the General Assembly, as well as the Senate Executive Nominations Committee. Although the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee performs some similar functions, the Speaker's Office provides staff for this committee. Policy analysts in the Committee Support function are assigned to committees to perform a myriad of tasks with respect to the consideration of legislation assigned to those committees. These tasks include the close review and analysis of legislation to identify legal, constitutional, and policy issues; attendance at hearings and participation in voting and work sessions on the bills; drafting of amendments, floor reports, and informational documents to assist the chairs and members of the committees during the course of the legislative process; maintaining effective communication and working relationships with other members of the General Assembly, staff, and participants in the legislative process; and being responsive and available to meet the needs of the chairs and members in a hectic, fast-paced work environment.

The Office of Policy Analysis also assigns policy analysts to support a number of county and regional delegations in the Senate and the House. Delegation staffing often involves drafting and explaining amendments, responding to information requests, understanding parliamentary procedural matters, and working with representatives of local governments.

Staff assigned to the Legislation and Committee Support functions, as well as to the Fiscal and Policy Analysis function, also responds to requests from legislators for opinions and advice pertinent to legislation. They also participate in the staffing of statutory, special joint and special legislative committees, and task forces and study groups that are often jointly appointed by the Presiding Officers and the Governor. In addition, staff reviews and summarizes bill review letters of the Attorney General's Office as part of an ongoing effort to improve legislative drafting. Finally, staff prepares annual supplements to the charters of municipal corporations as part of the legal review function of the office.

### **Editing and Bill Processing**

Editing and Bill Processing staff work collaboratively to ensure that bills and other legislative documents are accurate and meet legislative and departmental standards. Legislative editors review, proofread, and edit all bills, including the annual operating and capital budget bills, and amendments, as well as many other legislative and departmental documents. Legislative editors also make certain that both the annotated code and the statute database used by legislative drafters are accurate and up to date. In conjunction with the legislative editors, bill processing staff format, edit, and store various documents including, but not limited to, bills, the journals of the Senate and the House of Delegates, and other legislative and departmental publications. The bill processing staff also produce a daily synopsis of bills during the legislative session.

### **Library and Information Services**

Library and Information Services provides reference and research services to the General Assembly and its staff and legislative information to the public. The library contains over 140,000 volumes including the *Laws of Maryland* since 1637, House and Senate Journals since 1826, as well as all other state and federal laws. An extensive collection of materials related to bills introduced in previous legislative sessions consists of committee files and votes, floor votes, indexes, and other valuable documents. Furthermore, by law, the library serves as the official depository for all Maryland State agency publications and for all county government codes. Librarians use these resources and others in the collection, as well as standard library resources including online databases and the Internet, to provide information on public policy topics and other reference information of interest to the legislature. *Maryland Documents*, a listing of the State agency publications, is distributed by the library each month to legislators and staff. The library catalog is accessible on the General Assembly website. The department's librarians index bills, laws, and other legislative publications.

In addition to traditional library functions, staff also writes, edits, or coordinates the preparation of legislative documents and materials for publication in print and on the General

Assembly website. These include publications such as the daily *Synopsis* (online only), *Dates of Interest* calendars, the *Committee Meetings and Hearing Schedule* (online only), and the *Roster and List of Committees*. Staff also prepares the *Maryland Clipper*, a compilation of newspaper clippings of interest to the legislature, daily during session and weekly during the interim. Information desk staff responds to requests for legislative information from the public over the telephone, via email, in person, and through the distribution of numerous legislative documents.

Coordination of the General Assembly's educational and visitor programs for school children, constituents, public interest groups, and international dignitaries, many of whom are legislators in their own countries, is an important part of this unit's work. On request, staff arranges and conducts programs throughout the year, customizing each visit to specific areas of interest. Requests may come from legislators, directly from citizens, or from teachers and parents. Visits to the General Assembly by officials from other states and countries are usually coordinated by library staff in conjunction with the United States Information Agency, Congressional Research Service, National Conference of State Legislatures, World Trade Center Institute, Maryland Sister States Program, or other similar agencies and organizations. Staff also conducts workshops and orientations about the legislative process and the General Assembly on request.

### **Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability**

At the direction of the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee, the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability conducts evaluations of governmental activities and/or units. The office evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy with which resources are used; determines whether desired program results are achieved; determines whether a program aligns with the unit's mission; evaluates whether a program duplicates another program or activity within another unit; evaluates whether the governmental activity or unit operates in an open, accountable, fair, and nondiscriminatory manner; and determines the reliability of specified performance measures.

### **Office of Legislative Audits**

The Office of Legislative Audits is responsible for conducting audits of each department, agency, unit, and program within the Executive and Judicial branches, and for reporting the findings to the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee of the General Assembly in accordance with Section 2-1220 of the State Government Article. The office is also required to audit the financial management practices of each of the State's local school systems at least once every six years, unless the system received an exemption as provided by law. The office, located at The Warehouse at Camden Yards in Baltimore City, is organized into three divisions:

- The Fiscal Compliance Audit Division plans and conducts audits of all agencies in the Executive and Judicial branches of State government at least once every three years. In addition, this division operates a fraud hotline.

- The Performance Audit Division conducts performance audits to assess economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and program results. The Division also includes two specialized units to assist in the audit process: the Data Analytics Unit, which maintains sophisticated automated tools that enables the office to analyze statewide financial-related records to aid the audit fieldwork; and the Fraud Investigation Unit, which operates the office's fraud hotline, investigates allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse, and coordinates investigative activity with the Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the State Prosecutor.
- The Information System Audit Division is responsible for auditing the security controls within State agencies' information systems and networks, while also providing technical support for other audit operations. This division also develops and maintains the office's computer network, management information systems, and website.
- The Quality Assurance and Professional Development Division supports the auditing function by monitoring the quality of the office's work products to ensure overall reliability and integrity, and compliance with professional standards. The division also reviews the audited financial statements of counties, municipal corporations, taxing districts, and community colleges. In addition, this division coordinates the office's recruitment and staff development activities and directs the office's administrative functions.

The Office of Legislative Audits issues reports for all of its audits and reviews. Reports are posted on the office's website at [www.ola.state.md.us](http://www.ola.state.md.us) and are available for electronic delivery and downloading. In accordance with State law, copies of the audit reports containing cybersecurity-related findings will have those findings redacted from the publicly available audit report.

## **Attorney General – Counsel to the General Assembly**

Under the Constitution of Maryland, the Attorney General is given the responsibility of rendering legal advice to the General Assembly (Article V, Section 3). To fulfill that responsibility, the Attorney General has established an Office of Counsel to the General Assembly, located in the legislative complex and staffed by several assistant Attorneys General, one of whom is designated the Counsel to the General Assembly.

The office renders legal advice to the legislature, individual legislators, legislative committees, and legislative staff, including the department. During both the legislative session and the interim, members and committees considering legislation seek the advice of this office about the constitutionality or legal construction of proposed legislation or existing law. The office defends legislators and legislative staff who are sued or subpoenaed for official actions. The office also assists members in responding to requests under the Maryland Public Information Act. Further, the office may be used as a liaison between the Legislative Branch and the Attorney

General's staff assigned to various State agencies. Depending upon the time available, the nature of the inquiry, and the state of the law, legal advice can be rendered through formal opinions of the Attorney General (which are prepared by the Opinions, Advice, and Legislation Division in Baltimore and take months to prepare), written letters of advice of counsel, or informal email or oral recommendations.

All formal Opinions of the Attorney General are available to the public. All letters of advice are treated as public documents unless the legislator requesting the advice specifically asks that it be held in confidence.

In addition, the Office of Counsel to the General Assembly is primarily responsible for coordinating the review of all passed legislation for constitutionality and legal sufficiency, and for preparing the Attorney General's bill review letters that are submitted to the Governor prior to the approval or veto of the bills. Moreover, the assistant Attorneys General in the Office of Counsel to the General Assembly frequently go to court to defend the constitutionality of enacted legislation when it is challenged in litigation. Finally, the office serves as legal counsel to the department.



## Chapter 7. Publications and Electronic Resources

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Legislators receive hundreds of publications during the course of a year, some on a one-time basis, others periodically. Publications come from legislative staff, executive agencies, national or regional associations, interest groups, and other sources. This section outlines some of the resources available to legislators. Most documents and publications are available online and in print. For general information and requests for publications, contact Library and Information Services.

### Electronic Resources

The General Assembly website (<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>) provides information about bills and resolutions introduced each session, from point of introduction to final disposition. Information is available for bills and resolutions introduced since the 1996 session. The website includes the Daily Synopsis, daily Senate and House floor proceedings, committee and floor vote tallies, livestream video of floor proceedings and committee meetings and hearings, and committee hearing schedules. The full text of proposed legislation, fiscal and policy notes, the *Roster and List of Committees*, *The 90 Day Report*, the *Joint Chairmen's Report*, budget analyses, and special study reports are also available. Additionally, other documents and publications that support the work of the General Assembly may be found on the website under "Publications," which is organized into the following categories:

- *Legislative and Legal* includes publications that summarize the activity that occurred during each legislative session. The categories include Municipal Charters, Other, Proceedings, and Synopsis;
- *Budget and Fiscal* includes publications that analyze and summarize the State's budget and other fiscal matters. The categories include Capital, Capital – Analysis Only, Local Government, Operating, Operating – Analysis Only, Shared Operating and Capital, and Spending Affordability;
- *Committee* includes publications that have been presented to committees or reports prepared by committees;
- *Commission, Task Force, and Workgroup* includes publications that have been presented to or produced by these groups; and
- *Other* includes all other publications.



Additional publications created by the Department of Legislative Services, mandated by legislation, or requested in the *Joint Chairmen's Report* may be found in the Legislative Library and Information Services Catalog.

The department's website (<http://dls.maryland.gov>) offers comprehensive information on the department's mission, organizational structure, functions, programs, and services. Explanatory text is included on legislative processes such as how a bill becomes a law, operating and capital budget bill actions, and committee jurisdictions and deliberations. Other sections of the site address career opportunities, student page and intern programs, and assistance for individuals with disabilities. The public may also obtain maps of downtown Annapolis and the legislative complex, as well as information on security procedures, attending a floor session or committee hearings, educational programs, and communicating with individual legislators. An extensive list of department publications and documents is also available at this site.

The Office of Legislative Audits maintains its own website ([www.ola.state.md.us](http://www.ola.state.md.us)) that provides electronic access to copies of all its reports and examinations. The office may also be reached through the department's website.

## Legislative and Legal Documents

### Constitution of Maryland

After each election in which voters have approved amendments to the Constitution of Maryland, the department publishes the amended version and posts the document online. The publication also includes the Constitution of the United States. Printed copies are available from Library and Information Services Information Desk.

### *Laws of Maryland*

After the Governor signs or vetoes bills, the department publishes the *Laws of Maryland* (Session Laws) for that year. The Session Laws are a set of volumes containing all laws adopted during the previous session and all bills vetoed by the Governor with the veto messages. The Session Laws are published initially as paperbound volumes, called "advance sheets." These are later replaced by hardbound volumes. Beginning with the 1996 session, the Session Laws are available online.

### Annotated Code of Maryland

The Annotated Code of Maryland, published by commercial publishers, is a multivolume compilation of the permanent public general laws. This compilation is organized in units designated as "articles," which are based on broad subject matter areas. Each year the publisher updates the Code to incorporate the newly enacted laws found in the *Laws of Maryland*. Under

Section 2-1257 of the State Government Article, all legislators are entitled to a set of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to be kept up to date at State expense as long as they are members of the General Assembly. Legislators receive their sets of the Annotated Code from Library and Information Services.

Except for any copyrighted material owned by the publisher, such as section captions, editor's notes, and applicable court case references, the code is accessible through the "Statutes" link on the General Assembly website. There is also a link to the publisher's Maryland Code online.

### **Journals of the Senate and House of Delegates**

The journals, prepared by the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House, are the official record of the proceedings of the Senate and the House for the entire session. These documents are published in both softbound and hardbound versions and must be requested. The journals are available on the General Assembly website from 2007 forward. Beginning with the 1996 session, the daily Senate and House floor proceedings are available on the General Assembly website.

The audio portions of the Senate and House floor proceedings are available on the General Assembly website beginning with the 2000 session. Starting with the 2011 session, video and audio broadcasts of House committee hearings and audio broadcasts of Senate committee hearings are available online. Video broadcasting of Senate hearings began in 2015.

### **Rules of the Senate and House of Delegates**

At the beginning of each session, the Senate and House adopt rules to govern their respective chambers. The rules are published by the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House. Printed copies are available from Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

### ***Synopsis of Laws***

The *Synopsis of Laws*, a quick reference that complements the use of the Session Laws, contains brief summaries of enacted session legislation, passed joint resolutions, and vetoed bills. The synopsis includes a subject index, as well as indexes that cross-reference bills to chapter numbers and to sponsors. Sections of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the codes of Public Local Laws that were amended, added, or repealed during the session are also indicated. This document may be accessed online beginning with the 2006 session.

## **Indexes to Legislation**

Bill indexes, printed from the online bill status system, are published in separate volumes by subject, sponsor, committee, and statute and are available on the General Assembly website from 2006 to the present.

## **Final Status Report**

This report contains a numerical listing of all legislation introduced during a session with each bill's short title and final status and is available on the General Assembly website beginning with the 2006 session.

## **Daily Synopses**

While the legislature is in session, a daily synopsis (or summary) is published of all bills and joint resolutions that are introduced. Bill and resolution synopses may be accessed on the General Assembly website for the current session and for each session beginning with 1996.

## **Legislative Calendars**

The Secretary of the Senate prepares a legislative calendar or agenda each day reflecting the matters to be considered during the floor session. The agenda includes committee reports, bills that have been "laid over" or "special ordered" from a prior session, bills on third reading, and other items of interest. In the House of Delegates, the Office of the Chief Clerk prepares individual calendars for each committee report, bills on third reading, or other items of legislative business to be considered at the floor session. The agendas are available on the General Assembly website.

## **Meeting Schedules**

The *Meetings* tab on the General Assembly website contains the dates, times, locations, and topics of all scheduled meetings of the General Assembly's committees. The schedule also includes other meetings of interest related to State government. Changes to the schedule are published, as necessary.

## ***Roster and List of Committees***

A *Roster and List of Committees* is available for each session and interim. The roster contains biographies of legislators, committee membership lists, Senate and House membership lists, and various appendices providing other pertinent legislative information. In addition, a brief

roster is prepared by Library and Information Services staff early in each regular session. A limited number of printed rosters are available from Library and Information Services.

### ***Notice of Legislative Unit Invitations to Meals and Receptions***

The *Notice of Legislative Unit Invitations to Meals and Receptions*, issued each Thursday year-round, contains the date and locations of each upcoming meal or reception held by a regulated lobbyist to which a legislative unit has been invited. Addenda to the weekly notice are published as necessary. Regulated lobbyists are required to register the meal or reception with the department at least five days before the event. The notice is available from Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

### **Official Dates of Interest Calendars**

Legislative staff compiles a list of deadlines and other dates of interest primarily related to the legislative process for each session of the General Assembly and for each interim. The calendars are available at the Information Desk and on the General Assembly website.

### **Committee Reports (Reflective of Interim Work)**

Before the beginning of every session, each standing committee presents a written report on its activities over the preceding interim. These reports are included in the *Summary Reports of Committees* issued by the Legislative Policy Committee. Legislative Policy Committee documents are also online.

In addition, statutory and special committees issue written reports upon the completion of their task or charge. These reports are usually included in the *Summary Reports of Committees*. In some cases, they are issued as separate reports, which are available from Library and Information Services and may also be available online.

### ***Issue Papers (Predictive of Session Work)***

Prior to each session, the department prepares an information report on current issues that are likely to be considered during the next regular session. The *Issue Papers* publication is a compilation of briefing documents arranged by major topic. Each issue paper is followed by an identification of the staff who worked on that particular topic. Members may contact the staff for additional information. The *Issue Papers* are available on the General Assembly website and at the Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

## ***The 90 Day Report – A Review of Legislation of the Annual Session***

Several days after the end of the regular session each year, the department publishes *The 90 Day Report*, a comprehensive review of legislation that was considered during the session. *The 90 Day Report* is divided into 12 parts, each dealing with a major policy area. Each part contains a discussion of the majority of bills passed in that policy area, including comparisons with previous sessions and current law, background information, and a discussion of significant bills that did not pass. Information relating to the operating budget, capital budget, and aid to local governments is included. Each legislator receives a copy of *The 90 Day Report* during the week following the end of session. The reports are available on the General Assembly website and at the Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

### ***Major Issues Review (Four-year Term)***

This document, published by the department during the interim of the fourth year of a four-year term, summarizes legislative activity over the term and includes discussion of all major issues, significant bills that did and did not pass, and gubernatorial vetoes of major legislation. Like *The 90 Day Report*, the *Major Issues Review* is divided into 12 parts, each dealing with a major policy area. Business and economic development, crime, education, health, State budget, taxes, and transportation are some of the major issues discussed. The *Major Issues Review*, beginning with the 1995-1998 term, is available on the General Assembly website and from Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

### **Effective Dates of Enacted Legislation**

Enacted legislation may become effective on June 1, July 1, October 1, or at some other date as specified in the legislation. Other than emergency bills, which take effect as soon as they are signed and the State budget bill, which is effective on the day it passes, June 1 is the earliest date for a bill to become effective. Budget, tax, and revenue bills usually take effect on July 1. By custom, October 1 is the usual effective date for most bills. However, bills may also have varying effective dates as specified in the bills. To notify the public, the department publishes an effective dates list prior to June 1, July 1, October 1, and January 1 of each year. The lists, as well as abnormal effective date information, are available on the General Assembly website.

### **Bill Review Letters**

Bill review letters, which are prepared by the Office of the Attorney General, provide advice as to the legality and constitutionality of bills passed by the General Assembly and are used as a part of the Governor's consideration of whether to sign or veto legislation. These letters are available in the legislative library. For use in the drafting, review, and analysis of bills and amendments, each interim the Office of Policy Analysis prepares *Bill Review Letters*, which analyzes selected bill review letters on legislation passed at that year's session and discusses constitutional and legal pitfalls in legislative drafting.

### ***Legislative Drafting Manual***

The *Legislative Drafting Manual* is published annually to assist those involved in the drafting of bills and amendments for the General Assembly. It is intended to serve as a teaching text for those new to legislative drafting, a ready reference guide for veteran legislative staff, and a source of useful information on legislative drafting and process for the general public. The fundamental goal of the manual is to ensure accuracy, clarity, and uniformity in the drafting of legislation in Maryland by promoting compliance with constitutional principles, rules of law and statutory interpretation, and accepted practices regarding style, form, and process. Copies are available from Library and Information Services' Information Desk and on the department's website.

### ***Maryland Style Manual for Statutory Law***

Under Section 2-1238(10) of the State Government Article, the department is required to maintain a style manual for statutory law. Its rules should be followed, to the extent practicable, in preparing any legislation for the General Assembly. Copies are available from Library and Information Services' Information Desk and on the department's website.

### ***Maryland Legislative Desk Reference Manual***

The *Maryland Legislative Desk Reference Manual* is intended primarily to provide a quick source of information on the general state of the law in areas commonly encountered by policy analysts in drafting legislation and providing other professional staff services to the General Assembly. It can also be useful to others who may have a more casual interest in Maryland law and legislation. Discussions of statutory issues, legislative procedure issues, constitutional issues, local government issues, and administrative issues are included. Copies are available from Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

### ***Ethics Guide***

Updated, as necessary, the *Ethics Guide* is based on the Maryland Public Ethics Law, Title 5 of the General Provisions Article. Topics discussed in the guide include conflicts of interest, gifts, prohibited employment and compensation, and financial disclosure. Ethics opinions and forms are also included. This publication is available in print and on the General Assembly website.

### ***Cases & Decisions Update***

The Office of Policy Analysis annually prepares a summary and analysis of selected, recently issued opinions of the Court of Appeals of Maryland, the State's highest court, that are

identified as being of interest to the members of the General Assembly. Cases that involve the interpretation of statutes passed by the General Assembly have the highest priority in the selection of opinions to be included in the update.

## **Budget and Fiscal Documents**

### **Budget Books**

Sets of the books on the budget – one volume on the capital budget, three volumes on the operating budget, and one volume on budget highlights – are distributed to members by the Department of Budget and Management on the day the Governor submits the budget to the General Assembly. Electronic access is available through the Department of Budget and Management website (<http://www.dbm.maryland.gov>).

### **Analyses of the Maryland Executive Budget**

The *Analysis of the Maryland Executive Budget* documents include an agency-by-agency analysis of the budget submitted by the Governor, and the annual fiscal briefing, which summarizes the State's operating and capital budgets, economic activity and revenues, and extraordinary audit findings. The analyses of the operating and capital budgets, supplemental budgets, and budget reconciliation legislation are available on the General Assembly website.

### ***Joint Chairmen's Report (Operating and Capital Budgets)***

This report, by the chairs of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, incorporates detailed statements of all legislative reductions made to the operating and capital appropriations and includes narrative that expresses legislative intent and policy guidelines relative to the action taken. The report is released in April. The text is available on the General Assembly website.

### ***Local Government Finances in Maryland***

This document, published by the department and available on its website, summarizes revenues and expenditures of Baltimore City, counties, municipalities, and special taxing districts.

### **Fiscal Effects Report**

After the Governor has signed the session's bills into law, the department publishes *The Effect of the Legislative Program on the Financial Condition of the State* (also called "Fiscal

Effects”), which is posted online. This report identifies enacted legislation that affects State and local finances, summarizes State revenues and appropriations, and discusses the major fiscal issues of the session.

### ***Fiscal Digest***

Following the end of the session, the Department of Budget and Management publishes the *Fiscal Digest*, which summarizes the final actions taken by the General Assembly on the operating and capital budgets. The digest is available on the Department of Budget and Management website.

### **Comptroller’s Report**

After the close of a fiscal year, the State Comptroller issues a report, the *State of Maryland Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*, detailing actual revenues and expenditures. The report is available on the Comptroller’s website.

### **Capital Debt Affordability Committee Report**

Under Section 8-112 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, the Capital Debt Affordability Committee is required to submit a recommended level of debt authorization for the next fiscal year to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before October 20 of each year. The committee’s reports are available on the State Treasurer’s website.

### ***Effect of Long-term Debt on the Financial Condition of the State***

This annual report includes a review of the recommendations of the Capital Debt Affordability Committee, an independent affordability analysis, and a market analysis. The report is prepared by the department each November and is available on the General Assembly website.

### **Spending Affordability Committee Report**

In December of each year, the Spending Affordability Committee submits a report with recommendations on fiscal goals for the State budget to be considered at the next regular session of the General Assembly. In preparing the report, the committee reviews data concerning the economic status of Maryland, the budget and fiscal issues of previous fiscal years, projections for the next fiscal year, and the results of the Capital Debt Affordability Committee report. The report, along with spending affordability briefings from 2004, is available on the General Assembly website.



## **Board of Revenue Estimates**

Under Section 6-106 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, the Board of Revenue Estimates (which consists of the Comptroller, the Treasurer, and the Secretary of Budget and Management) is required to submit reports to the Governor that (1) contain an itemized statement of the estimated State revenues from all sources for the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the report is made and (2) include any recommendations of the board. The Governor is required to forward this report to the General Assembly.

The reports of the Board of Revenue Estimates are released in March, September, and December for the purposes of informing the Governor of the State's revenue picture at those three junctures. The reports are available on the State Comptroller's website.

## ***Measuring Maryland's Progress***

*Measuring Maryland's Progress* compiles various data dashboards prepared by the Office of Policy Analysis in key policy areas. The goal is to illustrate, in the form of graphs, maps, and explanatory text, Maryland's progress and performance in terms of finance, administration, public safety, health, population, and quality of life. The report is available on the department's website; the dashboards are updated periodically as new data becomes available.

## **General Information**

### ***Maryland Documents***

Under Section 2-1246 of the State Government Article, *Maryland Documents* is compiled each month for members of the General Assembly. This list of all State publications cataloged by Library and Information Services during the previous month is available on the department's website.

### ***Maryland Manual***

The State Archives publishes the *Maryland Manual*, which is a compendium of general information about the State and its government, including photographs and biographies of all the members of the General Assembly. It is available on the State Archives website (<http://msa.maryland.gov>).

### ***Maryland Register and Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)***

The *Maryland Register*, a biweekly publication of the Division of State Documents of the Office of the Secretary of State, contains notices of official actions by all agencies of State

government and serves as the temporary supplement to the *Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)*. Any change to the text of regulations published in *COMAR* must first be published in the *Maryland Register*. The *Maryland Register* and *COMAR* are available in Library and Information Services and online on the Secretary of State's website ([www.sos.state.md.us](http://www.sos.state.md.us)).

### ***Maryland Clipper***

The *Maryland Clipper* is a compilation of newspaper articles of general interest selected from numerous local, State, and national newspapers. Legislators and their staff receive the *Maryland Clipper* electronically each day during the session and weekly during the interim from Library and Information Services. For use in the library, past issues of the *Maryland Clipper* beginning with 1988 are compiled in chronological order and by subject.

### **State of Maryland Telephone Directory**

A telephone directory of State employees is compiled biennially by the Department of Budget and Management. It includes a section arranged by organizational unit and one with individuals arranged alphabetically by last name. The directory is available on the State of Maryland website ([www.maryland.gov](http://www.maryland.gov)).

### **Legislative Handbook Series**

The *Maryland Legislator's Handbook* is one volume of a series of books published every four years by the department. The handbook is designed to give members of the General Assembly an overview of the legislative process, the organization of the General Assembly, and the services and facilities available to legislators. The other volumes are *Government Services in Maryland*; *Maryland's Revenue Structure*; *Maryland's Budget Process*; *Maryland State Personnel, Pensions, and Procurement*; *Maryland Local Government*; *Business Regulation in Maryland*; *Maryland's Criminal and Juvenile Justice Process*; and *Education in Maryland*. The series is also available on the General Assembly website, and at the Library and Information Services' Information Desk.

### ***Guide to Graphics and Printing Services***

The *Guide to Graphics and Printing Services* assists legislators and their staff in preparing documents for reproduction by the legislative Print Shop, consistent with guidelines established by the Presiding Officers.

## **Department of Legislative Services Brochure**

This document familiarizes the General Assembly and the public with the organization and purpose of the department, and describes generally the programs, services, publications, and documents it provides. The department's website also contains extensive information on the department, its mission, programs, and services.

### ***Your Voice in Annapolis***

*Your Voice in Annapolis*, prepared by Library and Information Services, provides a short but comprehensive overview of the processes and procedures of the General Assembly. The booklet includes a brief history of the General Assembly, the roster of legislators current at the time of publication with Annapolis addresses, standing committee memberships, and chamber seating assignments. There is a description of the responsibilities of the General Assembly and the requirements mandated by the Maryland Constitution related to the passage of legislation. Information on how a bill becomes a law and on the process by which standing committees consider legislation is also included. Copies are available at the Information Desk, Library and Information Services.

## Chapter 8. Facilities

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### State House

The focal point of Legislative and Executive branch activities in Annapolis is the State House, situated within State Circle in the center of the city. This building is the oldest state capitol in continuous legislative use. The first floor contains the chambers of the Senate and the House of Delegates with the Presiding Officers and their staff occupying suites of offices on corridors that parallel the two chambers. Offices of the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Delegates are located along the corridors. A lounge for members is located at the rear of each chamber.

The second floor houses the offices of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Governor's staff. The Governor's Reception Room, located in the Governor's suite, is the site of bill signings. Also on the second floor are the visitors' galleries of the House and Senate chambers.

The press occupies offices on the ground floor of the State House. Currently, a legislative information desk on that floor is operated full time for the benefit of legislators, staff, and the public. Once the reconstruction of the Legislative Services Building is complete, the information desk will move to that facility and will only be available in the State House during session. Also during session, the Amendment Office of the Department of Legislative Services is on the ground floor, and Printing Services maintains auxiliary copying facilities there as well. The ground floor of the State House includes additional space for the Governor's staff, President's staff, and Speaker's staff; and a lounge for student pages.

### Senate Office Buildings

The James Senate Office Building and the Miller Senate Office Building house offices for senators, committee offices, and public hearing rooms.

Offices for senators occupy the building at College Avenue and Bladen Street, the William S. James Senate Office Building, named for the Harford County senator who served as President of the body from 1963 to 1975. Each senator has a suite consisting of a private office and an office for staff, with a conference room for every four senators. Ceremonial conference rooms are located on the first floor and a reception room on the second floor. The Majority Leader and the Minority Leader maintain offices on the second and fourth floors, respectively. Adjacent to their offices are meeting rooms for the majority and minority caucus meetings. The basement contains quarters for a canteen that currently operates only during session.

The Miller Senate Office Building, dedicated January 9, 2001, and named after Maryland's longest serving Senate President, 1987-2020, Thomas V. 'Mike' Miller, Jr., provides

offices and meeting rooms for the primary standing committees of the Senate. Located on Bladen Street, the building is connected to the James Senate Office Building by enclosed walkways.

Offices for the President of the Senate and staff are in one section of the first floor, although the President's principal office is in the State House. The first floor of the Miller Senate Office Building also has two large conference rooms and a media center for news broadcasts and press conferences. Exhibits on the first floor are developed and curated by the staff of the Maryland State Archives and address various topics in Maryland history. They include highlights from the Archives' holdings of prints, photographs, ephemera, and artistic property.

Offices for committee chairs and vice chairs of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the Judicial Proceedings Committee are located on the second floor. Budget and Taxation Committee and Finance Committee offices are located on the third floor. Each committee has office space for staff and a public hearing room with a vestibule for those waiting to testify on legislation. Galleries on both floors provide space for guest exhibitions. The second walkway to the James Senate Office Building is on the second floor.

The fourth floor contains one additional committee hearing room used by the Executive Nominations Committee and other groups, and two hearing rooms for subcommittees of the Budget and Taxation Committee and other groups.

The Miller Senate Office Building also contains a legislative supply office and parking for senators and staff on the lower levels of the building.

## **House Office Building**

Situated directly across Bladen Street from the Senate Office Building complex is the House Office Building. The original building was completed in 1975 with a new addition completed in 2006. It provides offices for the delegates, hearing rooms, and other facilities. The main floor of the House Office Building contains hearing rooms and offices of the chairs, vice chairs, and staffs of the House Appropriations, Ways and Means, and Judiciary committees. There is meeting space for several county delegations, as well as additional offices for delegates and staff and additional meeting space. A public lounge, media room, and a multipurpose room are also located on the first floor.

The second floor of the House Office Building contains the hearing rooms and offices for the chairs, vice chairs, and staff of three House committees: Economic Matters, Environment and Transportation, and Health and Government Operations. The remainder of this floor provides office space for delegates, staff, and additional meeting space.

On the third and fourth floors are offices of delegates and their staff and additional meeting space. On the third floor of the new addition, there are also offices for the Speaker of the House, although the Speaker's principal office is in the State House. Beneath the main floor of the House Office Building there is parking for delegates.

## **Legislative Services Building**

The original Legislative Services Building was demolished in June 2022 and its replacement is under construction in the same location across State Circle from the State House and adjacent to Lawyers' Mall. Completion of the new facility is anticipated by December 2024. The construction includes the renovation of the tunnels connecting the legislative complex to the State House. Legislative Services staff members are dispersed throughout the legislative complex with additional options for remote work.

## **Parking**

Special parking areas are maintained for members of the General Assembly and their staff. Members of the Senate have parking spaces in the lower levels of the Miller Senate Office Building. House members have spaces in the garage of the House Office Building. To gain access, members must scan their photo badges at sensors located at the entrance to these garages.

Special numbered automobile license plates bearing the inscription "Senate" or "House of Delegates" are issued to members by the Motor Vehicle Administration. Requests for these special tags are made through the offices of the President and the Speaker.

Some legislative employees are assigned parking spaces nearby during the legislative session and interim. Other staff park in the Calvert Street Garage, completed in 2006. Access is gained by scanning one's photo badge at sensors located at the garage entrances. In addition, legislative employees may park at the Naval Academy Stadium. A shuttle bus operates from the stadium parking lot to provide transportation between the lot and the Annapolis government complex. Legislative employees must scan their photo badges to gain access to reserved parking at the stadium and may ride the shuttle free of charge.

## **Security**

Buildings in the capitol complex are accessible to the public only through specified entrances. The State House has two entrances open to the public, one on the first floor and the other on the ground floor. Both are on the Lawyers' Mall side of State Circle. Visitors must enter the Senate Building complex and the House Office Building at their main entrances on Bladen Street. The Legislative Services Building will be accessible at the entrance on Lawyers' Mall once the new facility is completed.

To enter a building, visitors must present a photo identification card, such as a driver's license, and pass through a metal detector. Security officers also search bags and other personal effects. Temporary badges are then issued and must be visible for the duration of the visit.

Legislators and legislative staff are required to have photo badges and may access the buildings by scanning their badges at sensors located at various entrances. Other State employees are allowed access to the complex on presentation and display of their State photo badges.

## Chapter 9. The General Assembly of Maryland – Historical Summary

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### Early History

On February 26, 1635, some 11 months after the first Maryland settlers landed on an island in the Potomac, which they named for Saint Clement, the freemen of the new colony of Lord Baltimore gathered at St. Mary's City for the first General Assembly meeting of the province. They were there acting under the charter issued by Charles I in 1632, giving the Proprietary authority to enact laws, "with the Advice, Assent and Approbation of the Free-Men of the same Province" and decreeing that these "Free-Men, or their Delegates or Deputies, shall be called together for the framing of LAWS, when, and as often as Need shall require...."

In large part, the first legislative assemblies of Maryland reflected conditions in the parent nation, and their struggle with the Proprietary over the meaning of "advice and assent" mirrored the fight of the English Parliament to supersede the monarch as the highest legislative authority.

Due to lack of records, little is known of this first General Assembly meeting. It is certain, however, that it was a gathering of all the freemen of the province, in person or by proxy, in an atmosphere resembling a town meeting. The freemen mentioned in the charter and in the early archives were the male inhabitants, 21 years of age or older and free of bondage.

The second session of the General Assembly opened on January 25, 1638, with Governor Calvert presiding. The Assembly gave Governor Calvert general supervision of the proceedings and the decorum of the body and proceeded to adopt a set of rules of order based on standards of conduct and procedure that had been developed over the centuries by the English Parliament. These included the hours of opening morning and afternoon sessions, the requirements for a quorum, and general rules of conduct while speaking. Another rule adopted at a later date during the session was "that all bills propounded to the house for lawes, should be 3 times read on 3 severall days afore they should be putt to the vote."

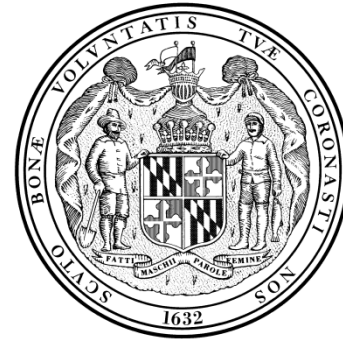


## The Great Seal of Maryland

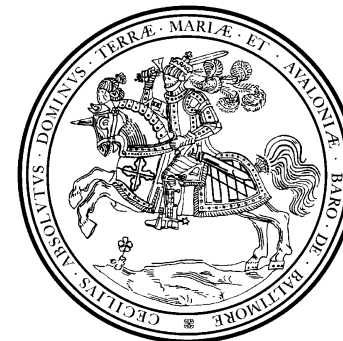
The Great Seal of Maryland is used by the Governor and the Secretary of State to authenticate Acts of the legislature and for other official purposes. The first Great Seal was sent from England shortly after settlement of the Colony. It remained in use, although slightly altered, until the Revolution. Maryland then adopted a new seal similar in form and spirit to those of other states. One hundred years later, the State of Maryland readopted its old seal (Joint Resolution No. 5, Acts of 1876).

The reverse consists of an escutcheon, or shield, bearing the Calvert and Crossland coats of arms quartered. Above is an earl's coronet and a full-faced helmet. The escutcheon is supported on one side by a farmer and on the other by a fisherman. It symbolizes Lord Baltimore's two estates: Maryland and Avalon in Newfoundland. The Calvert motto on the scroll is "Fatti maschii parole femine," usually translated "strong deeds, gentle words." The Latin legend on the border (the last verse of Psalms 5 from the Vulgate) is translated "with favor wilt thou compass us as with a shield." The date, 1632, refers to the year the Maryland Charter was granted to Cecilius Calvert, second Lord Baltimore.

The obverse of the seal shows Lord Baltimore as a knight in full armor mounted on a charger. The inscription translated is "Cecilius, Absolute Lord of Maryland and Avalon, Baron of Baltimore."



**REVERSE**



**OBVERSE**

But the main business before this second General Assembly was whether it would accept the bills drafted and presented to it for “advice, assent and approbation” by the Lord Proprietor. The Assembly ignored these and on its own initiative passed other bills that were sent along to the Proprietary for his assent.

Cecil Calvert challenged the legality of the Assembly’s action, and when the legislative body met again in February 1639, it had before it another set of bills proposed by the Proprietor.

The freemen moved promptly to reject Lord Baltimore’s proposals. On the second day of the session they voted, 37 to 14, against the bills he proposed. The 14 affirmative votes were those of the Governor and his council, including the proxies they held. The journal of the session states that the proposal was “denied by all the rest of the assembly, being 37 votes.”

The legislators themselves had their own ideas about their prerogatives. They chose a committee of five members to draft a new set of bills. Forty-two of these were passed before adjournment on February 25. All were rejected at first by Lord Baltimore but then, in August of that year, he relented, settling once and for all the General Assembly’s right to initiate and pass laws, reserving to himself the right to veto.

## **Seeds of Bicameralism**

Although these first assemblies in form were a single house comprised of all the freemen of the Province, either in person or by proxy, they contained the seeds of bicameralism and representative government, both well established in English legislative tradition.

The first two meetings (in 1635 and 1638) were attended by the Governor, his secretary and the members of his council, the freemen generally, in person or by proxy, and, in the 1638 meeting, by burgesses chosen by the inhabitants of Kent Island.

The idea of presence in the assembly by representation was pushed a step further in the writs of summons issued in the name of the Proprietary in the winter of 1638-1639 for the session that opened on February 25, 1639. Special writs were issued to members of the council and close associates of the Governor. General writs were issued commanding the inhabitants in the “hundreds” (civil subdivisions) to hold meetings and “chuse two or more discreet and honest men to be their deputies or burgesses....”

At the 1639 session the assembly passed what it entitled “An Act what persons shall be called to every Generall Assembly.” As the title suggests, it defined the constituency of the legislative body, with allotments as follows: (1) “everyone being of the Council of this Province”; (2) “any other Gentlemen of able judgment and quality Summoned by this Writt”; (3) “the Lord of every Mannor within this Province after Mannors are erected”; and (4) representatives of all the hundreds. The writs of summons specified that there be an election in each hundred to “chuse some one, two or more able and Sufficient men for the hundreds (as the said Freemen or the major part of them so assembled shall think good)....”

Another Act at the same session provided a quorum of 12 members, the “Lieutenant Generall (Governor) and Secretary of the Province to be alwaies two,” named the legislative body “the house of Assembly,” and decreed that a bill to become law required approval of the “major part of the Persons assembled” and the assent of “the Lieutenant Generall in behalf of the Lord Proprietarie.”

The apportionment of membership among the localities appeared to have been of no concern whatsoever until 1640, when the writs of summons began to indicate the number of burgesses the hundreds might be expected to send to the Assembly. For the session of October 1640, the writ for Kent Island<sup>1</sup> specified that this jurisdiction select “one or more” burgesses, “not exceeding four.” St. Clement’s hundred was told to send one, and the remaining hundreds (St. Mary’s, St. George’s, and St. Michael’s) two each.

In addition to these, there were, of course, the special writs for the members of the council and special friends of the Governor.

Mathias de Sousa, a man of mixed African and European descent who arrived as an indentured servant with Maryland’s first settlers in March of 1634, participated among the “Freeman in Attendance” in the General Assembly’s 1642 session, making him the first person of African heritage to sit in a legislative assembly in Maryland and likely in colonial America.

Apportionment of the membership became a legal reality in an Act of 1650 creating two chambers, an upper house comprised of the Governor, the Secretary of the Province, and members of the council, and a lower house consisting of 11 members from St. Mary’s County, 1 member from “Ile of Kent County,” and 2 members from that “part of the Province called Providence.”<sup>2</sup>

After the British revolution of 1688 and the installation of William and Mary as monarchs, Maryland became a crown colony. At the first General Assembly under the Royal Governor in 1692, the Act of Toleration was repealed, Anglicanism became the established religion, and there began a series of Catholic persecutions and repressions that continued in varying measures of severity until Maryland became an independent state in 1776.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time a “hundred” of St. Mary’s County.

<sup>2</sup> Now Anne Arundel County.

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## The Mace and Speaker's Medallion

For over 320 years, the House of Delegates has not gone into session without displaying one of its most cherished possessions, the Mace – an ebony and silver staff measuring 24½ inches long by 1¾ inches in diameter. Traditionally used to bring witnesses before the House and to keep order, the Mace in use today is believed to be the same one first presented to the Speaker of the House of Delegates (then known as the Lower House of Assembly) by Governor Francis Nicholson in 1697 or 1698. It was offered in the English parliamentary tradition; the English House of Commons first used a mace as a symbol of resistance to King Charles I. At one point, the silver on the Maryland Mace was engraved with the 1794 Great Seal. Today, it remains a symbol of the independence and authority of the House.

In 1995 the Mace served as the inspiration for the Speaker's Medallion, an award now given annually to two individuals: one is a former member of the House of Delegates chosen in recognition of an outstanding career of service and one is an individual chosen for his or her exemplary service to the House and the State of Maryland. The Speaker's Medallion depicts the Mace backed by the Maryland flag on one side, and the 1794 Great Seal of Maryland encircled with the words, "Industry the Means, Plenty the Result," the State motto from 1794 to 1817, on the other.

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Except for one or two brief intervals, the seat of government in Maryland had remained in St. Mary's City where it was established in 1634. In the minds of some Protestants, St. Mary's City symbolized Catholic-Calvert authority, and when the Protestants became the dominant political force, they began a clamor for the removal of the capital.

As St. Mary's City was the center of Catholic traditionalism, the center of Protestant insurgency in the Province was an area known variously as Proctor's Landing, Providence, Ann Arundel Town, and finally Annapolis. It was to here that Protestants wished to move the capital, and, over protests of the inhabitants of St. Mary's City, the seat of government was established at this site on the Severn River in the winter of 1694-95.

The General Assembly met for the first time in the new capital in 1695, and there it has sat continuously since, with two exceptions. In April 1757 an epidemic of smallpox in Annapolis drove it to Baltimore, and in April 1861, it left Annapolis and repaired to Frederick, a city sympathetic to the Union.

## **Constitution of 1776**

Elections for a constitutional convention were held in the summer of 1776, and on August 14 of that year the convention assembled in Annapolis. On November 3 a Declaration of Rights was adopted, and five days later the constitution itself was accepted.

The Declaration of Rights, adopted just a few months after the colonies declared themselves independent of British rule, reaffirmed the independence of Maryland as a state.

It provided for the separation of executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The essential rights of individuals, imbedded in the common law and in the English Bill of Rights of 1689, were recited – freedom of speech and assembly, the right of trial by jury and due process, freedom from unwarranted search and seizure, etc. Religious freedom in Maryland was restored, the protection being confined, however, to persons professing the Christian religion.

The Constitution of 1776 established a legislature consisting of “two distinct branches, a senate and a house of delegates, which shall be stiled the General Assembly of Maryland.”

In the House of Delegates, each of the 18 counties was allotted 4 delegates, and Annapolis and Baltimore were allotted 2 each. Delegates were chosen by popular vote for one-year terms. The Senate was composed of 15 members, 9 from the Western Shore, and 6 from the Eastern Shore, chosen by electors elected by the people, 2 from each county and 1 each from Annapolis and Baltimore. Senators were elected for five years.

Distrust of executive authority and reliance upon the legislature, deriving from years of unpleasant experience with Royal and Proprietary executive power, was evident in this first State constitution. Governors were elected by the General Assembly for one-year terms. The executive veto was abolished.

The first General Assembly under the constitution met February 10, 1777. It elected Thomas Johnson as Governor and set about enacting laws for the prosecution of the War of Independence.

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## First Citizen Awards

Each session the President of the Maryland Senate bestows “First Citizen Awards” to individuals who demonstrate their dedication and effectiveness as participants in the process of making government work for the benefit of all. First presented in 1992, the First Citizen Award is a citation embellished with a reproduction of a medal honoring Charles Carroll of Carrollton in 1826. It is given with a book devoted to a lengthy debate waged in the *Maryland Gazette* in 1773 between Charles Carroll of Carrollton and Daniel Delany, a well-known lawyer of the day. Signing his columns, “First Citizen,” Charles Carroll of Carrollton called for freedom and a restructuring of government based on the advice and consent of the people. He was a renowned Maryland legislator, helping to draft the State’s first Constitution, signing the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and serving as a member and the President of the Maryland Senate from 1777 to 1801 and as one of Maryland’s first U.S. Senators. Yet, Charles Carroll of Carrollton was paradoxically also an enslaver. While many signers of the Declaration of Independence and many “founding fathers” of Maryland were enslavers, Carroll was one of the largest. He held 453 enslaved as personal property in 1783. At the same time, as Maryland Senate President, he welcomed the Confederation Congress to use his Chamber for ten months when the Maryland State House was the nation’s Capitol.

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## Reforms of 1836-37

The structure of government remained essentially unchanged over the ensuing decades. Property qualifications for voting were removed in 1801 and for holding office in 1809. However, in 1802, the General Assembly amended the Constitution of 1776 to limit the right to vote to free, white men. Free, non-white males were for the first time denied the right to vote in Maryland on the basis of race alone.

And then, in 1836-37, the people approved sweeping constitutional reforms. Replacing an electoral college model, the amendments provided for the direct popular election of Governor and State senators. The Governor’s term was extended to three years. Most importantly, these amendments took steps to make the legislature more representative by beginning to equalize election districts. Conversely, though, the General Assembly’s 1836-37 Acts also amended the Constitution of 1776 to protect the property rights of Maryland enslavers by stating that “The relations of master and slave, in this State, shall not be abolished unless a bill to abolish the same shall be passed by a unanimous vote of the members of each branch of the general assembly” two sessions in a row.

The Senate was comprised of 21 members, with each county and Baltimore City represented by one senator. Senators' terms were for six years, staggered in a fashion to provide for a renewal of a third of the body's membership every two years.

Two systems for the apportionment of the House seats were provided: one for before and one for after the taking of the decennial census of 1840.

Members of the House, still elected for one-year terms, were selected prior to the promulgation of the 1840 census with each county, Baltimore City, and Annapolis granted a designated apportionment. Baltimore City was allocated five delegates, as many as the largest counties.

After the census, any county with over 35,000 people got the maximum six delegates. Baltimore City was entitled to as many delegates as the most populous county. For apportionment purposes, Annapolis was considered a part of Anne Arundel County and lost its individual delegate.

The General Assembly's 1836-37 Acts also amended the Constitution of 1766 to protect the property rights of Maryland enslavers by stating that "The relations of master and slave, in this State, shall not be abolished unless a bill to abolish the same shall be passed by a unanimous vote of the members of each branch of the general assembly" two sessions in a row.

By an amendment effective in 1846, the General Assembly began holding sessions biennially and delegates were elected to terms of two years.

## **Constitution of 1851**

At the 1849 legislative session, the General Assembly passed an act calling for consulting the people in a referendum on May 8, 1850, on calling a constitutional convention. That convention was approved and convened in Annapolis on November 4, 1850. Controversy at the convention centered on the question of apportionment of legislative membership. The city of Baltimore, whose population had mushroomed, principally as a result of European immigration, clamored for the apportionment of both houses on the basis of population.

In the Constitution of 1851, the General Assembly was empowered to reapportion the House of Delegates after each federal census on the basis of population, with certain qualifications. The House was to be composed of no more than 80 and no fewer than 65 members. No county would have fewer than two members, and Baltimore City was to have four more than was allotted to the most populous county. The Senate apportionment remained unchanged – one senator from Baltimore City and each of the counties, elected to four-year terms, staggered to provide renewal of half the body every two years.

Obviously, more than a decade would elapse before another federal census, and so an interim apportionment of the House was arranged, based somewhat upon population but strongly favoring the smaller counties.

The Constitution of 1851 also forbade passage of “any law abolishing the relation of master or slave, as it now exists in this State” in Article 3, section 43. This set the stage for enacting a new constitution in 1864 to legally end slavery in Maryland.

## **Civil War**

Because of the Civil War and the social upheaval that accompanied it, the General Assembly ceased to be an effective instrument of government during the war.

Governor Thomas Holliday Hicks for months resisted the pleas of secessionists for a special session to vote on secession. Finally, on April 26, 1861, he did call such a session but held it in Frederick, a Union stronghold far from secessionist Annapolis. The Assembly promptly rejected secession. For the remainder of the conflict, Maryland remained under Union military authority.

## **Constitution of 1864**

The Civil War constitution – the Constitution of 1864 – was notable primarily because it abolished slavery, declared the U.S. Constitution and the laws passed thereunder to be “the supreme law of the land,” and denied the franchise to Southern activists and Southern sympathizers.

In its legislative provisions, the General Assembly improved the principle of fair representation by allowing Baltimore City three senators and making the apportionment formula of the House of Delegates more fair. Baltimore City was divided into three legislative districts, each entitled, as was each county, to one senator. The formula for House apportionment, based on white population (as it was calculated then), was:

- for every population of 5,000, or fraction thereof greater than one-half, one delegate until a total of five delegates was reached;
- for the next 20,000, or fraction thereof greater than one-half, one delegate; and
- for every 80,000 thereafter, or fraction thereof greater than one-half, one delegate.

This formula was to be applied after the next decennial census, but, since a new constitution was adopted prior to that time, it never became effective.



The Constitution of 1864 also created the position of Lieutenant Governor, an officer to preside over the Senate and succeed the Governor in case of death, resignation, or removal from office.

## **Constitution of 1867**

Some two years after the surrender at Appomattox, another constitutional convention met in Annapolis, and a new constitution, supplanting one scarcely three years old, was ratified by the people on September 18, 1867.

The new constitution revoked certain war measures and softened others aimed primarily at Southern sympathizers. It removed as obsolete the elaborate provisions for voting by soldiers, a device to assure Union control of the State during the war. Likewise, prohibitions on voting and office-holding by supporters of the Confederate cause were repealed.

The anti-slavery articles of the State Constitution were kept intact but were mollified somewhat to allow former slave owners to be compensated by the federal government, if such compensation were ever authorized. The statement in the Declaration of Rights that every Maryland citizen owed “paramount allegiance” to the constitution and government of the United States was attenuated into a statement that the federal constitution and laws passed thereunder are the “supreme law of the land.”

The Constitution of 1867 established, for the first time since Independence, an executive veto. It also terminated Maryland’s first brief venture with a lieutenant governorship.

The apportionment of the General Assembly was settled with little controversy in this convention. Allotment of Senate seats remained unchanged – one for each of the counties and for each of the three legislative districts in Baltimore.

A weighted apportionment formula based on population was continued for the House as follows:

Under 18,000	two delegates
18,000 - 28,000	three delegates
28,000 - 40,000	four delegates
40,000 - 55,000	five delegates
Over 55,000	six delegates

Each Baltimore City legislative district was entitled to the number of delegates of the largest counties. This formula was to be applied following each decennial census, beginning with the 1870 census.

The Constitution of 1867 remains Maryland’s basic law. It has been amended repeatedly, however, and in the process has undergone some rather drastic alterations.

Apportionment of the membership of the two houses of the General Assembly remained unchanged for more than 30 years, until finally, in 1901, another legislative district was carved out in Baltimore, giving the city another senator and six more delegates. By an amendment approved in 1922, two more districts were added, giving the city 6 senators and 36 delegates.

This weighted apportionment formula, establishing maximums at a fairly low population level, obviously favored the smaller counties over the large counties and Baltimore City. With the remarkable population growth that followed World War II, it became so unfair that in 1950 a constitutional amendment was adopted freezing the House of Delegates apportionment at the level prescribed by the 1940 census enumeration.

After the legislature in Maryland and in other states persistently refused to heed the growing demand for apportionment reform, courts throughout the country intervened, and, beginning about 1962, a series of federal and State decisions enunciated the doctrine of “one person, one vote.”

Maryland’s first attempt to comply was to reapportion the House and leave Senate representation unchanged. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, ruled that both the Senate apportionment and the “stopgap” House reapportionment were unconstitutional, and a special session of the General Assembly was called in 1966 to reapportion both houses in conformity with court decrees. The General Assembly reapportioned itself, providing a House of Delegates with 142 seats and a Senate with 43 seats.

The legislature’s self-reapportionment to comply with the Supreme Court’s orders was only a temporary stopgap. Governor Tawes used the opportunity to call the 1967 constitutional convention. The constitutional convention drafted a model, modern constitution, but it was rejected by the voters in the spring of 1968. In the wake of this “Magnificent Failure,” however, the legislature still had to be reapportioned. A 1970 constitutional amendment enshrined the constitutional requirement of “one person, one vote,” set the size of the legislature at 43 senators and 142 delegates and provided for reapportionment every 10 years. Finally, in 1972, the constitution was amended once more to set the membership in the legislature as it is today: 47 senators and 141 delegates.

## **Terms and Sessions**

By an amendment adopted in 1922, terms of members of the House of Delegates were increased from two years to four years.

Beginning in 1846, the General Assembly held regular sessions every two years. This continued, under the constitutions of 1851, 1864, and 1867, until 1948, when a constitutional amendment was adopted providing for annual sessions, a 90-day session in odd-numbered years and a 30-day session in even-numbered years, the latter to deal only with the budget and emergency measures.

In a 1965 amendment, 70-day annual sessions were approved, and in 1970 regular sessions were increased to 90 days, with an optional 30 extra days, if approved by a three-fifths vote in each house.

## Changes to the Capitol Complex

In the late 1960s, the 1939 State Office Building was remodeled to create space for offices and committee rooms for the Senate; in 1974, it was dedicated to Senate President William S. James. In 1975, a new House of Delegates building at the corner of College Avenue and Bladen Street was built to provide office space for House members for the first time, as well as adequate space for committees to meet. The House Office Building was named after former Speaker Thomas Hunter Lowe. Changes to the capitol complex have continued to the present time. A new Senate Office Building was finished in 2001. Named after the late Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., the longest serving Senate President in Maryland history and in the nation's history of state legislatures. The Miller Senate Office Building is now the home of the Senate standing committees and contains some office space. The James Senate Office Building was renovated in 2001-2002 and rededicated in March 2003. An addition to the House Office Building, named in honor of former Speaker of the House, Casper R. Taylor, Jr., was completed in 2006. The new wing contains larger, more modern committee rooms and additional space to accommodate the public.

The Legislative Services Building which was constructed in 1976 to provide central support facilities for the General Assembly and space for the nonpartisan professional staff was demolished in 2022 to make way for a more modern structure. Upon completion new tunnels will connect the Legislative Services Building to the Senate and House office buildings and the State House. The space between the Governor's Mansion and the new Legislative Services Building, once an open throughfare, has been closed and landscaped and is now known as Lawyers' Mall.

In 1996, Lawyers' Mall was updated with the addition of the Thurgood Marshall Memorial in honor of United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the great civil rights leader, first African American justice of the United States Supreme Court, and native Marylander. The memorial, dedicated on October 22, 1996, includes an eight-foot statue of Justice Marshall as a young lawyer. Behind the statue are pillars inscribed "Equal Justice Under the Law." Facing the statue are two benches. On one bench is the figure of Donald Gaines Murray, whose entrance into the University of Maryland Law School marked Marshall's first important victory in his struggle for school integration. On the second bench are the figures of two children representing Marshall's most famous case, *Brown v. Board of Education*. Within the circle of the memorial plaza is a chronology of the important events in Justice Marshall's long and distinguished career. Lawyers' Mall was tripled in size, planted with native Maryland plants, and rededicated in April 2021.

## **The General Assembly in the Digital Age**

The General Assembly provides a full range of computer services and office automation, including Internet access, email, and custom legislative applications. Legislative applications include preparation of bills, fiscal and policy notes, amendments, budget analyses, and web-based applications.

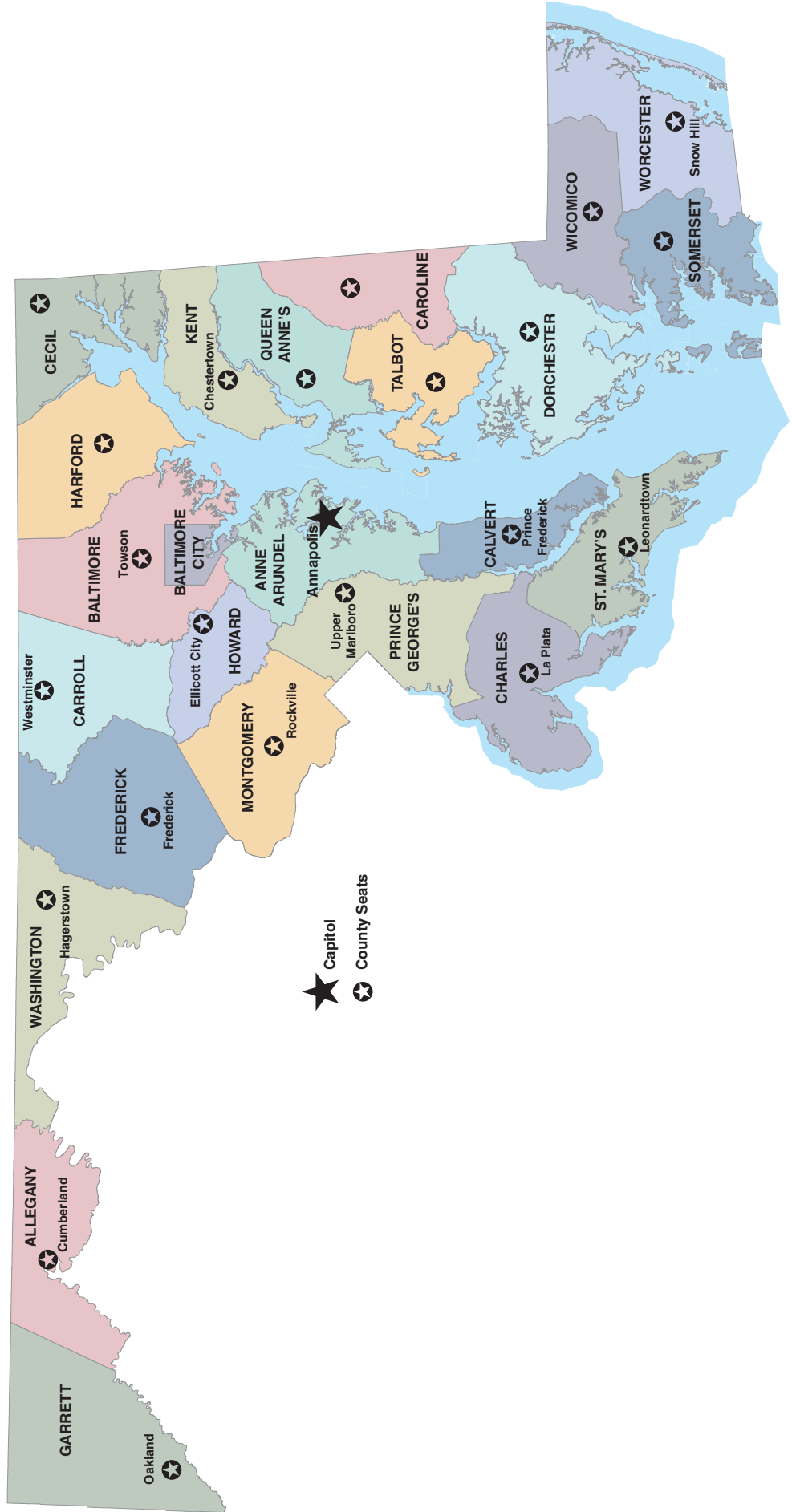
The General Assembly website (<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>) provides copies of bills and their synopses, bill status information, the schedule of hearings and committee meetings, budget analyses, commission and task force reports, the roster and list of committees, and a myriad of other materials. House and Senate hearings are also streamed live on the website or may also be available via a Zoom format which was utilized during the COVID–19 pandemic. House and Senate floor proceedings are also streamed live during each session on the website.

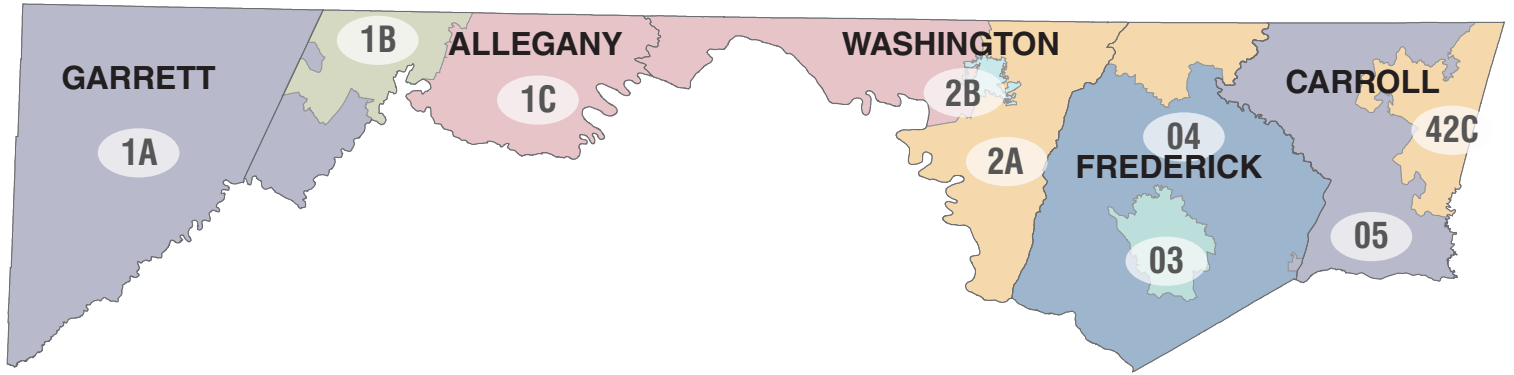
The Department of Legislative Services also has a website (<http://dls.maryland.gov>) that provides a description of the mission and functions of the agency, the nonpartisan body supporting the General Assembly. These websites have in many ways made the work of the General Assembly significantly more visible and accessible.



**Appendix 1**  
**Maps of Maryland – State Legislative Districts**

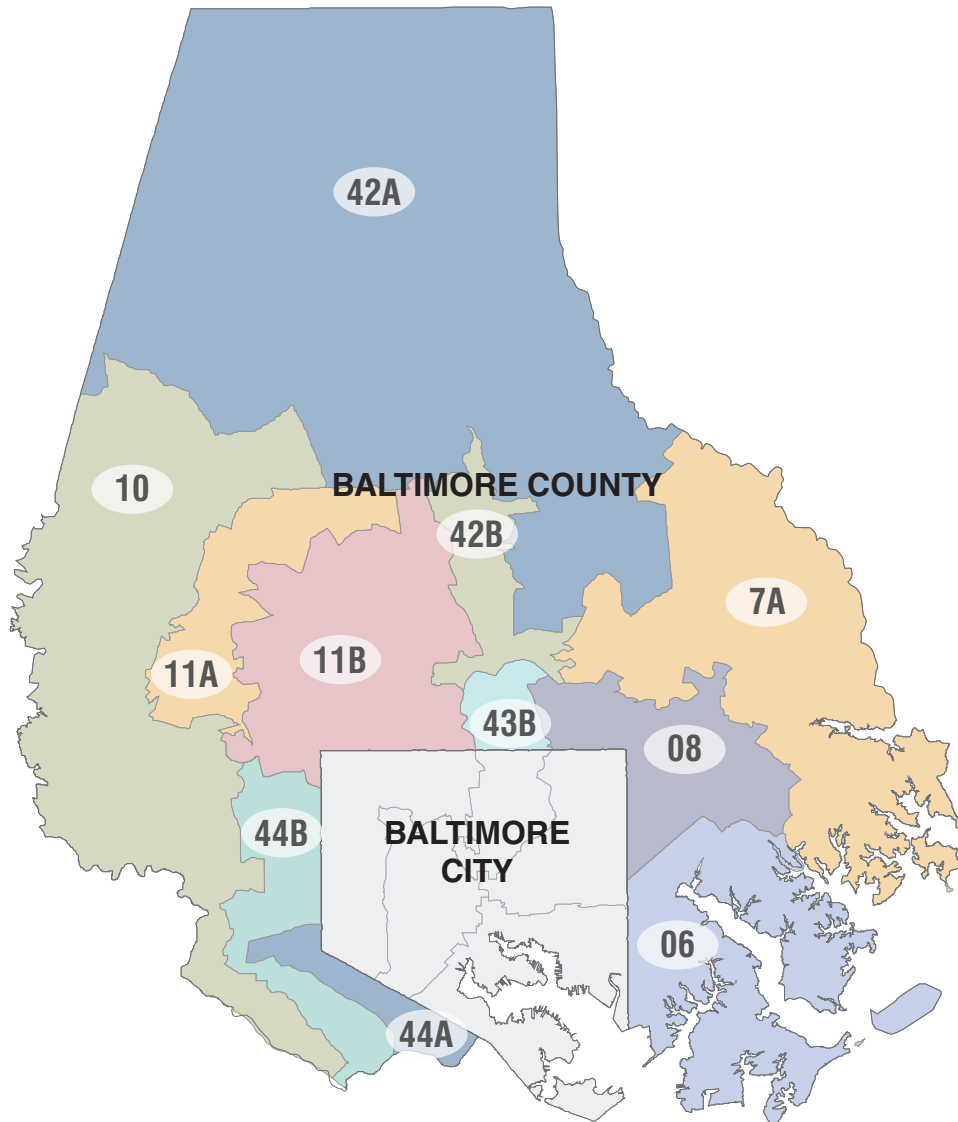
**Maryland Counties**





### MAP 1 – State Legislative Districts

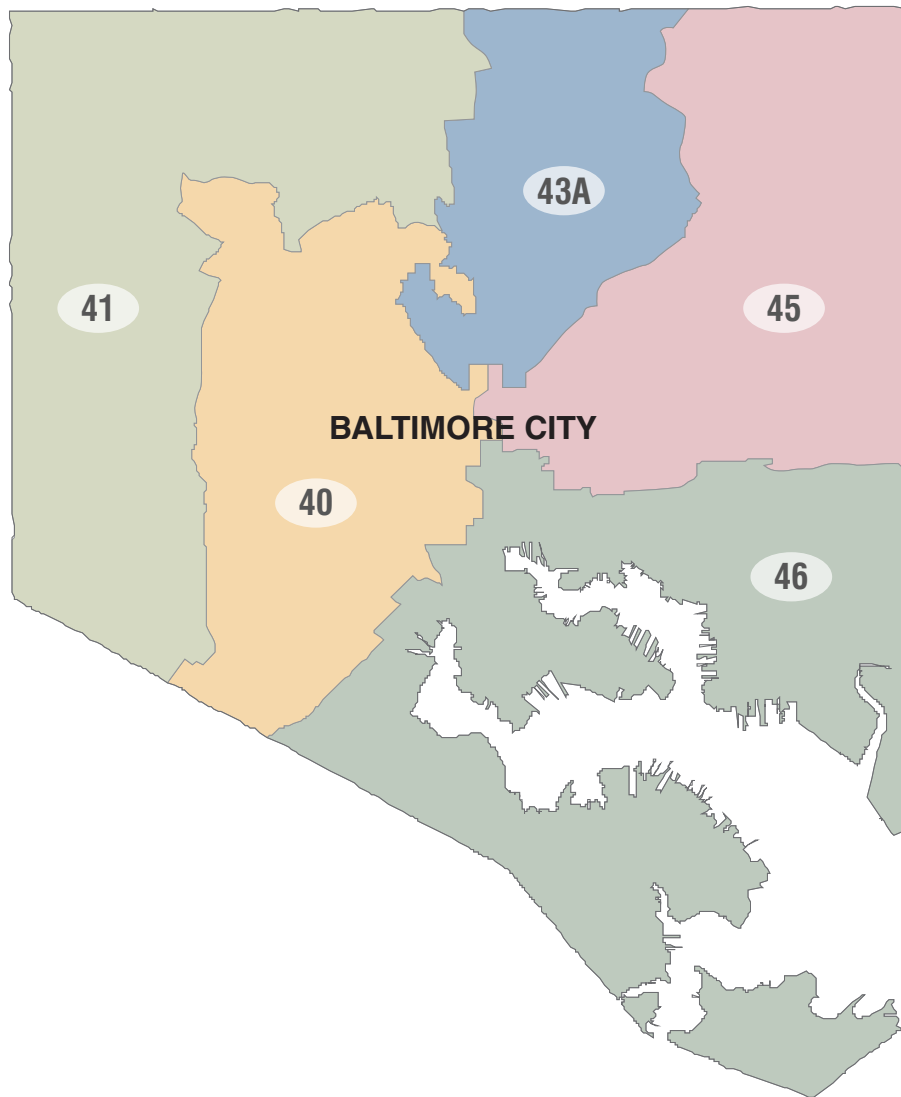
County	District
Garrett	1 (1A)
Allegany	1 (1A, 1B, 1C)
Washington	1 (1C), 2 (2A, 2B)
Frederick	3–4
Carroll	5, 42 (42C)



**MAP 2 – State Legislative Districts**

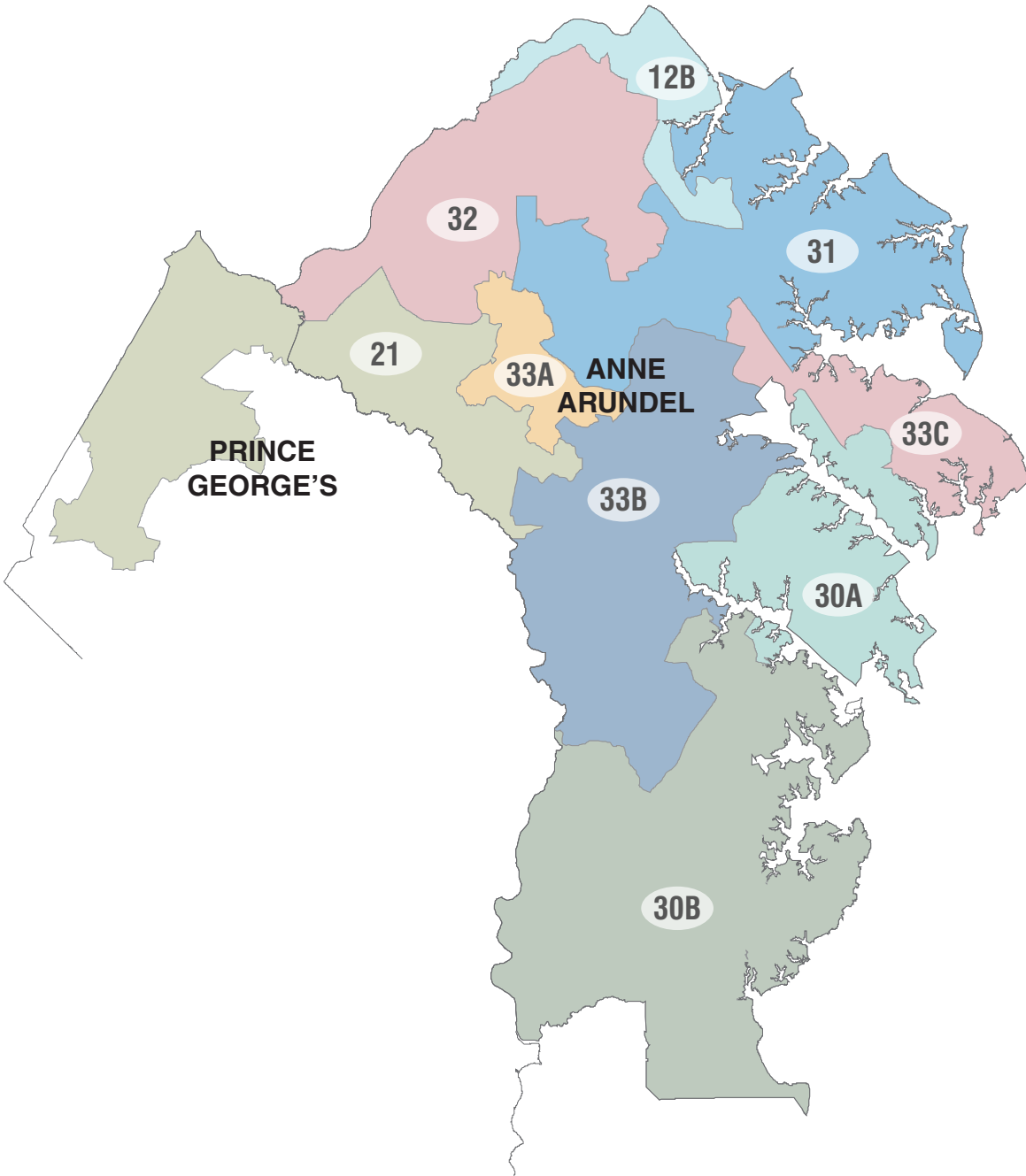
<b>County</b>	<b>District</b>
Baltimore	6–8 (7A), 10–11 (11A, 11B), 42–44 (42A, 42B, 43B, 44A, 44B)





**MAP 3 – State Legislative Districts**

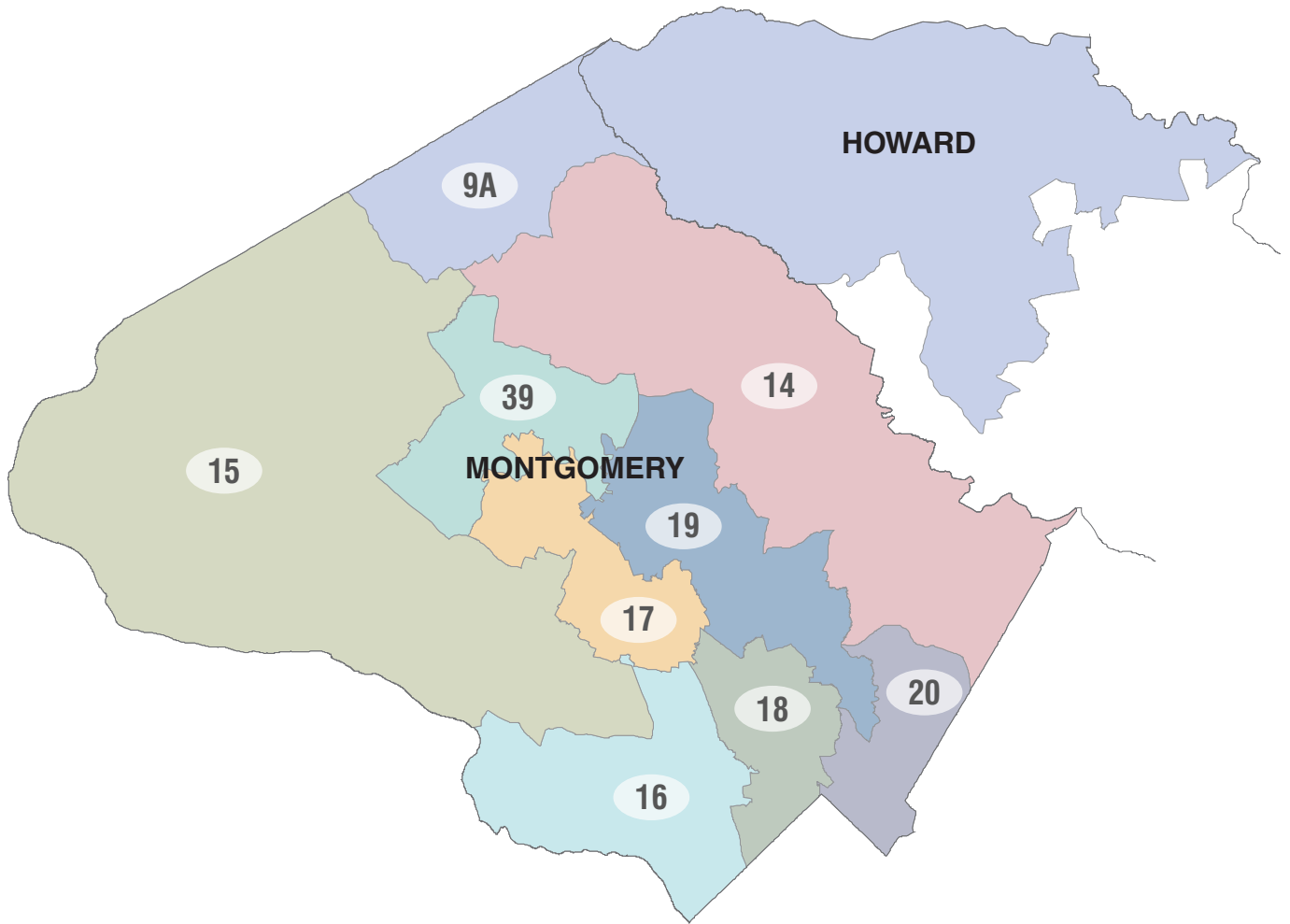
<b>County</b>	<b>District</b>
Baltimore City	40–41, 43 (43A), 45–46



**MAP 4 – State Legislative Districts**

County	District
Prince George's	21
Anne Arundel	12 (12B), 21, 30–33 (30A, 30B, 33A, 33B, 33C)

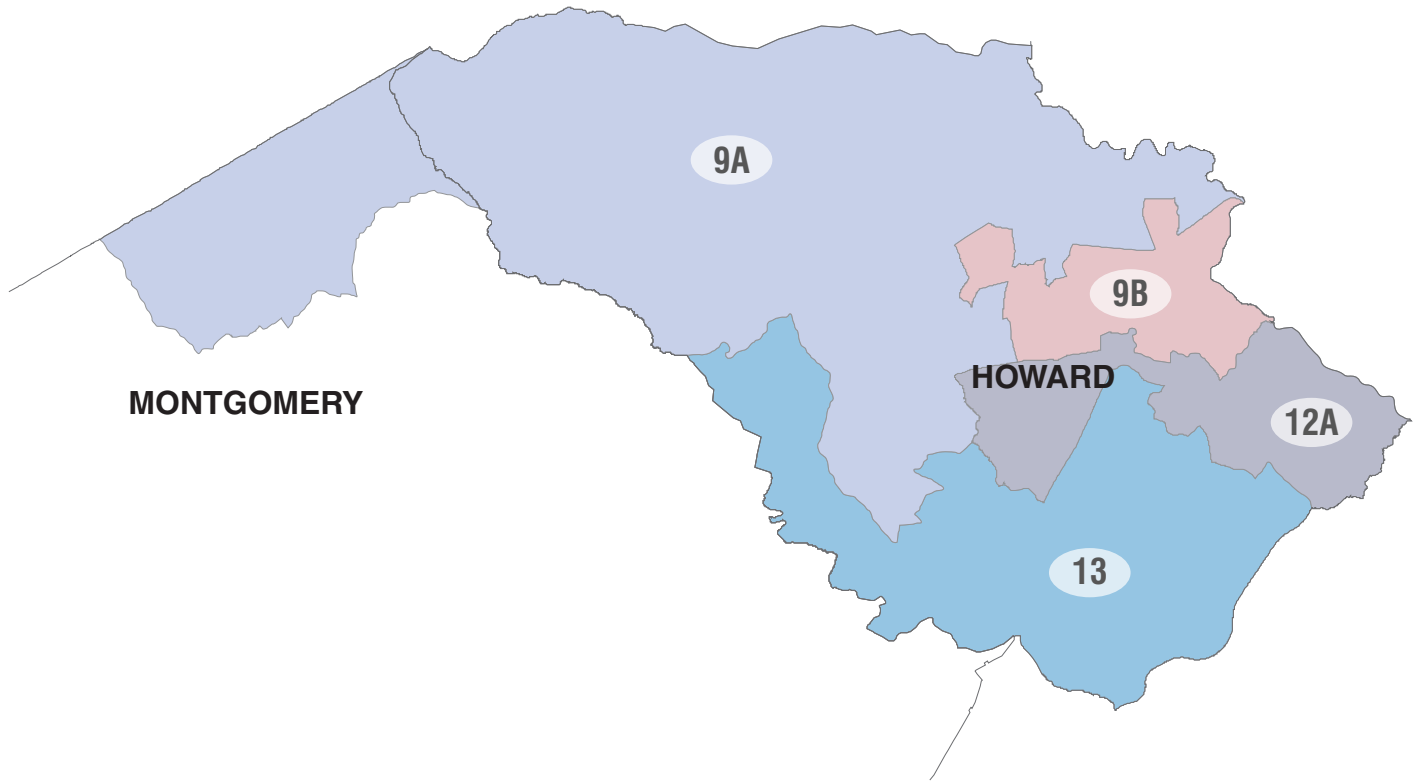
Source: Department of Legislative Services



**MAP 5 – State Legislative Districts**

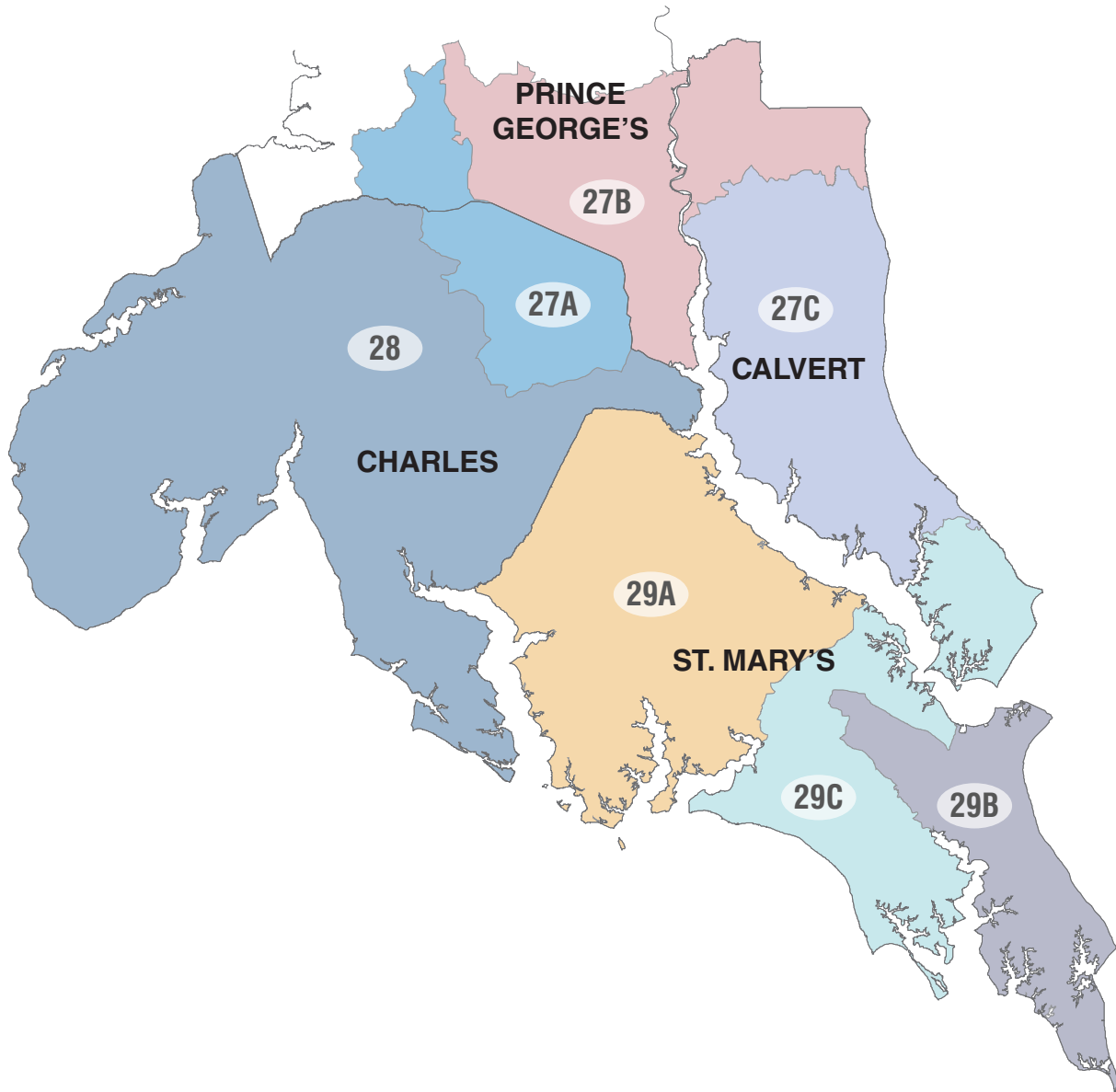
County	District
Montgomery	9 (9A), 14–20, 39
Howard	9 (9A)

Source: Department of Legislative Services



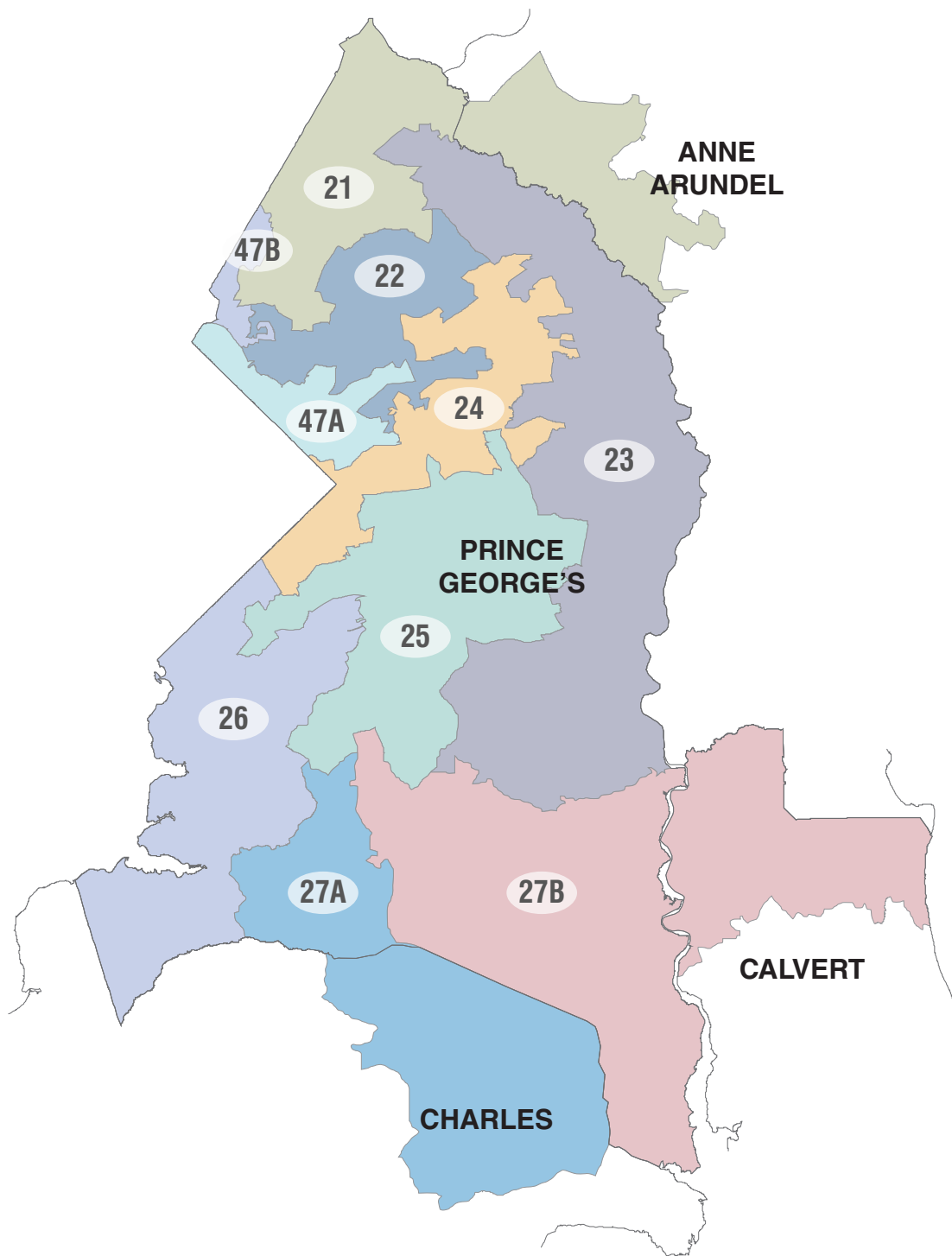
**MAP 6 – State Legislative Districts**

<b>County</b>	<b>District</b>
Howard	9 (9A, 9B), 12–13 (12A)
Montgomery	9 (9A)



**MAP 7 – State Legislative Districts**

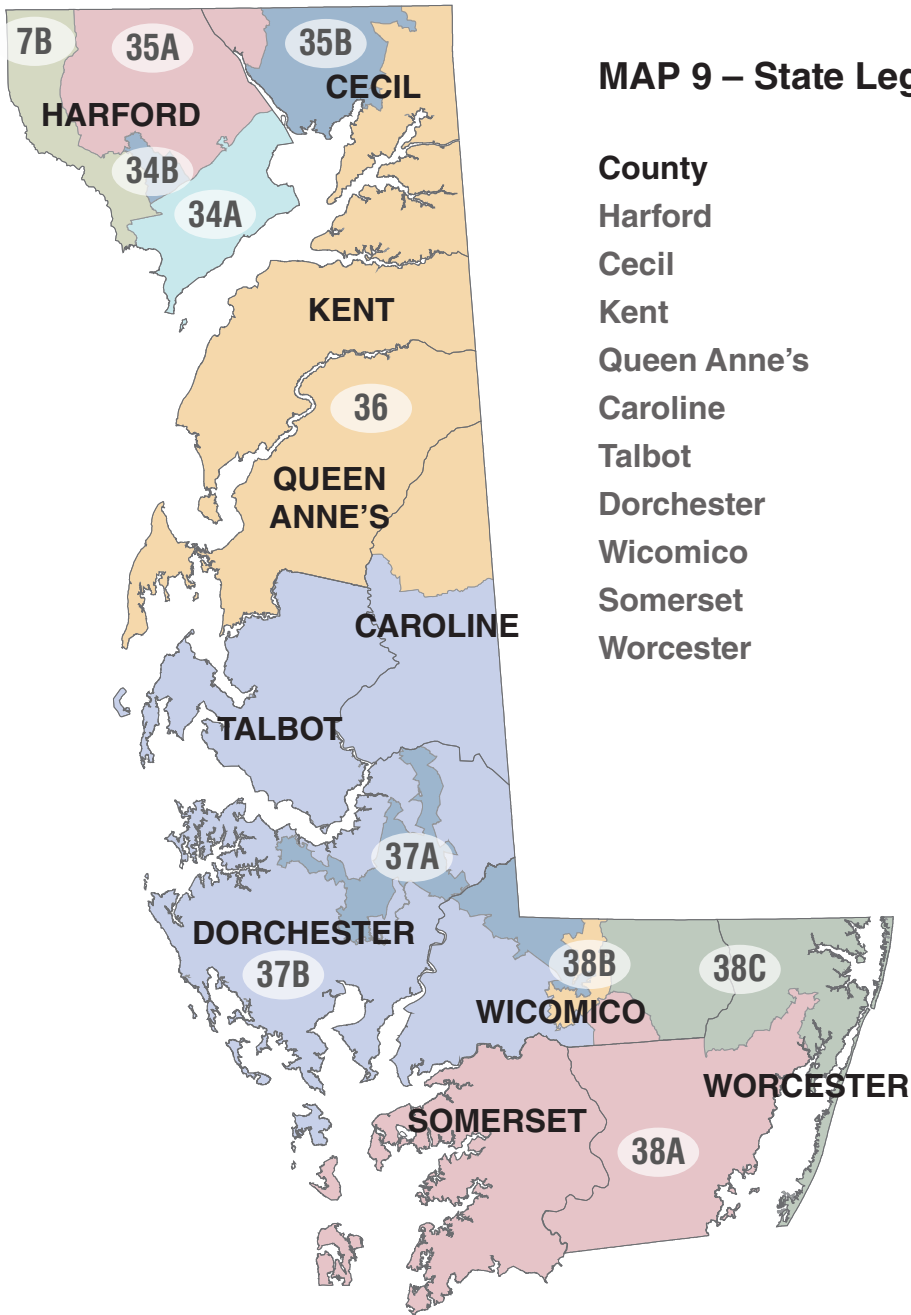
<b>County</b>	<b>District</b>
Prince George's	27 (27A, 27B)
Calvert	27 (27B, 27C), 29 (29C)
Charles	27–28 (27A)
St. Mary's	29 (29A, 29B, 29C)



**MAP 8 – State Legislative Districts**

County	District
Anne Arundel	21
Prince George's	21–27 (27A, 27B), 47 (47A, 47B)
Charles	27 (27A)
Calvert	27 (27B)

Source: Department of Legislative Services



**MAP 9 – State Legislative Districts**

County	District
Harford	7 (7B), 34–35 (34A, 34B, 35A)
Cecil	35–36 (35A, 35B)
Kent	36
Queen Anne's	36
Caroline	36–37 (37B)
Talbot	37 (37B)
Dorchester	37 (37A, 37B)
Wicomico	37–38 (37A, 37B, 38B, 38C)
Somerset	38 (38A)
Worcester	38 (38A, 38C)