

HOUSE BILL 1501

C9

6lr2192

By: **Delegate Fair**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2026

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Housing and Community Development – Homeless Shelter**
3 **Certification**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development to
5 operate a certification program for homeless shelters; prohibiting a certain homeless
6 shelter from operating without a homeless shelter certification after a certain
7 deadline; requiring the Department to develop certain requirements for certain
8 homeless shelter certification classes; requiring the Department to perform on-site
9 monitoring of certain homeless shelters and implement a certain grievance process;
10 and generally relating to the certification of homeless shelters.

11 BY adding to

12 Article – Housing and Community Development

13 Section 6–1401 through 6–1405 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 14. Homeless
14 Shelter Certification”

15 Annotated Code of Maryland

16 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article – Housing and Community Development**

20 **SUBTITLE 14. HOMELESS SHELTER CERTIFICATION.**

21 **6–1401.**

22 **(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
23 **INDICATED.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(B) “DISASTER OR HAZARD EMERGENCY SHELTER” MEANS A TEMPORARY**
2 **SHELTER THAT IS A PART OF A COUNTY’S EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN AND THAT**
3 **OPENS AT A SPECIFIC TEMPERATURE DESIGNATION, DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER,**
4 **OR DUE TO A NATURAL DISASTER OR HAZARD.**

5 **(C) (1) “HOMELESS SHELTER” MEANS A FACILITY THAT IS OPERATED**
6 **FOR THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF PROVIDING TEMPORARY OVERNIGHT SLEEPING**
7 **ACCOMMODATIONS, MEALS, BASIC NEEDS ASSISTANCE, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**
8 **FOR CASE MANAGEMENT AND HOUSING NAVIGATION TO HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS.**

9 **(2) “HOMELESS SHELTER” INCLUDES:**

10 **(I) A YEAR-ROUND SHELTER;**

11 **(II) A SAFE HAVEN SHELTER;**

12 **(III) A TRANSITIONAL SHELTER;**

13 **(IV) A SEASONAL EMERGENCY SHELTER; AND**

14 **(V) A DISASTER OR HAZARD EMERGENCY SHELTER OR**
15 **EMERGENCY MASS CARE SHELTER.**

16 **(D) “MEDICAL OR SPECIALIZED CARE SHELTER” MEANS A YEAR-ROUND**
17 **SHELTER THAT PROVIDES A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE TO MEET THE UNIQUE HEALTH**
18 **CARE, PERSONAL CARE, ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING, OR MOBILITY NEEDS OF**
19 **SHELTER RESIDENTS.**

20 **(E) “MOTEL- OR HOTEL-BASED SHELTER” MEANS A MOTEL OR HOTEL USED**
21 **TO SUPPLEMENT TRADITIONAL SHELTER OPTIONS WHEN SHELTERS ARE FULL OR**
22 **WHEN A FAMILY HAS INDIVIDUAL NEEDS THAT MAKE A TRADITIONAL SHELTER AN**
23 **UNSAFE OR UNVIABLE OPTION.**

24 **(F) “SAFE HAVEN SHELTER” MEANS A SUPPORTIVE SHELTER FUNDED BY**
25 **THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT THAT PROVIDES**
26 **A 24-HOUR RESIDENCE FOR HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS WITH SEVERE MENTAL**
27 **ILLNESS.**

28 **(G) “SEASONAL EMERGENCY SHELTER” MEANS A CONGREGATE OR**
29 **DORM-STYLE SHELTER WITH BEDS OR WHOLE FACILITIES THAT OPEN FOR AN**
30 **ENTIRE SEASON OR FOR A PREDETERMINED TIME PERIOD BUT ARE NOT PART OF**
31 **THE COUNTY’S EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN.**

1 **(H) “TRANSITIONAL SHELTER” MEANS A SHELTER THAT TYPICALLY**
2 **PROVIDES ACCOMMODATIONS FOR UP TO 2 YEARS.**

3 **(I) “YEAR-ROUND SHELTER” MEANS A SHELTER THAT IS OPEN**
4 **YEAR-ROUND AND HAS RESIDENTS OCCUPYING THE SHELTER EVERY NIGHT,**
5 **INCLUDING A SAFE HAVEN SHELTER, TRANSITIONAL SHELTER, AND MEDICAL OR**
6 **SPECIALIZED CARE SHELTER.**

7 **6-1402.**

8 **(A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL OPERATE A CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR**
9 **HOMELESS SHELTERS.**

10 **(B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A TIERED SYSTEM FOR HOMELESS**
11 **SHELTER CERTIFICATIONS BASED ON:**

12 **(1) THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY THE HOMELESS**
13 **SHELTER;**

14 **(2) THE TYPE AND DURATION OF SHELTER PROVIDED; AND**

15 **(3) THE TYPE AND INTENSITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED.**

16 **(C) THE TIERED SYSTEM REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS**
17 **SECTION SHALL PRIORITIZE THE CERTIFICATION OF HOMELESS SHELTERS IN THE**
18 **FOLLOWING ORDER:**

19 **(1) YEAR-ROUND SHELTERS, INCLUDING SAFE HAVEN SHELTERS,**
20 **TRANSITIONAL SHELTERS, OR MEDICAL OR SPECIALIZED CARE SHELTERS;**

21 **(2) SEASONAL SHELTERS;**

22 **(3) MOTEL- OR HOTEL-BASED SHELTERS; AND**

23 **(4) OTHER SHELTERS.**

24 **6-1403.**

25 **(A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A STAGGERED APPROVAL**
26 **TIMELINE TO ENSURE THAT HOMELESS SHELTER CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS**
27 **ARE PROCESSED EFFICIENTLY, QUALITY SITE VISITS AND INSPECTIONS ARE**
28 **CONDUCTED, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED TO SHELTER OPERATORS, AND**
29 **CERTIFICATIONS ARE ISSUED IN A TIMELY MANNER.**

1 **(B) THE STAGGERED APPROVAL PROCESS SHALL INCLUDE:**

2 **(1) NOTIFYING OPERATORS OF EXISTING HOMELESS SHELTERS OF**
3 **EACH SHELTER'S CLASSIFICATION UNDER § 6-1402 OF THIS SUBTITLE;**

4 **(2) ASSIGNING HOMELESS SHELTERS INTO COHORTS; AND**

5 **(3) ASSIGNING APPLICATION AND CERTIFICATION DEADLINES.**

6 **(C) A HOMELESS SHELTER MAY NOT OPERATE WITHOUT A HOMELESS**
7 **SHELTER CERTIFICATION AFTER THE APPLICABLE CERTIFICATION DEADLINE HAS**
8 **PASSED.**

9 **6-1404.**

10 **THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH HOMELESS**
11 **SHELTER CERTIFICATION CLASS THAT INCLUDE:**

12 **(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL, INCORPORATION, AND**
13 **GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS;**

14 **(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR FISCAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND LEGAL**
15 **DOCUMENTS;**

16 **(3) OVERSIGHT VISIT AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS;**

17 **(4) INTERIM UPDATE REPORT REQUIREMENTS;**

18 **(5) PROCEDURES FOR THE RENEWAL OF A HOMELESS SHELTER**
19 **CERTIFICATION;**

20 **(6) SUBMISSION METHODS FOR APPLICATIONS AND REPORTS;**

21 **(7) CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE CONDITIONAL APPROVAL OF A**
22 **HOMELESS SHELTER CERTIFICATION;**

23 **(8) GROUNDS FOR THE DENIAL, SUSPENSION, OR REVOCATION OF A**
24 **HOMELESS SHELTER CERTIFICATION; AND**

25 **(9) PENALTIES FOR A HOMELESS SHELTER THAT OPERATES WITHOUT**
26 **A CERTIFICATION AFTER THE APPLICABLE CERTIFICATION DEADLINE HAS PASSED.**

1 **6-1405.**

2 **(A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PERFORM ON-SITE MONITORING TO**
3 **DETERMINE IF A HOMELESS SHELTER MEETS HOMELESS SHELTER CERTIFICATION**
4 **REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED UNDER § 6-1404 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

5 **(B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A GRIEVANCE**
6 **PROCESS FOR HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS AND HOMELESS SHELTER RESIDENTS TO**
7 **NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
9 1, 2026.