

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 369

(Senator Watson, *et al.*)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Ways and Means

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Public Libraries - Automated External Defibrillator Program (Raymono A.  
Russell Act)

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This bill requires each operator of a “library,” beginning January 1, 2026, to (1) place an “automated external defibrillator” (AED) in a prominent area, accessible to employees and library users; (2) comply with the Maryland Public Access Automated External Defibrillator Program; and (3) maintain the functionality of the AED. By December 1, 2026, the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) must submit a specified report to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment and the House Economic Matters Committee.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MIEMSS can ensure library compliance with the Maryland Public Access AED Program and complete the required report with existing budgeted resources. Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) expenditures increase by as much as \$6,000 in FY 2026 to purchase AEDs and provide training, as discussed below. Expenditures increase by an indeterminate amount in future years for ongoing maintenance and training. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** Local government expenditures increase beginning in FY 2026, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** “Library” includes the State Library Resource Center (SLRC), a regional resource center, a county library system and the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD), the Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library (DCDL), and a metropolitan cooperative service program. “Library” does not include a school library media program established by a local school system.

In addition to any other immunities available under statutory or common law, a library is not civilly liable for any act or omission in the provision of automated external defibrillation if the library has satisfied specified requirements. An individual is not civilly liable for any act or omission if (1) the individual is acting in good faith while rendering automated external defibrillation to another individual who is the victim or is reasonably believed to be a victim of sudden cardiac arrest; (2) the assistance or aid is provided in a reasonably prudent manner; and (3) the automated external defibrillation is provided without fee or other compensation. A library or individual is not civilly liable for failing to render automated external defibrillation to an individual who is a victim or is reasonably believed to be a victim of a sudden cardiac arrest, as specified.

By December 1, 2026, MIEMSS must report on the libraries that registered AEDs in accordance with adopted regulations and the number of adverse cardiac events that required the use of an AED experienced in those libraries.

**Current Law:** “Automated external defibrillator” means a medical heart monitor and defibrillator device that (1) is cleared for market by the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA); (2) recognizes the presence or absence of ventricular fibrillation or rapid ventricular tachycardia; (3) determines, without intervention by an operator, whether defibrillation should be performed, and on determining that defibrillation should be performed, automatically charges; and (4) either requires operator intervention to deliver the electrical impulse or automatically continues with delivery of the electrical impulse.

### *State Library Network*

Since 1888, the State has provided funds to support public libraries throughout the State under what is now known as the State library network. The network consists of the Central Library of the Enoch Pratt Free Library System in Baltimore City, three regional resource centers (Charlotte Hall, Hagerstown, and Salisbury), and metropolitan cooperative service programs. All these systems receive State funding for operating expenses. The Central Library of the Enoch Pratt Free Library operates as the designated SLRC.

MSLA administers State and federal funding for Maryland's libraries and provides strategic leadership, resources, and support for local, regional, and State libraries. MSLA oversees Maryland's 24 public library systems, LBPB, SLRC, three regional resource centers, and DCDL.

#### *Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled*

LBPB provides comprehensive library services to eligible blind and physically disabled residents of Maryland, which includes individuals who are legally blind, visually or physically limited, or reading disabled. The library is part of the national network of the National Library Services for the Blind and Print Disabled through the Library of Congress. The National Library Services selects and produces recordings of full-length books and magazines for a network of libraries providing alternative format materials. LBPB supplements the National Library Service collection with large print books, descriptive videos, children's braille books, and tactile materials such as maps, atlases, and art books. Books are lent on a wide range of subjects in braille, audio, and large type. The service is free, statewide, and can be provided to individuals via the U.S. mail. Approximately 8,400 Maryland residents receive the services provided by the library annually.

#### *Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library*

DCDL is the primary information center on deaf resources for library customers and staff in the State. DCDL must conduct a needs assessment to identify and fill gaps in library services for deaf patrons; in coordination with the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, develop and provide sensitivity training for State and county library staff; develop a website for specified purposes; in coordination with MSLA, develop deaf-related programs and materials and share them with libraries in the State; and develop specified partnerships, collaborations, and alliances with specified government and other entities.

#### *Maryland Public Access Automated External Defibrillator Program*

The Maryland Public Access AED Program permits an organization, business, association, or agency that meets specified requirements to make AEDs available to victims of sudden cardiac arrest. Chapter 764 of 2024 expanded the program to include an initiative to co-locate up to two doses of naloxone (an FDA-approved medication for the reversal of opioid overdose) with each AED placed in a public building. MIEMSS oversees the program, including approving entities to participate and issuing registrations.

Under Maryland regulations (COMAR [30.06.02.01](#)), to be eligible for registration or renewal of registration, each facility must designate an AED coordinator who must:

- complete cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AED training and subsequent refresher training, in accordance with specified requirements;
- be responsible for implementing and administering the AED program at the facility; and
- ensure that monthly safety inspections of all supplemental and AED equipment are conducted.

Likewise, a facility must ensure that all expected AED operators have completed CPR and AED training and subsequent refresher training, as specified. AEDs must be placed in locations that are visible and readily accessible to any person willing to operate the AED in the event of a suspected cardiac arrest. A facility at which an AED is operated must have a telephone or communication service available at all times for the notification of a public safety answering point; it must also submit data or other information concerning the AED program as requested by MIEMSS.

Chapters 304 and 305 of 2023 require each owner and operator of a grocery store or a specified restaurant, beginning January 1, 2025, to place an AED in a prominent area and maintain its functionality. A grocery store or restaurant that is excluded from the Maryland Public Access AED Program must still register with MIEMSS.

**State Expenditures:** The bill requires SLRC, a regional resource center, a county library system and the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, LBPB, DCDL, and a metropolitan cooperative service program to place an AED in a prominent area, comply with the Maryland Public Access AED Program (which includes ensuring that all expected AED operators have completed CPR and AED training and subsequent refresher training), and maintain the functionality of the AED.

MSLA advises that, of the State libraries, LBPB does not have an AED or trained staff; therefore, MSLA estimates that general fund expenditures increase by as much as \$6,000 in fiscal 2026 to purchase an AED and provide staff training at LBPB. MSLA further advises that it is unclear if the bill's requirements apply to mobile library units (such as bookmobiles). To the extent that mobile library units are required to place AEDs and train staff, MSLA general fund expenditures increase by an additional indeterminate amount in fiscal 2026.

General fund expenditures for MSLA increase by an indeterminate amount in future years to maintain and replace AEDs and train additional staff as needed.

**Local Expenditures:** Expenditures for county library systems in many jurisdictions increase in fiscal 2026 to ensure that each library has an AED and appropriately trained library staff. Based on a brief survey of public library systems conducted by MSLA in which about two-thirds of the 27 library systems responded, some libraries (including

county libraries) in the State have AEDs and appropriately trained staff. More specifically, at least 8 have AEDs and trained staff at all locations, at least 4 have AEDs at some branches with some trained staff, and at least 6 have no AEDs at any location.

**Additional Comments:** New AED units typically cost between \$880 to \$2,000 and certified pre-owned AEDs generally range from \$500 to \$880. The American Red Cross offers CPR and AED training courses that cost between \$75 to \$115 per person. It holds on-site AED training at several locations in Maryland, including Annapolis, Baltimore, Salisbury, Silver Spring, and Walkersville. Online classes are also offered at a cost of \$37.

Under the bill, MIEMSS must report on the libraries that registered AEDs in accordance with regulations adopted under § 23-102.2 of the Education Article as enacted by Section 1 of the bill. However, as amended, the bill does not require adoption of regulations, rather libraries must comply with the Maryland Public Access AED Program.

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### Additional Information

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years; however, legislation with similar provisions has been proposed. For example, see HB 1206 of 2023 and SB 294 of 2022.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 593 (Delegate Boafó, *et al.*) - Ways and Means.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems; Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Maryland State Library Agency; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Department of Legislative Services

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