



Bill Summary

Safe Sleep Act of 2024

[House Bill 177](#)

BILL SUMMARY

HB 177 requires hospitals to provide oral and written educational resources to the parent or legal guardian on how to provide a safe sleep environment before the hospital discharges a newborn after birth. Hospitals must establish a process to provide these resources and confirm receipt. The bill also requires the Maryland Department of Health to develop a list of resources, by county, that hospitals can provide to the parent or legal guardian before discharge to provide a safe sleep environment.

WHAT'S NEXT

- By Jan. 1, 2025, hospitals must establish a process to provide information and resources and confirmation of receipt by parents/legal guardians
- The Maryland Department of Health, in consultation with local health officers, must develop a list of resources available in each county for obtaining the items necessary to provide a safe sleep environment for an infant. Each local health department is responsible for updating the list annually.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Update your hospital policy on safe infant sleep to include a process for sharing safe sleep educational resources, confirming patient receipt, and documenting the interaction. Model safe sleep practices in your mother/baby unit, neonatal intensive care unit, and other applicable units, and have access to the latest guidelines and best practices. Partner with your local health department to understand what resources are available to support patients in your community who need access to cribs and other resources to ensure a safe sleep environment.

For more information, contact [Jane Krienke](#), Senior Analyst, Government Affairs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- As soon as practicable before discharge, hospitals must provide oral and written educational resources to the parent or legal guardian on how they can provide a safe sleep environment for the infant. These resources can include information on the use of supine positioning; avoidance of exposure to smoke, soft bedding, or overheating; the use of a firm and flat sleep surface; and room sharing. The educational resources may be supplemented by a video on safe sleep practices.
- Hospitals must have the parent or legal guardian confirm receipt of the resources and document this interaction
- Hospitals must ask the parent or legal guardian to describe the sleep environment they will provide the infant at home and provide information on the importance of ensuring a safe sleep environment, including risks of suffocation and sudden infant death
- Hospitals must provide a list of resources available for the parent or legal guardian to obtain the items necessary to provide a safe sleep environment. The Department of Health is responsible for compiling the resource list by county.