

Chapter 496

(House Bill 9)

AN ACT concerning

Public Safety – Food System Resiliency Council – Definitions and Reports

FOR the purpose of defining “healthy food priority areas” and “wasted food” as they relate to the Food System Resiliency Council; repealing certain outdated reporting requirements and altering certain ongoing reporting requirements; and generally relating to the Food System Resiliency Council.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Public Safety

Section 14–1101

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

(As enacted by Chapter 49 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2023)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Public Safety

Section 14–1102(a)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Public Safety

Section 14–1103

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 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 – Public Safety

14–1101.

(a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

(b) “Council” means the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council.

(c) “Food council organization” means a local food council organization that is established in the State.

(d) **“HEALTHY FOOD PRIORITY AREAS” MEANS PREDOMINANTLY LOWER-INCOME AREAS THAT HAVE LIMITED ACCESS TO RETAIL OUTLETS THAT SELL AFFORDABLE, HEALTHY FOODS.**

(E) “Secretary” means the Secretary of Emergency Management.

(F) **“WASTED FOOD” MEANS FOOD NOT USED FOR ITS INTENDED PURPOSE THAT IS MANAGED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, INCLUDING:**

- (1) DONATIONS TO FEED PEOPLE;**
- (2) THE CREATION OF ANIMAL FEED;**
- (3) COMPOSTING;**
- (4) ANAEROBIC DIGESTION; OR**
- (5) DISPOSAL IN LANDFILLS OR COMBUSTION FACILITIES.**

14–1102.

(a) There is a Maryland Food System Resiliency Council in the Office of Resilience in the Department.

14–1103.

(a) The Council shall:

(1) meet regularly for a period of at least 2 years to address food insecurity in the State; and

(2) work toward the following goals:

(i) to address the food insecurity crisis in the State resulting from the COVID–19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis by:

1. coordinating State and local level food insecurity services to support residents of the State;

2. tracking and analyzing data to create a comprehensive map of food insecurity across the State and identify the gaps in service;

3. leveraging federal and private sector grants and other resources in order to address food insecurity needs;

4. advising the State on how best to allocate resources and increase efficiency; and

5. A. exploring the role of and potential for the federal Community Eligibility Provision to ensure all students in the State are fed; and

B. making recommendations to the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland General Assembly to implement relevant findings under item A of this item;

(ii) to develop[, on or before November 1, 2021,] equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of the food system, including:

1. addressing and eliminating racial inequities in the food system;

2. addressing and eliminating diet-related public health disparities;

3. addressing and eliminating [food deserts] **LIMITED FOOD OPTIONS AND FOOD SCARCITY THAT EXIST IN HEALTHY FOOD PRIORITY AREAS; and**

4. reducing **WASTED** food [waste], increasing recycling, and encouraging other relevant environmental impacts;

5. IN URBAN, SUBURBAN, AND RURAL SETTINGS, INCREASING THE QUANTITY, QUALITY AGGREGATION, MARKETING, AND DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL FOOD;

6. INCREASING THE PROCUREMENT OF LOCAL FOOD THROUGH SCHOOLS, INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, *NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS*, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS;

7. CREATING ADDITIONAL MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARYLAND FOOD BUSINESSES; AND

8. EXPANDING ACCESS TO SMALL SCALE MANUFACTURING AND FOOD PRODUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE; AND

(iii) to expand the impact of existing food council organizations by:

1. providing coordination and facilitation of knowledge exchange at the State level; and

2. supporting identification and application of grants to operating funds to support existing and new food council organizations as needed; ~~and~~

~~(iv) to develop[, on or before November 1, 2021,] AND PERIODICALLY UPDATE a strategic plan to increase the production and procurement of Maryland certified food, including:~~

~~1. increasing the quality and quantity of production, as well as aggregation, marketing, and distribution of local food in urban, suburban, and rural settings;~~

~~2. increasing procurement of local food through schools, universities, and other institutions;~~

~~3. creating additional market opportunities for Maryland food businesses; and~~

~~4. expanding access to small scale manufacturing and food production infrastructure.~~

(b) To advance the goals of the Council, the Council shall engage and collaborate with interested stakeholders, including:

(1) residents of the State with lived experience of food insecurity; and

(2) food council organizations and similar local level food system convening organizations.

(c) [(1) On or before November 1, 2021, the Council shall submit an interim report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on key findings and activities undertaken by the Council.

(2) On or before November 1, 2022 the Council shall submit a report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the Council's recommendations for a long term structure for a statewide food policy council including providing recommendations on:

(i) appropriate policy and legislative changes;

(ii) potential ways to restructure the Council such as:

1. placing the Council within a different agency or organization; and

2. enacting a sunset provision for the Council; and

(iii) any other recommendations of the Council.

(3)] On or before November 1, 2023, and each year thereafter, the Council shall submit a report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on key findings, **APPROPRIATE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**, and activities undertaken by the Council.

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

Approved by the Governor, May 13, 2025.