

HOUSE BILL 25

D4
HB 721/25 – JUD

(PRE-FILED)

6lr0770

By: **Delegate Addison**

Requested: September 4, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Family Law – Grandparent Visitation**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the circumstances under which an equity court is authorized
4 to grant visitation rights to a grandparent of a child; specifying the circumstances
5 under which an equity court is required to grant visitation rights to a grandparent
6 of a child; and generally relating to grandparent visitation.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

8 Article – Family Law

9 Section 9–102

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Family Law**

15 9–102.

16 (A) [An] IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, AN
17 equity court may[:]

18 (1)] consider a petition for reasonable visitation of a grandchild by a
19 grandparent[; and

20 (2) if the court finds it to be in the best interests of the child, grant
21 visitation rights to the grandparent].

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(B) (1)** SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS
2 SUBSECTION AND SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, AN EQUITY COURT MAY GRANT
3 VISITATION RIGHTS TO A GRANDPARENT IF:

4 **(I)** THE PETITION FOR VISITATION RIGHTS WAS FILED AFTER
5 AN ACTION FOR DIVORCE, ANNULMENT, CUSTODY, OR PATERNITY WAS FILED BY A
6 PARENT OF THE CHILD; AND

7 **(II)** THE COURT FINDS THAT GRANTING VISITATION RIGHTS TO
8 THE GRANDPARENT:

9 1. IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD; AND

10 2. WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE PARENT-CHILD
11 RELATIONSHIP.

12 **(2)** IN MAKING A DETERMINATION UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(II)1 OF
13 THIS SUBSECTION, THE COURT SHALL CONSIDER THE AMOUNT OF PERSONAL
14 CONTACT THAT OCCURRED BETWEEN THE GRANDPARENT AND THE CHILD BEFORE
15 THE FILING OF THE PETITION.

16 **(C)** SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, AN
17 EQUITY COURT SHALL GRANT VISITATION RIGHTS TO A GRANDPARENT UNDER THIS
18 SECTION IF:

19 **(1) (I)** THE CHILD RESIDED WITH THE GRANDPARENT FOR A
20 PERIOD OF AT LEAST 12 MONTHS; OR

21 **(II)** THE CHILD'S PARENT WHO IS THE CHILD OF THE
22 GRANDPARENT IS DECEASED; AND

23 **(2)** THE COURT FINDS THAT GRANTING VISITATION RIGHTS TO THE
24 GRANDPARENT:

25 **(I)** IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD; AND

26 **(II)** WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE PARENT-CHILD
27 RELATIONSHIP.

28 **(D)** IN MAKING A DETERMINATION UNDER THIS SECTION, THE COURT MAY
29 NOT DENY VISITATION RIGHTS BASED ON ALLEGATIONS THAT GRANTING
30 VISITATION RIGHTS TO THE GRANDPARENT WOULD INTERFERE WITH THE
31 PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP UNLESS, AFTER A HEARING, THE COURT

1 DETERMINES BY A PREPONDERANCE OF THE EVIDENCE THAT INTERFERENCE
2 WOULD OCCUR.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
4 October 1, 2026.