

Chapter 863

(Senate Bill 119)

AN ACT concerning

Legally Protected Health Care – Gender-Affirming Treatment

FOR the purpose of altering the definition of “legally protected health care” to include certain gender-affirming treatment, including medications and supplies, for the purposes of certain provisions of law that prohibit health occupations disciplinary actions and certain actions in criminal and civil proceedings and the use of certain resources in furtherance of certain investigations and proceedings related to legally protected health care; and generally relating to legally protected health care.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
Section 9–302(b)(2), 9–402(a), 10–408(c)(5), and 11–802(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Criminal Procedure
Section 9–106(b)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2018 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Health – General
Section 15–151(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2023 Replacement Volume)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Health Occupations
Section 1–227
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – State Personnel and Pensions
Section 2–312
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2015 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

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

Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings

9–302.

(b) (2) (i) In this paragraph, “legally protected health care” has the meaning stated in § 2–312 of the State Personnel and Pensions Article.

(ii) A judge may not order a person within the State to give testimony or a statement, or produce documents, electronically stored information, or other tangible things under this subsection, in a case where prosecution is pending, or where a grand jury investigation has commenced or is about to commence, for a violation of a criminal law of another state involving the provision of, receipt of, or assistance with legally protected health care in the State, unless the acts forming the basis of the prosecution or investigation would constitute a crime in this State.

9–402.

(a) (1) In this subsection, “legally protected health care” has the meaning stated in § 2–312 of the State Personnel and Pensions Article.

(2) (i) To request issuance of a subpoena under this section, a party shall submit a foreign subpoena to a clerk of the circuit court for the county in which discovery is sought to be conducted in this State.

(ii) The request under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph shall include a sworn, written statement signed under penalty of perjury by the party seeking enforcement, or the party’s counsel, that no portion of the subpoena is intended or anticipated to further any investigation or proceeding related to legally protected health care, unless the out-of-state proceeding is:

1. Based in tort, contract, or statute;
2. A claim for which a similar or equivalent claim would exist in the State; and
3. A. Brought by the patient who received legally protected health care, or the patient’s legal representative; or
B. Based on conduct that would be prohibited under the laws of this State.

(3) A request for the issuance of a subpoena under this subtitle does not constitute an appearance in the courts of this State.

10–408.

(c) (5) (i) In this paragraph, “legally protected health care” has the meaning stated in § 2–312 of the State Personnel and Pensions Article.

(ii) A judge may not issue an ex parte order under this section for the purpose of investigating or recovering evidence of actions related to legally protected health care, unless the acts forming the basis for the investigation or recovery of evidence would constitute a crime in this State.

11–802.

(a) (1) In this subsection, “legally protected health care” has the meaning stated under § 2–312 of the State Personnel and Pensions Article.

(2) (i) Except as provided in subparagraphs (ii), (iii), and (iv) of this paragraph, a copy of any foreign judgment authenticated in accordance with an act of Congress or statutes of this State may be filed in the office of the clerk of a circuit court.

(ii) If the face amount of the judgment is \$2,500 or less, the copy shall be filed with the clerk of the District Court.

(iii) If the face amount of the judgment is not more than a jurisdictional amount described in § 4–401 of this article, but more than \$2,500, the copy may be filed either with the clerk of the District Court or in the office of the clerk of a circuit court.

(iv) Except as required by federal law, a judgment creditor may not file a copy of any foreign judgment under this section if the judgment was issued in connection with any litigation concerning legally protected health care, unless the underlying cause of action is:

1. Based in tort, contract, or statute;
2. A claim for which a similar or equivalent claim would exist in the State; and
3. A. Brought by the patient who received legally protected health care, or the patient’s legal representative; or
B. Based on conduct that would be prohibited under the laws of this State.

(3) The clerk shall treat the foreign judgment in the same manner as a judgment of the court in which the foreign judgment is filed.

Article – Criminal Procedure

9–106.

(b) (1) In this subsection, “legally protected health care services” has the meaning stated in § 2–312 of the State Personnel and Pensions Article.

(2) Unless compelled by a writ of mandamus issued by a federal court, the Governor may not surrender a person on demand of the executive authority of any other state if the alleged act for which surrender is being demanded relates to providing, procuring, or aiding another in providing or procuring legally protected health care services and the act would not be a crime in the State.

Article – Health – General

15–151.

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

(2) (i) “Gender–affirming treatment” means any medically necessary treatment consistent with current clinical standards of care prescribed by a licensed health care provider for the treatment of a condition related to the individual’s gender identity.

(ii) “Gender–affirming treatment” includes:

1. Hormone therapy, hormone blockers, and puberty blockers;
2. Hair alteration for the purposes of altering secondary sex characteristics and surgical site preparation;
3. Alterations to voice, voice therapy, and voice lessons;
4. Alterations to abdomen, chest, trunk, and buttocks;
5. Alterations to the face and neck;
6. Alterations to the genitals and gonads;
7. Laser treatment for scars from gender–affirming treatment;
8. Standard fertility preservation procedures, as set forth in § 15–810.1 of the Insurance Article;
9. Revisions to previous treatments and reversal of treatments;

10. Combinations of gender-affirming procedures; and

11. Other treatments as prescribed to suppress the development of endogenous secondary sex characteristics, align the individual's appearance or physical body with gender identity, and alleviate symptoms of clinically significant distress resulting from gender dysphoria.

(iii) "Gender-affirming treatment" may include treatment described in the current clinical standards of care for gender-affirming treatment published by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health.

(3) "Gender identity" has the meaning stated in § 20-101 of the State Government Article.

Article – Health Occupations

1-227.

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

(2) "Health care practitioner" means an individual who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by law to provide health care services under this article.

(3) "Legally protected health care" has the meaning stated in § 2-312 of the State Personnel and Pensions Article.

(b) A health occupations board may not revoke, suspend, discipline, take an adverse action against, or refuse to issue or renew a license, certification, or other authorization to practice for any health care practitioner in whole or in part because of the provision or support of the provision of legally protected health care if the legally protected health care was provided in accordance with the standard of care as determined by the relevant health occupations board established under this article and in accordance with the laws of this State.

(c) A health occupations board may not revoke, suspend, discipline, take an adverse action against, or refuse to issue or renew a license, certification, or other authorization to practice for any health care practitioner if the health care practitioner is disciplined by a licensure board in another state in whole or in part because of the provision or support of the provision of legally protected health care if the legally protected health care was provided in accordance with the standard of care as determined by the relevant health occupations board established under this article and in accordance with the laws of this State.

Article – State Personnel and Pensions

2–312.

(a) **(1)** In this section[, “legally”] **THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.**

(2) “GENDER–AFFIRMING TREATMENT” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 15–151 OF THE HEALTH – GENERAL ARTICLE.

(3) “LEGALLY protected health care” means:

(I) all reproductive health services, medications, and supplies related to the direct provision or support of the provision of care related to pregnancy, contraception, assisted reproduction, and abortion that is lawful in the State; **OR**

(II) ALL GENDER–AFFIRMING TREATMENT, INCLUDING MEDICATIONS AND SUPPLIES, RELATED TO THE DIRECT PROVISION OR SUPPORT OF THE PROVISION OF CARE RELATED TO GENDER–AFFIRMING TREATMENT THAT IS LAWFUL IN THE STATE.

(b) This section does not apply to an interstate investigation or proceeding described under subsection (c) of this section if:

(1) the interstate investigation or proceeding concerns conduct that would be subject to civil liability, criminal liability, or administrative sanction if committed in the State; or

(2) the subject of the interstate investigation or proceeding submits a written request to provide information or assistance to the investigation or proceeding.

(c) An agency of the State or a political subdivision of the State, an agent or employee of the State or a political subdivision of the State acting in the agent’s or employee’s official capacity, or a private party providing services on behalf of the State or a political subdivision of the State, may not provide information, expend time or money, or use State facilities, State property, State equipment, State personnel, or other State resources in furtherance of any interstate investigation or proceeding seeking to impose civil or criminal liability on, or administrative sanction against, a person for any activity relating to legally protected health care if the activity would not be subject to civil or criminal liability or professional sanction in the State.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2024.