

HOUSE BILL 716

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CF 5r0150

By: **Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee (By Request –
Departmental – Housing and Community Development)**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2025

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Housing and Community Development – Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher**
3 **Program Eligibility – Alterations**

4 FOR the purpose of including the Department of Housing and Community Development in
5 the definition of “public housing agency” for the purpose of certain provisions of law
6 relating to the Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program; authorizing the
7 Department to project–base up to a certain amount of its authorized voucher units;
8 altering the manner in which the Department and each public housing agency shall
9 prioritize vouchers and housing assistance payments for certain families; altering
10 the percentage of monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities a family
11 assisted under the Program shall be expected to pay; altering the time at which the
12 Department or a public housing agency shall make a certain determination; altering
13 certain inspection schedule and standard requirements; altering the amount the
14 Department shall issue to each public housing agency each year for certain purposes;
15 and generally relating to the Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program.

16 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
17 Article – Housing and Community Development
18 Section 4–2901(a) and 4–2902
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
22 Article – Housing and Community Development
23 Section 4–2901(i), 4–2904(a), 4–2906, 4–2908(b), 4–2911, and 4–2919
24 Annotated Code of Maryland
25 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **Article – Housing and Community Development**

2 4–2901.

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

4 (i) **[(1)]** “Public housing agency” means an entity authorized by the U.S.
5 Department of Housing and Urban Development to administer the federal Housing Choice
6 Voucher Program in the State.

7 **[(2)]** “Public housing agency” does not include the Department.]

8 4–2902.

9 There is a Statewide Rental Assistance Voucher Program in the Department.

10 4–2904.

11 (a) (1) In political subdivisions without a local administrator under the federal
12 Housing Choice Voucher Program, the Department shall administer the State Program and
13 issue vouchers and housing assistance payments to assist low-income households that are
14 eligible for but are not currently receiving housing choice vouchers under the federal
15 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

16 (2) In political subdivisions with a public housing agency–administrator
17 under the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program, the public housing agency shall
18 administer the State Program and issue vouchers and housing assistance payments to
19 assist low-income households that are eligible for but are not currently receiving housing
20 choice vouchers under the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program.

21 **(3) THE DEPARTMENT MAY PROJECT-BASE UP TO 100% OF ITS**
22 **AUTHORIZED VOUCHER UNITS IF NECESSARY TO ADMINISTER THE STATE**
23 **PROGRAM, INCLUDING IN POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS WITHOUT A LOCAL**
24 **ADMINISTRATOR UNDER THE FEDERAL HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM.**

25 4–2906.

26 **[The Department and each] EACH** public housing agency shall **[equally]** prioritize
27 vouchers and housing assistance payments for families that include:

28 (1) a child who is under the age of 18 years;

29 (2) a foster child who is:

30 (i) at least 18 years old; but

- 1 (ii) under the age of 24 years;
- 2 (3) a military veteran;
- 3 (4) an individual experiencing homelessness;
- 4 (5) a disabled individual; or
- 5 (6) an elderly individual.

6 4–2908.

7 (b) A family assisted under the State Program shall be expected to pay not more
8 than **[30%] 40%** of its monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities, as determined
9 by **[the Department or]** the public housing agency **AT THE TIME THE FAMILY INITIALLY**
10 **RECEIVES ASSISTANCE UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM.**

11 4–2911.

12 (a) (1) **[The Department or a] A** public housing agency shall conduct **[annual]**
13 **AN INITIAL INSPECTION AND PERIODIC** inspections **THEREAFTER** of each unit rented
14 using housing assistance payments to ensure the continued compliance with federal
15 housing quality standards under 24 C.F.R. § 982.401 **OR 24 C.F.R. § 5.703, AS**
16 **APPLICABLE.**

17 (2) Inspections shall occur on or before the initial lease date and **[each**
18 **year] AT LEAST BIENNIALY** thereafter **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC HOUSING**
19 **AGENCY’S ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN.**

20 (b) For a unit located in a building with 3 to 49 units, the property owner shall
21 provide **[the Department or]** the public housing agency with a certificate of occupancy that
22 has been completed within 1 year.

23 (c) For a unit located in a building with 50 units or more, the property owner shall
24 provide **[the Department or]** the public housing agency with an inspection certificate.

25 4–2919.

26 (a) (1) For fiscal years 2025, 2026, and 2027, the Governor shall include in the
27 annual budget bill an appropriation of \$10,000,000 to the Department for the State
28 Program.

29 (2) For fiscal year 2028 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Governor shall
30 include in the annual budget bill an appropriation sufficient to fund at least the same
31 number of vouchers issued in the prior fiscal year.

1 (b) Of the amount specified under subsection (a) of this section, the Department
2 shall distribute [6%] each year to [public housing agencies] **EACH PUBLIC HOUSING**
3 **AGENCY AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE FEDERAL DE MINIMIS RATE OF THE PUBLIC**
4 **HOUSING AGENCY'S MODIFIED TOTAL DIRECT COSTS AS ESTABLISHED IN 2 C.F.R. §**
5 **200.414(F)** to help defray staffing expenses related to the administration of the federal
6 Housing Choice Voucher Program and the State Program.

7 (c) The Department shall develop a formula for distributing State Program funds
8 to [the Department and] each public housing agency.

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