

HOUSE BILL 1544

C3

6lr2329

By: **Delegate Rosenberg**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Justice Corps Program – Establishment**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Justice Corps Program in the University
4 System of Maryland to provide an alternative pathway to a license to practice law
5 subject to a certain requirement; and generally relating to the Maryland Justice
6 Corps Program.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Business Occupations and Professions
9 Section 10–207
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 BY adding to
13 Article – Education
14 Section 12–401 through 12–406 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 4. Maryland
15 Justice Corps Program”
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

20 **Article – Business Occupations and Professions**

21 10–207.

22 (a) To qualify for admission to the Bar, an applicant shall be an individual who
23 meets the requirements of this section.

24 (b) An applicant shall be of good character and reputation.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (c) An applicant shall be at least 18 years old as of the date of admission.

2 (d) An applicant shall:

3 (1) have completed the academic work necessary to meet the minimum
4 requirements for admission to an American Bar Association approved law school; and

5 (2) have a degree of juris doctor or its equivalent from a law school that the
6 Board recognizes.

7 (e) An applicant shall [pass]:

8 (1) **PASS** a written examination given by the Board under this subtitle; **OR**

9 (2) **SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**
10 **ESTABLISHED BY THE SUPREME COURT OF MARYLAND FOR AN ALTERNATIVE**
11 **PATHWAY TO LICENSURE.**

12 (f) An applicant shall meet any other qualification or requirement that the
13 Supreme Court of Maryland establishes by rule.

14 Article – Education

15 SUBTITLE 4. MARYLAND JUSTICE CORPS PROGRAM.

16 **12-401.**

17 (A) **IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
18 **INDICATED.**

19 (B) **“PARTICIPANT” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE APPLICATION TO**
20 **PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN APPROVED.**

21 (C) **“PROGRAM” MEANS THE MARYLAND JUSTICE CORPS PROGRAM.**

22 (D) **“SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION” MEANS AN ORGANIZATION THAT**
23 **PROVIDES CLOSE SUPERVISION OF AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO A**
24 **PARTICIPANT.**

25 **12-402.**

26 (A) **THERE IS A MARYLAND JUSTICE CORPS PROGRAM IN THE UNIVERSITY**
27 **SYSTEM OF MARYLAND.**

1 **(B) (1) THE PROGRAM SHALL BE ADMINISTERED JOINTLY BY THE**
2 **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND FRANCIS KING CAREY SCHOOL OF LAW AND THE**
3 **UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE SCHOOL OF LAW.**

4 **(2) IN ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM, THE UNIVERSITY OF**
5 **MARYLAND FRANCIS KING CAREY SCHOOL OF LAW AND THE UNIVERSITY OF**
6 **BALTIMORE SCHOOL OF LAW SHALL:**

7 **(I) ESTABLISH APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR THE**
8 **PROGRAM;**

9 **(II) REVIEW APPLICATIONS AND SELECT INDIVIDUALS TO**
10 **PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM WHO MEET THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**
11 **ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE;**

12 **(III) VERIFY THAT EACH PARTICIPANT IS PLACED WITH A**
13 **SUITABLE SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION;**

14 **(IV) SUPPORT PARTICIPANTS AND SUPERVISING**
15 **ORGANIZATIONS; AND**

16 **(V) MONITOR THE COMPLIANCE OF PARTICIPANTS AND**
17 **SUPERVISING ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM AND**
18 **THE LAWS OF THE STATE.**

19 **12-403.**

20 **(A) APPLICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM MAY BE**
21 **ACCEPTED BEGINNING JULY 1, 2027.**

22 **(B) AN INDIVIDUAL SHALL BE APPROVED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE**
23 **PROGRAM IF THE INDIVIDUAL:**

24 **(1) SUBMITS AN APPLICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE**
25 **PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED FOR THE PROGRAM;**

26 **(2) IS A GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND FRANCIS**
27 **KING CAREY SCHOOL OF LAW OR THE UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE SCHOOL OF**
28 **LAW;**

29 **(3) HAS NOT TAKEN THE MARYLAND BAR EXAMINATION; AND**

1 **(4) HAS COMMITTED TO A 3-YEAR TERM OF PARTICIPATION IN THE**
2 **PROGRAM WITH A SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION THAT THE PROGRAM HAS**
3 **DETERMINED TO BE SUITABLE.**

4 **(C) TO BE DETERMINED AS A SUITABLE SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION**
5 **UNDER THE PROGRAM, THE SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION SHALL:**

6 **(1) BE A PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ORGANIZATION LOCATED IN THE STATE;**

7 **(2) AGREE TO SHARE THE TOTAL COST OF THE BENEFITS PROVIDED**
8 **TO A PARTICIPANT UNDER § 12-404 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND**

9 **(3) AGREE TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT NO COST**
10 **TO THE PARTICIPANT, INCLUDING MENTORSHIP, TRAINING, AND NETWORKING**
11 **OPPORTUNITIES.**

12 **(D) THE PROGRAM SHALL GIVE PRIORITY TO SUPERVISING**
13 **ORGANIZATIONS THAT:**

14 **(1) WORK IN UNDERSERVED AREAS OF THE STATE; OR**

15 **(2) SPECIALIZE IN UNDERSERVED LEGAL AREAS.**

16 **12-404.**

17 **(A) (1) A PARTICIPANT IN THE PROGRAM SHALL RECEIVE THE BENEFITS**
18 **AS PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION.**

19 **(2) THE STATE AND THE SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION EACH SHALL**
20 **PAY 50% OF THE TOTAL COST OF THE BENEFITS PROVIDED TO A PARTICIPANT**
21 **UNDER THIS SECTION.**

22 **(B) A PARTICIPANT SHALL RECEIVE:**

23 **(1) AN ANNUAL SALARY OF \$75,000; AND**

24 **(2) AN ANNUAL HOUSING STIPEND OF \$15,000.**

25 **(C) IF A PARTICIPANT HAS STUDENT LOAN DEBT FOR ATTENDING LAW**
26 **SCHOOL, THE PARTICIPANT SHALL RECEIVE UP TO \$30,000 FOR EACH YEAR OF**
27 **PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM TO BE USED FOR PAYMENT OF THE STUDENT**
28 **LOAN DEBT.**

1 **12-405.**

2 (A) WHEN A PARTICIPANT HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE PROGRAM,
3 THE SUPERVISING ORGANIZATION SHALL ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION TO
4 THE PARTICIPANT.

5 (B) AFTER A PARTICIPANT HAS RECEIVED A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION
6 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, THE PARTICIPANT MAY
7 COMPLETE THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE SUPREME COURT
8 OF MARYLAND FOR AN ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY TO LICENSURE.

9 (C) A PARTICIPANT WHO HAS RECEIVED A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION IN
10 ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION AND HAS SUCCESSFULLY
11 COMPLETED THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE SUPREME
12 COURT OF MARYLAND FOR AN ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY TO LICENSURE SHALL BE
13 ADMITTED TO THE BAR UNDER § 10-207 OF THE BUSINESS OCCUPATIONS AND
14 PROFESSIONS ARTICLE.

15 **12-406.**

16 THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO
17 CARRY OUT THIS SUBTITLE.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
19 October 1, 2026.