

HOUSE BILL 675

J1, E4

5lr2435
CF 5lr2433

By: **Delegates Bartlett, D. Jones, and Shetty**

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2025

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Safety – Rape Kit Testing Grant Fund – Alterations**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the purpose and use of the Rape Kit Testing Grant Fund;
4 expanding the duties of the Executive Director of the Governor’s Office of Crime
5 Prevention and Policy relating to the Fund; prohibiting the use of the Fund for the
6 Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking System; and generally relating to the Rape
7 Kit Testing Grant Fund.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Public Safety
10 Section 4–401
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Public Safety**

16 4–401.

17 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

18 (2) “Forensic laboratory” means a facility, an entity, or a site that offers or
19 performs forensic analysis and is owned or operated by the State, a county or municipal
20 corporation in the State, or another governmental entity.

21 (3) “Fund” means the Rape Kit Testing Grant Fund.

22 (4) “Law enforcement agency” means the Department of State Police or a
23 police department of a county or municipal corporation in the State.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(b) There is a Rape Kit Testing Grant Fund.

(c) The purpose of the Fund is to:

(1) provide law enforcement agencies with funding to pay for testing of sexual assault evidence collection kits by forensic laboratories;

(2) PROVIDE THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WITH FUNDING TO ASSIST LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY INVESTIGATIONS OF CRIMES INVOLVING SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KITS THAT WERE COLLECTED BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2020, AND HAVE NOT BEEN TESTED;

(3) PROVIDE THE FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED STATE SEXUAL ASSAULT COALITION WITH FUNDING FOR A STATEWIDE SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIM NOTIFICATION HOTLINE AND RELATED PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT WITH:

(I) ADVOCACY;

(II) SUPPORT;

(III) INFORMATION ABOUT UNTESTED RAPE KITS;

(IV) INFORMATION ABOUT NAVIGATING THE SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE KIT TRACKING SYSTEM ESTABLISHED UNDER § 11-926.1 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ARTICLE; AND

(V) VICTIMS' RIGHTS INFORMATION; AND

(4) PROVIDE SUPPORT TO PEER-TO-PEER TELEHEALTH PROGRAMS AS DEFINED IN § 11-1007 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ARTICLE.

(d) The Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy shall:

(1) administer the Fund;

(2) establish and publish procedures for the distribution of funding to law enforcement agencies;

(3) ensure each jurisdiction in the State that has a forensic laboratory is able to access the Fund;

(4) consider the number of sexual assault incidents that were investigated by a law enforcement agency in the prior fiscal year when distributing funding; [and]

(5) **(I) ENSURE THAT FUNDS ARE DISTRIBUTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (C)(2) AND (3) OF THIS SECTION EACH FISCAL YEAR UNTIL ALL SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KITS COLLECTED BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2020, HAVE BEEN TESTED, OR IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT TESTING IS NOT REQUIRED UNDER § 11-926 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ARTICLE; AND**

(II) UNLESS THE APPROPRIATION TO THE FUND IS REDUCED OR FUNDING HAS BEEN AWARDED FROM THE NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT INITIATIVE FOR THE SAME PURPOSE, ENSURE THAT FUNDS DISTRIBUTED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH ARE NOT LESS THAN THE AMOUNT DISTRIBUTED FOR THE PRIOR FISCAL YEAR; AND

(6) submit a report with information on the distribution of funding to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, before September 1 each year.

(e) (1) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to § 7-302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

(2) The State Treasurer shall hold the Fund separately, and the Comptroller shall account for the Fund.

(f) The Fund consists of:

(1) money appropriated in the State budget to the Fund;

(2) any interest earnings of the Fund; and

(3) any other money from any other source accepted for the benefit of the Fund.

(g) (1) The Fund may be used only for [equipment, supplies, personnel, and outsourcing necessary for the testing of sexual assault evidence collection kits in forensic laboratories] **THE PURPOSES STATED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION.**

(2) Subject to paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Fund may be used for equipment, supplies, personnel, and outsourcing necessary for the testing of sexual assault evidence collection kits collected before or after the establishment of the Fund.

(3) THE FUND MAY NOT BE USED TO SUPPORT THE SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE KIT TRACKING SYSTEM ESTABLISHED UNDER § 11-926.1 OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ARTICLE.

1 (h) (1) The State Treasurer shall invest the money of the Fund in the same
2 manner as other State money may be invested.

3 (2) Any interest earnings of the Fund, including interest earnings under
4 subsection (f) of this section, shall be credited to the Fund.

5 (i) Expenditures from the Fund may be made only in accordance with the State
6 budget.

7 (j) Money expended from the Fund for testing of sexual assault evidence
8 collection kits is supplemental to and is not intended to take the place of funding that
9 otherwise would be appropriated for [testing of sexual assault evidence collection kits] **THE**
10 **PURPOSES OF THE FUND STATED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION.**

11 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
12 October 1, 2025.