

Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Search (FGGS) 2025 Report

Criminal Procedure Article, Section 17-105

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy

June 3, 2026



WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor

DOROTHY LENNIG
Executive Director

June 3, 2026

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

The Honorable William C. "Bill" Ferguson IV
President of the Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk, Esq.
Speaker of the House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Criminal Procedure Article § 17-105 (MSAR #15674)

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Peña-Melnyk:

As required by § 17-105 of the Criminal Procedure Article, please find an enclosed copy of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy's report, titled *Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Search (FGGS) 2025 Report*. This report includes information regarding requests for FGGS during the 2025 calendar year. It also identifies the efforts of the panel of stakeholders tasked to review the annual report and make policy recommendations.

Should you have any questions relating to the information provided in this report, please feel free to contact me at 410-697-9338.

As required, five color copies will be sent to the Department of Legislative Services' Legislative Library.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dorothy J. Lennig". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "L".

Dorothy J. Lennig, Esq.
Executive Director

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

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Introduction

In accordance with § 17-105(a) of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (Office) must submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by June 1 of each year, as it relates to requests for forensic genetic genealogical DNA analysis and search (FGGS) for the preceding year. Section 17-105(b) also requires the Office to convene a panel of stakeholders tasked to review the annual report and make policy recommendations.

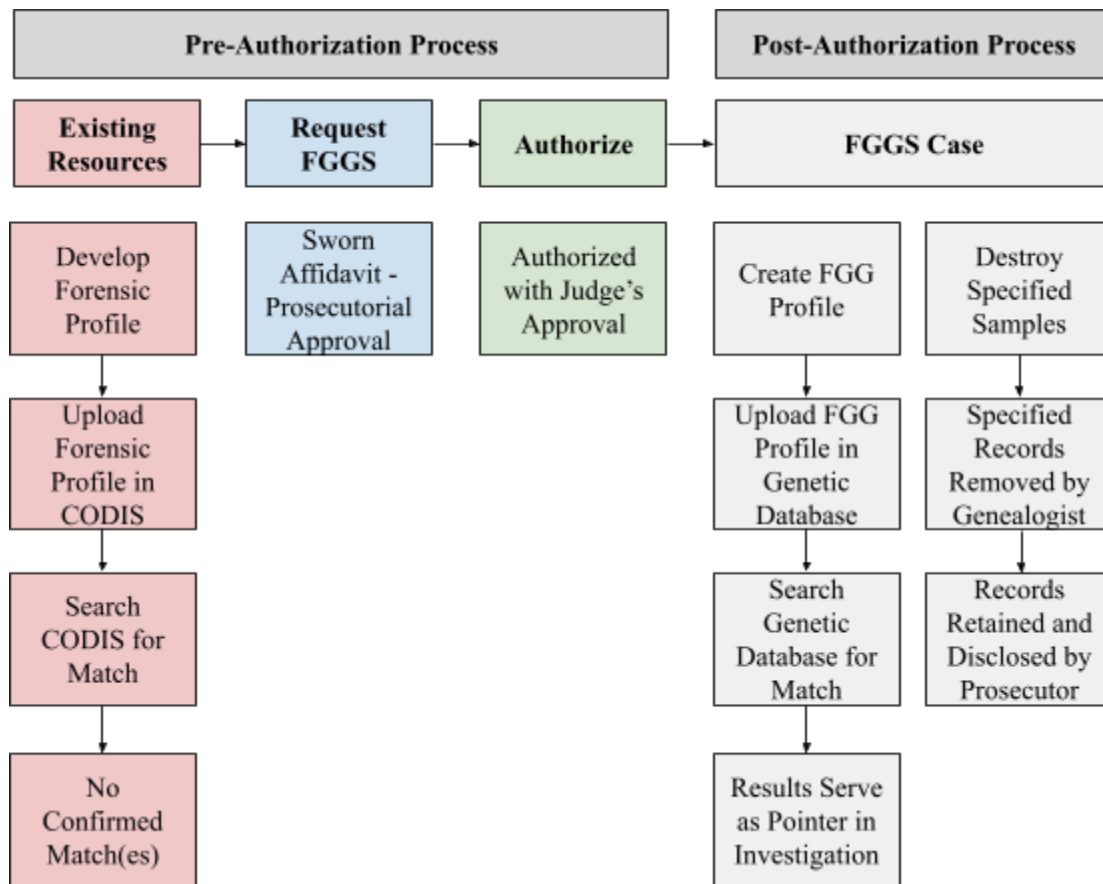
Pursuant to its charge, this *Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Search (FGGS) 2025 Report* includes information regarding requests for FGGS during the 2025 calendar year; and identifies efforts of the panel of stakeholders to increase awareness of FGGS and help move the State forward with FGGS-related processes. This report also provides a follow-up to several reports submitted in prior years and accessible at:

<https://gocpp.maryland.gov/reports-and-publications/>.

Background

Section 17-102 of the Criminal Procedure Article requires Maryland law enforcement to obtain judicial authorization - to include certifying before the court that the forensic sample and the criminal case meet specified criteria - before a forensic genetic genealogical DNA analysis and search (FGGS) may be initiated. This process also requires law enforcement to submit a sworn affidavit “with prosecutorial approval, asserting specified facts regarding the crime being investigated, testing that has already been conducted on the forensic sample, and the progress of the investigation.”¹ Following judicial authorization to initiate a FGGS, genetic genealogists must use single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) from sequencing or other methods generated from a forensic or reference sample to develop a FGG profile. Once developed, the FGG profile must be uploaded to an allowable genetic database to aid in the identification of a lead in the law enforcement investigation (*as illustrated below*).

¹ Department of Legislative Services. (2021). *The 90 Day Report: A Review of the 2021 Legislative Session*. <https://dls.maryland.gov/pubs/prod/RecurRpt/2021rs-90-Day-Report.pdf>



Based on the findings or lack thereof, law enforcement may also request judicial authorization to collect one or more of the following samples: covert putative perpetrator, covert third party, and/or voluntary third party. Upon judicial authorization, genetic genealogists must develop and upload a profile of the sample to an allowable genetic database for comparison against the genetic profiles of other individuals to evaluate potential familial relationships between the collected sample and other service user samples.

After a FGGS investigation is complete, the genetic genealogists must turn over to the law enforcement investigator all records and materials collected for the purpose of the FGGS, and confirm the removal or deletion of records from specified websites. If the FGGS investigation does not result in a specified outcome - such as a prosecution or an acquittal, completion of a sentence and postconviction litigation associated with a conviction obtained through the use of FGGS, or completion of any criminal prosecution that may arise from the FGGS - the court must issue orders to destroy all samples and information related to the investigation. For more information on the authorization process(es), please refer to:

<https://gocpp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/Forensic-Genetic-Genealogical-DNA-Analysis-and-Search-Pre-and-Post-Authorization-Process-1.pdf>.

Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Search

Section 17-105 of the Criminal Procedure Article requires the Office to prepare and submit an annual report regarding FGGS requests, and engage with a panel of stakeholders tasked to review the report each year and make policy recommendations. Please refer to the [data collection](#) and the [stakeholder panel](#) sections for more information pertaining to each.

Data Collection

Between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, state's attorneys made a total of 15 requests for FGGS.² All requests were granted, based on the following reasons:

- Test DNA associated with CDS distribution case
- Severity of the offense and lack of actionable leads
- Victim identification
- Suspect DNA identification
- Court ordered application

Because law enforcement must submit a sworn affidavit and receive prosecutorial approval before judicial authorization is granted, a timely turnaround is essential for agencies to initiate the FGGS. All requests that were initiated during calendar year 2025 were granted within seven days of the affidavit request date.³ In addition, agencies reported two cases in which the evidence originated from a sexual assault kit.⁴

Law enforcement agencies also reported that, prior to the use of FGGS, reasonable investigative leads were pursued for seven FGGS requests yet failed to identify the perpetrators. Investigative leads that occurred prior to the FGGS requests included the following:

- Known party verified contact with contraband
- Conducted numerous interviews and lab work
- Issued media release and teletypes to illicit suspects
- Conducted media outreach
- Tested other physical evidence recovered at the scene

² Data was extracted from Qualtrics, a survey used to collect the required information, on April 15, 2026. Information pertaining to this survey is accessible on the Office's website at: <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/mandated-reporting-requirements/>.

³ Three requests originated in 2024, and one originated in 2023.

⁴ This data point shows the relation to the sexual assault evidence collection kit tracking efforts under § 11-926.1 of the Criminal Procedure Article.

- Eliminated several serial rapists
- Ruled out similar offenders
- Held a group “round table” consisting of the Missing Persons / Cold Case Section
- Identified no new traditional investigative steps that would further case
- Re-interviewed the victim’s family, friends, and original personnel
- Searched latent prints through State/national databases
- Re-evaluated evidence
- Biological material from the scene produced a probative DNA profile that was uploaded to CODIS yet no matches returned
- Attempts to develop a SNP profile suitable for FGG failed
- Additional evidence under evaluation
- Conducted forensic examination of evidence such as DNA and latent prints, and interviewed multiple witnesses and suspects since 1974
- Conducted forensic testing since 1996, including previous DNA examinations, search warrants, and interviews
- Conducted forensic examinations of previously collected evidence and interviewed possible suspects and witnesses

Because all reasonable investigative and testing methods were exhausted for the seven FGGS requests, and the suspect remained unidentified, law enforcement obtained authorization to initiate the FGGS. Even though investigative leads were not pursued for the remaining eight requests, law enforcement received authorization to initiate the FGGS for the identification of a suspect or victim. As a result of the granted FGGS requests, law enforcement identified four putative perpetrators and conducted one covert collection.⁵ Law enforcement agencies reported no complaints from the individual subject to surveillance during the covert collection, and no complaints or suggestions from the judge supervising the covert collection. In addition, a third party reference sample was requested and collected from six individuals.⁶

Of the reported costs for FGGS procedures and costs to outsource such procedures, law enforcement agencies reported a total of \$19,041 and \$108,136.63, respectively.⁷ Based on the reported information, 79.52% of the outsourced procedures were covered with grant funds (\$85,994.63), and 20.48% (\$22,142) from general funds.

Based on the outcome of the authorized searches, one putative perpetrator was pending an arrest. As of April 15, 2026, which is the date on which most FGGS requests were extracted from Qualtrics - a survey tool used to collect the required information - no convictions were reported.⁸

⁵ Given the limited number of putative perpetrators, all demographic information was excluded from the report.

⁶ Given the number of third party references, the race and age of each individual was excluded from the report.

⁷ The cost to outsource FGGS procedures was reported for 11 cases. For this reason, the identified figures are based only on those costs reported to the Office.

⁸ Three requests were submitted to the Office on May 18, 2026.

For more information regarding the data collection process, please visit the Office's website at: <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/mandated-reporting-requirements/>.

Stakeholder Panel

Section 17-105(b) of the Criminal Procedure Article requires the Office to convene a panel - comprising judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, public defenders, law enforcement officials, crime laboratory directors, bioethicists, racial justice experts, criminal justice researchers, civil and privacy rights organizations, and organizations representing families impacted by the criminal justice system - to review the FGGS annual report each year and make policy recommendations. Although the panel is mandated to meet annually, the group meets three times per year, and established a sub-panel to help move three draft regulations through the approval process.

Pursuant to this charge, the Office convened two panel meetings in 2025. At the initial meeting on May 16, 2025, the Office presented the 2024 report findings, identified successes and challenges of the data collection process, and facilitated a discussion to improve efforts for next year. Individuals also discussed the need to:

- Gather information on the destruction of covertly collected samples;
- Finalize the draft forensic investigative genetic genealogy (FIGG) licensing requirements and regulations in order to funnel FGGS cases through the public forensic DNA laboratories that are licensed by the State;
- Include additional data elements pertaining to the date in which the affidavit is requested and approved, and, if the evidence originated from a sexual assault evidence collection kit, to show the relation to efforts under § 11-926.1 of the Criminal Procedure Article;
- Include year-over-year case information in annual reports to illustrate change, and ensure demographics are captured without the need to suppress findings;
- Develop presentations, resource materials, and flowcharts to illustrate and explain the FGGS process, from the initial request to the destruction of the sample; and
- Identify funding opportunities for State licensed laboratories to process the FGGS requests once the FIGG licensing requirements and regulations are finalized.

On October 10, 2025, the panel met for a second time to discuss the efforts made to address the needs identified at its initial meeting. These efforts included: updates to the Office's FGGS reporting guide to include the affidavit dates and a checkbox to capture if the evidence originated from a sexual assault kit; and discussions to develop presentations, resource materials, and flowcharts to illustrate and explain the FGGS process. The panel also received and completed a survey which served to gather feedback regarding if Maryland should partner with the Investigative Genetic Genealogy Accreditation Board to require individuals to take the

Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) Accreditation Exam as part of Maryland's draft licensing regulations.

Given the importance of the draft licensing regulations, the sub-panel, which consists of interested panel members, met three times in 2025. At the initial meeting on September 3, 2025, the group received a presentation from the Investigative Genetic Genealogy Accreditation Board regarding its creation and the exam development life cycle, an overview and functional description of the newly launched IGG Accreditation Exam, and its effective performance and capability to measure competency and proficiency of IGGs. On October 24, 2025, the Office presented the survey results, and facilitated a discussion to identify the steps needed to help move the three draft regulations forward. On December 15, 2025, the Office shared a recent finding regarding the need to establish a licensing board in accordance with § 17-104(a) of the Criminal Procedure Article to receive the Forensic Laboratory Advisory Committee's recommendations on the three draft regulations; however, no budget appropriation was provided to establish the board. For these reasons, the sub-panel will continue to meet several times a year to gather information and aid the State move towards compliance.

Conclusion

In accordance with § 17-105 of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Office will continue to work with law enforcement to gather the required information regarding FGGS requests. Given the limited awareness of forensic genetic genealogy and its use, and the low levels of data submitted under § 17-105 of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Office is working with the panel to develop materials that illustrate and explain the FGGS process and explore training opportunities. Once materials are developed, they will be posted on the Office's website at: <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/mandated-reporting-requirements/>. The Office is also working with panel members, bill sponsors, the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland State Board of Physicians, and the Investigative Genetic Genealogy Accreditation Board regarding the licensing board requirement.

Furthermore, the Office will continue to work with and convene the panel to address the remaining items specified above, gather information to comply with the required establishment of a licensing board, and review the information reported by law enforcement and make policy recommendations.