

HOUSE BILL 137

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EMERGENCY BILL

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By: **Montgomery County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2020

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Montgomery County – Elections – Early Voting Centers**

3 **MC 19–20**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring Montgomery County to have a certain number of early voting
5 centers; providing for the application and interpretation of this Act; requiring that a
6 certain voting center be located in a certain community for the 2020 election cycle;
7 making stylistic and conforming changes; making this Act an emergency measure;
8 and generally relating to early voting centers in Montgomery County.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article – Election Law
11 Section 10–301.1
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2017 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

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

16 **Article – Election Law**

17 10–301.1.

18 (a) Except as provided under Title 9, Subtitle 3 of this article, during any
19 regularly scheduled primary or general election a voter may vote:

20 (1) in the voter’s assigned precinct on election day; or

21 (2) at an early voting center in the voter’s county of residence on any early
22 voting day in accordance with this section.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(b) (1) Each county shall have at least one early voting center established in the county as prescribed in this subsection.

(2) A county with fewer than 125,000 registered voters shall have one early voting center established in the county.

(3) A county with more than 125,000 registered voters but fewer than 200,000 registered voters shall have three early voting centers established in the county.

(4) A county with more than 200,000 registered voters but fewer than 300,000 registered voters shall have four early voting centers established in the county.

(5) A county with more than 300,000 registered voters but fewer than 450,000 registered voters shall have seven early voting centers established in the county.

(6) **[A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (7) OF THIS SUBSECTION,** A county with more than 450,000 registered voters shall have **[eleven] 11** early voting centers.

(7) MONTGOMERY COUNTY SHALL HAVE 12 EARLY VOTING CENTERS.

[(7)] (8) In addition to the early voting centers required in this subsection, each county may establish one additional early voting center if the State Board, in collaboration with the local board, and the governing body of the county agree to establish an additional early voting center.

(c) No later than 6 months before a primary election, the State Board, in collaboration with the local board in each county, shall designate each early voting center in that county.

(d) Each early voting center shall be open for voting as follows:

(1) beginning the second Thursday before a primary or general election through the Thursday before the election; and

(2) during the following hours:

(i) in a presidential general election, during the hours between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. each early voting day; and

(ii) in all other elections, during the hours between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. each early voting day.

(e) Each early voting center shall satisfy the requirements of § 10–101 of this title.

(f) Beginning 30 days prior to each early voting period the State Board and each

1 local board shall undertake steps to inform the public about early voting and the location
2 of early voting centers in each county, including:

- 3 (1) a series of public service media announcements;
- 4 (2) mailings to all registered voters in each county; and
- 5 (3) other measures as appropriate.

6 (g) Except as expressly provided in this section, any provision of this article that
7 applies to voting on election day also applies to early voting.

8 (h) The State Board shall adopt regulations and guidelines in accordance with the
9 requirements of this section for the conduct of early voting.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

11 (a) Notwithstanding the deadline established in § 10–301.1(c) of the Election Law
12 Article, this Act shall be applied and interpreted to require that Montgomery County have
13 12 early voting centers beginning with the 2020 election cycle.

14 (b) For the 2020 election cycle, the twelfth early voting center shall be located at
15 the White Oak Community Recreation Center, or, if the White Oak Community Recreation
16 Center is not available, at another facility that serves the White Oak area community.

17 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency
18 measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has
19 been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to
20 each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is
21 enacted.