

2017 End of Session Report

During the 2017 Legislative Session, Catholic Charities tracked approximately 400 pieces of legislation. Below we have highlighted 35 bills of particular importance to the Agency and those we serve. Agency priorities are bolded.

Bills that were signed into law or enacted will become law on their effective date – usually July 1 or October 1. For bills that were vetoed, the General Assembly can vote to override the veto the next time it convenes. Bills that failed could be introduced again next year.

Employment

HB 1 (SB 230) **Labor and Employment - Maryland Healthy Working Families Act** **Vetoed**

This bill will allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn 1 hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked, up to 5 days a year. For employees in businesses with 14 or fewer employees, the leave is unpaid. The employee must work at least 12 hours/week to qualify, and the leave cannot be used in the first 106 days of employment.

HB 1047 (SB 906) **Child Support - Noncompliance With Court Order - License Suspension** **Signed into Law**

This bill allows an individual with a commercial driver’s license to be out of compliance with a child support order for up to 120 (from 60) before their license is suspended. It also requires the Child Support Enforcement Administration to let the obligor know they can request an investigation if their professional license is suspended.

HB 1143 **Maryland Pay Stub Transparency Act of 2017** **Failed**

This bill would have required employers to include certain pieces of information to their employees' paystubs, including the hours for which they are being paid, the rate at which they are being paid, and what deductions are being made from their wages.

Foster Care/Kinship Care

HB 462 (SB 701) **Higher Education - Tuition Waivers for Foster Care Recipients and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth – Alterations** **Signed into Law**

This bill makes changes to the existing Tuition Waiver for Foster Care Recipients and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth by extending eligibility for the tuition waiver to foster care youth who resided in an out-of-home placement at the time they graduated from high school or received their GED or they resided in an out-of-home placement on their 18th birthday. The bill also clarifies that tuition fees are waived for both credit and noncredit courses required in the pursuance of higher education.

HB 1207 (SB 85) **Family Law - Treatment Foster Care Homes – Siblings** **Signed into Law**

This bill allows more than two siblings - full, half, or adopted - to be placed in the same treatment foster care home as long as it is in their best interest and does not harm other children already in the home.

Health

HB 580 (SB 476) Behavioral Health Community Providers - Keep the Door Open Act **Failed (But see HB1329)**

This bill would have indexed funding for community behavioral health providers to medical inflation. Although this bill did not pass, large and relevant portions of this bill were included in the broader HOPE Act, which did pass this year.

HB 786 Education - Individualized or Group Behavioral Counseling Services - Establishment **Signed into Law**

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to recommend best practices for providing students behavioral needs assessments and behavioral health counseling services through a school-based health center. The bill also prohibits insurance carriers from denying behavioral health services because a student is receiving care at school.

HB 1082 (SB 1060) Heroin and Opioid Education and Community Action Act of 2017 (Start Talking Maryland Act) **Signed into Law**

This is a comprehensive bill that seeks to address the heroin and opioid addiction by expanding drug addiction and prevention education in schools, having naloxone in schools, requiring each institution of higher education in Maryland that receives State funding to have a policy that addresses addiction and prevention, and require the State Department of Education to convene a workgroup and submit a report on behavioral and substance abuse disorder services in public schools. There is funding associated with this bill.

HB 1329 (SB 967) Heroin and Opioid Prevention Effort (HOPE) and Treatment Act of 2017 **Signed into Law**

This is a comprehensive bill that seeks to address the heroin and opioid crisis through a variety of means, including a 3.5% rate increase for FY 2019 and 2020, and a 3.0% rate increase in 2021 for community behavioral health providers. The bill also seeks to including expanding the scope of drug courts and the health crisis hotline and establishing crisis treatment centers

Housing and Homelessness

HB 134 Homelessness and Supportive Services - Transfer to Department of Housing and Community Development **Signed into Law**

This bill transfers the Bureau of Homeless Services - which is currently housed within the Department of Human Resources - to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Programs that are under the umbrella of the Bureau of Homeless Services that are being moved to DHCD include the Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Women's Shelter Crisis Home Program, Service-Linked Housing Program, Housing Counselors, and Emergency Transitional Housing Services. Though this will impact providers, it is not expected to impact people experiencing homelessness.

HB 172 (SB 728) Home Act of 2017

Failed

This bill would have prohibited landlords from discriminating against potential tenants based on their sources of income, including Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), Veteran's HUD-VASH vouchers, alimony, and other sources of income.

HB 269 (SB 531) Housing Navigator and Aftercare Program

Signed into Law

This bill will codify the Housing Navigator and Aftercare program, which already exists in several Maryland counties, and allocates additional funding to the program. This program will be housed in the Department of Housing and Community Development, along with the Bureau of Homeless Services which is being transferred from the Department of Human Resources.

HB 1067 Public Schools and Shelters - Homeless Girls and Women - Feminine Hygiene Products

Signed into Law

This bill requires schools to provide free feminine hygiene products to girls experiencing homelessness in the school - provided by local county boards of education - as well as requires homeless shelters to provide free feminine hygiene products - provided by DHR and DHCD - to women experiencing homelessness residing in shelters.

Immigration & Human Trafficking

HB 1208 (SB 616) Victims and Witnesses - U Nonimmigrant Status - Certification of Victim Helpfulness

Failed

This bill would have required law enforcement to respond to a request to certify victim helpfulness within certain timeframes. Obtaining a signed form allows the victim to apply for a U-VISA with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

HB 1307 (SB 1016) Labor and Employment - Regulation of Farm Labor Contractors and Foreign Labor Contractors

Failed

This bill would have requires a foreign labor contractor (FLC) to be licensed by the Commissioner of Labor and Industry before the individual may perform foreign labor contracting services in the State. It also prohibits FLC's from charging an application fee.

HB 1362 (SB 835) Criminal Procedure - Immigration - Community Trust

Failed

This bill would have prohibited local law enforcement from stopping, arresting, and detaining an undocumented individual for the sole purposes of a federal civil immigration warrant. The bill also would have required schools, hospitals, and courthouses to establish policies that limit federal immigration enforcement on their premises.

Income/Public Benefits

HB 2 (SB 14) **Earned Income Tax Credit - Individuals Without Qualifying Children - Expansion** **Failed**
This bill would have expanded the EITC to include single filers without children between 18-24 years, would have increased the amount of the credit to 100% of the federal credit, and would have increased the amount an individual can earn and still receive the credit to 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.

HB 257 (SB 359) **Education - Maryland Meals for Achievement In-Classroom Breakfast Program - Administration (Maryland Meals for Achievement for Teens Act of 2017)** **Signed into Law**
This bill will make it easier for high schools in Maryland to adopt the Maryland Meals for Achievement breakfast program in their school by specifying in law that schools are allowed to serve the breakfast in a "grab and go" fashion in the hallway - as opposed to delivering it to the classroom - a model that is more popular in high schools. Maryland Meals for Achievement is a program that provides free breakfast to all students in eligible schools.

HB 287 (SB 361) **Hunger-Free Schools Act of 2017** **Signed into Law**
This bill reauthorizes and extends the option for Maryland school systems to implement Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) through FY 2022. This bill allows school districts to be held harmless in their state funding when implementing CEP, which is a federal option which allows all students in schools with high numbers of low-income students to receive free breakfast and lunch.

HB 288 (SB 360) **State Department of Education - Breakfast and Lunch Programs - Funding (Free School Meals for Students From Low- and Middle-Income Families Act)** **Failed**
This bill would have eliminated the "Reduced-Price" category for school meals - which are households between 136-185% of the Federal Poverty Line - and would have instead provided free meals to all students from households living at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Line.

HB 418 (SB 294) **Child Care Subsidy Program - Reimbursement Rate Adjustments** **Signed into Law**
This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to conduct an analysis every two years to calculate Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) reimbursement rates.

HB 586 (SB 278) **Maryland Farms and Families Act** **Signed into Law**
This bill creates the Maryland Farms and Families Program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA). This program provides matching dollars to individuals receiving WIC and SNAP when they spend their benefits at local farmers markets. The bill also creates the Maryland Farms and Families Fund supported by an annual general fund appropriation of \$500,000, though the funding is not mandated and is subject to the limitations of the State budget.

HB 1469 (SB 1009) Public Assistance - Family Investment Program - Child Support Pass Through **Signed into Law**

This bill - starting in July 2019 - will require the Department of Human Resources to pass through child support payments to families receiving Temporary Cash Assistance, and disregard these payments when calculating their benefit. Up to \$100/month will be passed through to TCA families with one child, and up to \$200/month will be passed through to TCA families with more than 1 child.

Legal Services

HB 972 (SB 811) Civil Cases - Maryland Legal Services Corporation Fund - Surcharges - Repeal of Sunset **Enacted**

This bill retains surcharges applied to civil cases, the funds of which go to the Maryland Legal Services Corporation Fund, which is used to finance civil legal services to indigent clients.

HB 1291 (SB 856) Maryland Legal Services Corporation Funding - Abandoned Property Funds **Enacted**

This bill increases the amount of abandoned property funds that go to the Maryland Legal Services Corporation Fund to \$3,000,000, up from \$1,500,000.

Seniors & Long-term Care

HB 752 (SB 671) Department of Human Resources - Public Assistance Eligibility - Financial Records **Signed into Law**

This bill allows the Department of Human Resources to request and obtain any necessary records from a fiduciary institution after an applicant for long-term care Medicaid benefits has been unable to obtain their financial records necessary to establish eligibility or ineligibility for assistance.

HB 769 (SB 216) Maryland Caregivers Support Coordinating Council - Renaming and Altering Membership and Duties **Signed into Law**

This bill renames the existing Maryland Caregivers Support Coordinating Council to the Maryland Commission on Caregiving, and also adds one member of the Maryland Senate and one member of the Maryland House of Delegates to the commission. The bill also expands the duties of the commission to include providing analysis of best practices in family caregiver support programs and requires that its annual report include recommendations regarding family caregiver support services.

HB 1599 (SB 1109) Nursing Homes - Partial Payment for Services Provided **Failed**

This bill would have required the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Department of Human Resources to submit reports on the percentage of applications for Medicaid eligibility that did not receive an eligibility determination within 90 days. If the percent of applications reported exceeded 20%, DHMH would have had to begin making advance payments to nursing homes.

Procurement/Contracting

HB 118 (SB 632) Election Law - Persons Doing Public Business - Reporting by Governmental Entities Signed into Law

This bill involves government contracts, and requires the governmental entity issuing contracts to provide the State Board of Elections (SBE) with the name and address for each person the governmental entity has awarded a contract to that causes the person to be doing public business. If a notice of the award of the contract has been posted on eMaryland Marketplace, the government entity does not have to provide the SBE with the above information.

HB 919 (SB 971) Procurement - Nondiscrimination Clauses and State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination Failed

This bill would have prohibited considering certain factors - such as religion, gender and marital status - when filling vacancies in the boards of any organization that has a state government contract.

Re-entry

HB 694 (SB 543) Higher Education - Admissions Process - Criminal History (Maryland Fair Access to Education Act of 2017) Vetoed

This bill prohibits colleges and universities that receive State funds and use their own admissions application from asking about criminal histories. For colleges and universities that use the "common application", which contains questions about the criminal history of the applicant, the institution needs to post a notice on its website stating that a criminal history does not disqualify an applicant from admission. The bill does not prohibit a student's criminal history to be considered for deciding access to campus residency, offering counseling and services, or deciding whether the student may participate in campus life activities.

HB 860 (SB 853) Transitional Supports for Ex-Offenders - Repeal of Restrictions (Maryland Equal Access to Food Act of 2017) Enacted

This bill repeals certain laws that require drug testing and treatment as a prerequisite to receiving benefits for individuals who have criminal records related to drugs - controlled dangerous substance (CDS). It also reduces the circumstances under which a person could lose their benefits for a drug conviction.

Other

HB 103 Department of Human Resources and Child Support Enforcement Administration – Renaming Signed into law

This bill renames the Department of Human Resources to be the Department of Human Services and the Child Support Enforcement Administration to the Child Support Administration.

HB 180 (SB 82) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene – Renaming Signed into law

This bill updates the name of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and accordingly renames the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene as the Secretary of Health.

HB 472 (SB 416) Income Tax Credit - Qualified Farms - Food Donation Pilot Program

**Signed
into law**

This bill creates a tax credit for farms that donate food to eligible nonprofit organizations as decided by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Only farms located in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties qualify for the new tax credit.

HB 1183 (SB 986) State Board of Social Work Examiners - Revisions

**Signed
into law**

The bill makes a number of changes to the statute governing the practice of social work including changes to terminology, supervision requirements, and defining private practice.

**SB 15 Insurance - Charitable Gift Annuities - Special Permit Holders - Required Financial
Statements**

**Signed
into law**

This bill requires nonprofits who are permitted to accept annuity payments from donors to submit audited fiscal year-end financial statements to the Insurance Commissioner each year, instead of having to submit an annual report. The time frame was extended to 180 days after the end of the fiscal year.
