



Maryland
Hospital Association

**House Bill 1485- Public Health - Crisis Response System - Resources for Family Members
and Trauma-Informed Care Training (Tiarra's Law)**

Position: *Letter of Information*

March 3, 2026

House Health Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to offer information on House Bill 1485.

Maryland's crisis care system is an essential component of the behavioral health care continuum. Accessible, timely crisis services can divert individuals from emergency departments, reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, and connect people with support before situations escalate. Efforts to increase public awareness of available crisis resources are critical to ensure that individuals, families, and caregivers know where to turn when they or a loved one are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis.

HB 1485 seeks to improve this awareness by requiring a standardized informational pamphlet to be developed and disseminated by the Department of Health, ensuring consistent messaging about Maryland's crisis system across providers. However, as the Department prepares to implement this requirement, there should be consideration given to how individuals access information today. Several providers have been moving away from paper pamphlets to reduce unnecessary waste. Patients often dislike being handed a physical copy and many prefer digital information. To maximize reach and effectiveness, other distribution methods such as text messages or QR codes that link to this information could also be useful.

Flexibility in formats and dissemination methods will align implementation with modern communication practices and preferences. MHA is also part of the Behavioral Health Administration's recently constituted 988 Partnership Committee that is focused on improving awareness and outreach regarding 988. We look forward to working with BHA and other stakeholders through this Committee to identify sustainable and cost-effective awareness initiatives.

For more information, please contact:

Pallavi Arora, Policy Analyst, Government Affairs & Policy
Parora@mhaonline.org