

# **New Maryland Laws Effective July 1, 2023**

## **Recreational Marijuana**

Under the new state law and regulations:

- Sales for recreational cannabis use are restricted to adults 21 and older. ID will be required at the time of purchase.
- An adult may buy 1.5 ounces of raw flower or pre-rolled joints; a maximum of 12 grams of concentrated cannabis for vaping; or edibles not to exceed a total of 750 mg of THC.
- Cannabis may not be used in public or on federal property. It is illegal for drivers or passengers to use cannabis in a vehicle.
- Use of cannabis can result in a DUI charge.
- State law does not supersede workplace rules governing impairment while at work. Federal or state laws governing impairment still apply.
- Adults 21 and older may grow two plants at home, out of public view, for recreational purposes. The law limits home growth to two plants regardless of the number of adults over 21 living in the same household.

## **Tax cuts for veterans**

The Keep Our Heroes Home Act, which goes into effect Saturday, will expand the amount of military retirement income exempt from state taxes from \$15,000 to \$20,000 for veterans 55 and older and from \$5,000 to \$12,500 for younger veterans next tax season.

## **Military health care reimbursement**

The Health Care for Heroes Act of 2023 — another piece of legislation prioritized by Moore — also will go into effect Saturday. The new law will create a program to reimburse members of the Maryland National Guard up to \$60 per month for premiums paid through health and dental plans under its TRICARE health insurance program.

## **Cash for body-worn cameras**

During the 2021 legislative session, the General Assembly enacted a landmark package of police reform bills, including a requirement for all Maryland law enforcement agencies to outfit their on-duty officers with body-worn cameras by July 1, 2025.

But, for smaller agencies, cameras and video file storage systems are too costly.

Beginning Saturday, the Maryland Department of General Services and Department of Information Technology will be tasked with negotiating affordable contracts with companies to supply smaller agencies with the required equipment.

## **Title IX support**

Starting Saturday, Maryland public schools will be required to inform students, parents and families about how they can file sexual misconduct complaints, what supports are in place for people who file complaints and who serves as the institution's Title IX coordinator.

## **Public comments on state procurement**

Beginning next week, the Board of Public Works will begin to prepare a procedure for members of the public to file comments on agenda items electronically. The system is required to be in place before Oct. 1, 2024. The governor, comptroller and state treasurer serve on the Board of Public Works, which approves contracts for the state's executive agencies.

## **Increase in Gas Tax**

The state's portion of the gas tax will be 47 cents per gallon, up from 42.7 cents, as part of an annual adjustment that links the tax to inflation. This is because the gas tax is indexed to go up at same rate as inflation. Governor Moore will be asking the legislature to reconsider the automatic increases in the gas tax.

## **Minimum Wage Increase in Montgomery County**

The county's minimum wage will increase to \$16.70 for people working at large employers (those with 51 employees or more). It will increase to \$15 for workers at mid-sized employers, and \$14.50 for those working for small employers. Statewide, regardless of the number of employees, employers will be required to pay at least \$15 per hour in January.

## **Primary and Secondary Education – Title IX – Notice (Hear Our Voices Act)**

House Bill 16 requires each public school to provide information to students, faculty, staff and parents regarding who serves as the Title IX coordinator for the school, the process in place for filing a sexual misconduct complaint, and the support measures that are in place for filing a sexual misconduct complaint and how to access the support measures.

## **Nonpublic Schools and Child Care Providers - Corporal Punishment - Prohibition**

House Bill 185 prohibits the State Board of Education from issuing a certificate of approval to noncollegiate educational institutions that do not have a policy prohibiting the administration of corporal punishment. This change requires regulations adopted by the State Board for the registration of family child care homes and large family child care homes and the licensing and operation of child care centers to prohibit corporal punishment.

## **Hunting - Snares, Traps, and Other Similar Devices - Identification Requirement**

House Bill 406 makes it so that a person who is not required to be licensed or permitted under certain provisions of law to obtain a free Department of Natural Resources identification number before using a snare, a trap, or another similar device to capture wildlife.

### **Institutions of Higher Education - Transcripts - Prohibition on Punitive Measures Related to Student Debt**

House Bill 384 prohibits higher education institutions from refusing to provide a current or former student with a transcript or taking other punitive measures regarding a student's transcript request due to the student owing a debt to the establishment.

### **Elevator Safety - Privately Owned Single-Family Residential Elevators - Inspection and Registration Requirements**

House Bill 505 establishes that an elevator installed in a privately owned single-family residential dwelling on or after Oct.1, 2023, is subject to certain inspection and registration requirements. It is also prohibited for the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to disclose to the public any information regarding a registered elevator unit installed in a privately owned single-family residential dwelling.

### **Hospitals - Financial Assistance - Medical Bill Reimbursement Process**

House Bill 333 develops requirements related to the reimbursement of out-of-pocket costs paid by certain hospital patients who were eligible for free care. The Commission will be authorized to impose a fine of up to \$50,000 per violation if a hospital fails to provide refunds to qualifying patients; making a violation of the Act an unfair, abusive, or deceptive trade practice subject to penalties under the Maryland Consumer Protection Act; etc.

### **Child in Need of Assistance – Neglect – Cannabis Use**

House Bill 232 alters the definition of neglect to specify that the use of cannabis by any parent or guardian is not considered neglect unless a child, or their welfare, is harmed as a direct result.

### **Cancer Screening - Health Insurance and Assessment of Outreach, Education, and Health Disparities**

House Bill 815 requires insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for certain lung cancer diagnostic imaging and limits the copayment, coinsurance or deductible that companies can require for screening and diagnosis.

### **Maryland Educator Shortage Reduction Act of 2023**

House Bill 1219 alters the qualifications for early childhood education teacher certification through an alternative teacher preparation program. The State Department of Education will consult with the Maryland High Education Commission to create specific goals for the recruitment and retention of teachers. Additionally, it will require that "high staff qualifications" for publicly funded eligible prekindergarten providers must be implemented by the 2027-2028 school year.

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