

# SENATE BILL 676

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CF HB 1380

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By: **Senator Gile**

Introduced and read first time: January 26, 2025

Assigned to: Finance

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 11, 2025

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Health Care Facilities – Hospitals and Freestanding Birthing Centers –**  
3 **Perinatal Care Standards**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Department of Health, in coordination with  
5 the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, to adopt  
6 regulations establishing minimum perinatal care standards for certain hospitals  
7 that meet or exceed the Maryland Perinatal System Standards; requiring certain  
8 hospitals and freestanding birthing centers, as a condition of licensure, to comply  
9 with certain minimum perinatal care standards; and generally relating to standards  
10 of care for hospitals and freestanding birthing centers.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
12 Article – Health – General  
13 Section 19–319(a) and 19–3B–02(a) and (b)  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

16 BY adding to  
17 Article – Health – General  
18 Section 19–319(j) and 19–3B–03(a)(1)(ii)9.  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
22 Article – Health – General

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### EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



Section 19–3B–03(a)(1)(ii)8. and 9.  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

**Article – Health – General**

19–319.

(a) To qualify for a license, an applicant and the hospital or related institution to  
be operated shall meet the requirements of this section.

**(J) (1) THE DEPARTMENT, IN COORDINATION WITH THE MARYLAND  
INSTITUTE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEMS, SHALL ADOPT  
REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING MINIMUM PERINATAL CARE STANDARDS THAT MEET  
OR EXCEED THE MARYLAND PERINATAL SYSTEM STANDARDS FOR EACH HOSPITAL  
THAT PROVIDES OBSTETRICAL SERVICES.**

**(2) EACH HOSPITAL THAT PROVIDES OBSTETRICAL SERVICES SHALL  
COMPLY WITH THE PERINATAL CARE STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE  
REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION AS A  
CONDITION OF LICENSURE.**

19–3B–02.

(a) A freestanding ambulatory care facility may not operate in the State unless  
the Secretary has granted the facility a license.

(b) The Secretary shall issue a license to an applicant that meets the  
requirements of this subtitle and all applicable regulations adopted by the Secretary.

19–3B–03.

(a) (1) After consultation with representatives of payors, health care  
practitioners, and freestanding ambulatory care facilities, the Secretary shall by regulation  
establish:

(ii) Standards to ensure quality of care and patient safety that shall  
include:

8. The use of ultrasound imaging in a freestanding birthing  
center; [and]

1                   **9. MINIMUM PERINATAL CARE STANDARDS FOR A**  
2 **FREESTANDING BIRTHING CENTER THAT MEET OR EXCEED THE MARYLAND**  
3 **PERINATAL SYSTEM STANDARDS THAT A FREESTANDING BIRTHING CENTER SHALL**  
4 **MEET AS A CONDITION OF LICENSURE; AND**

5                   **[9.] 10.** Any other procedures that the Secretary considers  
6 necessary for quality of care and patient safety.

7           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Maryland Department of  
8 Health shall adopt the regulations required under §§ 19–319(j)(1) and 19–3B–03(a)(1)(ii)  
9 of the Health – General Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act, on or before October 1,  
10 2026.

11           SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
12 October 1, 2025.

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.