

SENATE BILL 496

J1

6lr2703
CF 6lr2759

By: Senator Hershey

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Coverage for the Treatment of Obesity**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing, beginning on a certain date, the Maryland Medical
4 Assistance Program to provide comprehensive coverage for the treatment of obesity;
5 requiring the Maryland Department of Health to provide notice to Program
6 recipients if the Department elects to provide the coverage; and generally relating to
7 the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and coverage for the treatment of obesity.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

9 Article – Health – General

10 Section 15–103(a)(1)

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

14 Article – Health – General

15 Section 15–103(a)(2)(xxvii) and (xxviii)

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to

19 Article – Health – General

20 Section 15–103(a)(2)(xxix) and 15–160

21 Annotated Code of Maryland

22 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

23 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

24 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

25 **Article – Health – General**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 15–103.

2 (a) (1) The Secretary shall administer the Maryland Medical Assistance
3 Program.

4 (2) The Program:

5 (xxvii) Beginning on January 1, 2026, if providing coverage for
6 the delivery of anesthesia, shall provide coverage for the delivery of anesthesia in
7 accordance with § 15–862 of the Insurance Article; [and]

8 (xxviii) Beginning on January 1, 2026, shall provide calcium score
9 testing in accordance with § 15–863 of the Insurance Article; AND

10 (XXIX) BEGINNING ON JANUARY 1, 2027, MAY PROVIDE
11 COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE FOR THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY UNDER § 15–160 OF
12 THIS SUBTITLE.

13 15–160.

14 (A) IN THIS SECTION, “COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE FOR THE TREATMENT
15 OF OBESITY” INCLUDES COVERAGE FOR INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY,
16 BARIATRIC SURGERY, AND ANY MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE FEDERAL FOOD
17 AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION WITH AN INDICATION FOR CHRONIC WEIGHT
18 MANAGEMENT IN PATIENTS WITH OBESITY.

19 (B) THE PROGRAM MAY PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE FOR THE
20 TREATMENT OF OBESITY.

21 (C) THE PROGRAM MAY UNDERTAKE UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TO
22 DETERMINE THE MEDICAL NECESSITY AND APPROPRIATENESS FOR TREATMENT OF
23 OBESITY UNDER THIS SECTION IF THE DETERMINATIONS ARE MADE IN THE SAME
24 MANNER AS DETERMINATIONS ARE MADE FOR THE TREATMENT OF ANY OTHER
25 ILLNESS, CONDITION, OR DISORDER COVERED BY THE PROGRAM.

26 (D) IF THE DEPARTMENT ELECTS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE
27 FOR THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY UNDER THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
28 PROVIDE NOTICE TO PROGRAM RECIPIENTS.

29 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before November 1,
30 2027, the Maryland Department of Health shall report to the Senate Finance Committee,
31 the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the House Health Committee, and the House
32 Appropriations Committee, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article,
33 on whether the Maryland Medical Assistance Program has begun to provide comprehensive
34 coverage for the treatment of obesity as authorized under § 15–160 of the Health – General

1 Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act, and if not, why the Department has not begun
2 to provide coverage.

3 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
4 October 1, 2026.