



# Maryland

## Department of Human Services

**Commission on Trauma Informed Care:  
2024 Annual Report  
and  
Findings and Recommendations on the Development  
and Implementation of an ACEs Aware Program  
2024 Report**

*Completed pursuant to Human Services § 8-1309(a)(2) &  
Human Services § 8-1309(b)(5)*

*January 21, 2025*



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

*Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Rafael López, Secretary*

January 21, 2025

The Honorable Wes Moore  
Governor of Maryland  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne Jones  
Speaker of the House of Delegates  
H-101 State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate  
H-107 State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Report required by Human Services Article § 8-1309(a)(2) and (b)(5)- 2024  
Letter on the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care: Findings and  
Recommendations and ACEs Aware Program - MSAR # 15778 & MSAR # 15777**

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

Sections § 8-1302, 8-1305, 8-1307, and 8-1309(a)(2) of the Human Services Article established the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care (Commission) as an independent entity within the Department of Human Services (DHS) and requires the Commission to submit a report on its findings and recommendations by June 30 of each year.

[Executive Order 01.01.2024.06](#) recently transferred the Commission's staffing and reporting from the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) to DHS, effective January 18, 2024. GOCPP submitted a letter to the General Assembly earlier this year related to the intergovernmental transfer. DHS believes whole-heartedly in the mission of trauma-informed care as it is the cornerstone of our practice in the services we provide to children, youth, families, and communities.

The Commission last convened in February 2024 under GOCPP's leadership, and DHS has not reconstituted or reconvened the Commission since the Executive Order transfer took effect. DHS conducted a thorough assessment of the Commission's work since its inception in 2021 and is grateful for the valuable resources it has provided to the Administration, agency leadership, and agency staff.

The legislation's primary intent was to mandate the Commission to develop a statewide trauma-responsive strategy and ensure trauma-informed delivery of state services that affect children, youth, families, and older adults. To achieve this goal, the Commission published a framework entitled "[The Maryland Way](#): Trauma-Informed,

Resilience-Oriented, Equitable Care and Culture (TIROE).” This framework serves as the statewide trauma-responsive strategy and guides the Commission’s work and recommendations.

The legislation also asked state agencies to report annually on their progress towards providing trauma-responsive and trauma-informed delivery of State services, allowing the Commission to assess gaps and strengths. In the Commission’s [2023 Annual Report](#), the following state agencies reported the status and progress towards providing trauma-responsive and trauma-informed service delivery, covering training curriculum, trauma-informed initiatives, and plans to prioritize and strengthen trauma-informed service delivery.

- **Maryland Department of Health**
  - MDH’s comprehensive plan to guide the design and rollout of its Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) transformation work is in development. The plan will include establishing and convening a MDH Cross Administration TIC Transformation Workgroup to guide the development and implementation of the MDH TIC plan, and provide essential coordination of TIC training and organizational change initiatives across MDH administrations.
  - **Behavioral Health Administration (BHA)** is leading the way with their Behavioral Health Building Healing Systems Initiative, which offers training on trauma-informed care to MDH/BHA, local public health department staff, and health providers. The initiative has also developed metrics and assessment tools and conducted data surveillance on trauma-informed care and Adverse Childhood Experiences in partnership with the National Governors Association.
- **Department of Housing and Community Development**
  - In FY 2023, DHCD implemented several pilot programs that increased staff implementation of trauma-informed care practices internally and fostered community partner/grantee adoption of trauma-informed care.
- **Department of Human Services**
  - Trauma-informed care and practice, and secondary traumatic stress are addressed at all levels of training for all staff at DHS’ Social Services Administration. Race, equity, and inclusion are also included in all levels of training for staff. DHS is exploring how to further incorporate trauma-informed practices into the Family Investment Administration and Child Support Administration.
- **Department of Juvenile Services**
  - DJS assesses the needs of youth and provides services in detention facilities, treatment programs, and community. All new hires participate in an orientation which includes training on trauma-informed care as well as training on diversity, equity, and inclusion. DJS includes trauma-

informed practices into many aspects of its operations and programming, such as screening and assessing youth entering its facilities, providing treatment to youth in its treatment programs, or organizing activities or events to support and enhance staff well-being.

- **Maryland State Department of Education**
  - MSDE created a workgroup to establish a shared vision and definition for a trauma-informed approach for schools and school leaders working with students and families. The workgroup published guidelines for local education agencies and school leaders, titled "[A Trauma-Informed Approach for Maryland Schools.](#)"
- **Department of Transportation**
  - The department established and maintains Diversity to Belonging Cohorts which makes recommendations and corrective actions directly to the Secretary. It also provides training for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
- **Department of Aging**
  - MDOA does not provide direct client services at the state level. These services are provided at the local level through the 19 Area Agencies on Aging. The AAA are all local level government entities and employees and have their own guidelines and training on these topics.
- **Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services (recently restructured as the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy and the Governor's Office of Children)**
  - At the time of the 2023 report, GOCPYVS brought all divisions together to collaborate and work towards making the office a more trauma-informed, resilience-oriented, and equitable organization, leveraging staff training and incorporating Trauma-Informed Practices into the Children's Cabinet's work and related funding.

The following agencies did not report plans to prioritize the trauma-responsive and trauma-informed service delivery. However, they did explain how they are implementing trauma-informed delivery into their operations:

- **Department of Natural Resources**
  - DNR offers training related to trauma, trauma-informed care/practices, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) to the Natural Resources Police (NRP) and the Maryland Park Service (MPS) as a part of required annual in-service training.
- **Maryland Department of State Police**
  - MDSP officers receive training on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Secondary Traumatic Stress.

The Department of Planning and the Board of Public Works also both submitted brief reports to the Commission, though it was unclear how the Commission's work relates to these two agencies which have limited direct service delivery.

Upon review of the Commission's [2023 Annual Report](#) and its [separate publication](#) on the ACEs Aware Program Best Practices, DHS asserts that the Commission completed the reporting responsibilities outlined in Human Services Article 8-1309 (a) and (b), fulfilling its legislatively mandated reporting. Continuing the Commission's activities and reporting in perpetuity could guide deeper implementation at the agency level, but otherwise would be redundant.

DHS believes the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care has accomplished its goal. The state government agencies responsible for serving children, youth, families and older adults are following and implementing "The Maryland Way" statewide framework, tailoring trauma-informed practices to the function of their agency, and prioritizing trauma-responsive and trauma-informed service delivery. DHS recommends the Commission wind down operations through the upcoming year, culminating in a statutory repeal. A trauma-informed approach will continue to guide DHS and all state agencies' work and service-delivery, even after the Commission itself sunsets.

We remain grateful for the General Assembly's leadership on this initiative and look forward to continued partnership in recognizing and uplifting trauma-informed care. Should members of the General Assembly have questions about this recommendation or the work of the Commission to date, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs at [rachel.sledge@maryland.gov](mailto:rachel.sledge@maryland.gov).

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rafael López', written in a cursive style.

Rafael López,  
Secretary