



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 1277- Security Guards - Use of Force Reporting - Health Care-Related Physical Interventions

Position: *Support with Sponsor's Amendments*

March 6, 2024

House Economic Matters Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 1277 with amendments.

Maryland hospitals strive to create an environment that promotes healing and a positive patient experience while protecting the health and well-being of the workforce. The security guards employed by hospitals are critical to preserve this safe environment.

Senate Bill 760, as passed last year, although well-intentioned and necessary for security guards working in unregulated spaces, presents many challenges for Maryland hospitals. We appreciate the bill sponsors' willingness to introduce HB 1277 and include amendments that address the field's concerns.

The amendments:

- Strike the definition of health care related physical intervention
 - This definition does not encompass the variety of interactions hospital security guards utilize to protect the health and safety of patients, staff, and visitors
- Require hospitals to report aggregate data on the utilization of Code Purples and Code Greens to the Office of Health Care Quality.
 - Pursuant to [Health General 19-308.6](#) every Maryland hospital uses a uniform set of emergency security codes. According to Md. Code Regs 10.07.01.33 Uniform Emergency Codes, Code Green is for a Combative Person and Code Purple is for a Security Only Response.
 - Data on the number of codes initiated is not currently reported. Reporting the aggregate data on the utilization of these codes could provide valuable information that more accurately represents the actions security guards take within health care facilities.
 - The Office of Health Care Quality has a mechanism to receive data from hospitals and already collects data on adverse events.
- Extend the date by which the law will be enforced.
 - There are several actions that hospitals will need to take to comply with the requirements of this law including:

- Hospital security teams must certify existing security training programs and certify training instructors
- The Maryland Police Training & Standards Commission must review and accredit hospital programs
- Security guards will need to go through the required training. Due to workforce shortages this might entail staff working overtime to meet this requirement.
- Each security guard must submit an application and accompanying documentation to receive certification
- Hospitals cannot accomplish all of the tasks listed above before Oct. 1, 2024. More time is needed to ensure compliance, especially given security guard workforce shortages. The volume of security guards at hospitals is very different than the typical retail establishment. Hospitals operate 24/7/365 and generally have multiple security guards on a given shift. Extending the deadline to Jan. 1, 2025 will provide an on-ramp for the hospital field to ensure compliance.

These amendments will ensure hospital security guards are in compliance with the law while protecting patient data.

For these reasons, we ask for a *favorable* report on HB 1277 with the sponsor's amendments.

For more information, please contact:
Jane Krienke, Senior Legislative Analyst, Government Affairs
Jkrienke@mhaonline.org

Brandon Floyd, Analyst, Policy
Bfloyd@mhaonline.org