

Introduced 01.05.2026  
Public Hearing 01.20.2026  
Council Action 02.02.2026  
Executive Action 02.05.2026  
Effective Date 04.07.2026

## County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2026 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 1

Bill No. 7 -2026

Introduced by: Opel Jones

Co-Sponsored by: Christiana Rigby  
David Yungmann

**SHORT TITLE:** Howard County Boards and Commissions - Interference – Prohibition

**AN ACT** prohibiting the County Council, individual Councilmembers, ~~and County Council staff~~ County Council staff, the County Executive, and the County Executive's staff from hindering, obstructing, or disrupting the deliberations and decisions of certain County Board or Commission; and generally relating to Howard County Boards and Commissions.

Introduced and read first time Jan 5, 2026. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on Jan 20, 2026.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on Feb 2, 2026 and Passed ✓, Passed with amendments ✓, Failed    .

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 3 day of Feb, 2026 at 5<sup>00</sup> a.m./p.m.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive Feb 5, 2026

Calvin Ball  
Calvin Ball, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

**Section 1. *Be It Enacted*** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that the Howard County Code is amended as follows:

*By adding:*

*Title 5. "County Council"*

*Subtitle 6. "Noninterference with Boards and Commissions"*

*Section 5.600. "Noninterference with Boards and Commissions"*

## **Title 5. County Council**

### **Subtitle 6. Noninterference with Boards and Commissions**

#### **SEC. 5.600. NONINTERFERENCE WITH BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

(A) NEITHER THE COUNTY COUNCIL NOR ANY OF ITS MEMBERS OR STAFF SHALL TAKE ANY ACTION TO HINDER, OBSTRUCT, OR DISRUPT THE DELIBERATIONS OR DECISIONS OF ANY BOARD OR COMMISSION PROVIDED FOR IN SUBSECTION ~~(D)~~ (C) OF THIS SECTION.

(B) EXCEPT THROUGH LEGISLATION DULY ENACTED, NEITHER THE COUNTY COUNCIL NOR ANY MEMBER THEREOF OR THEIR STAFF MAY, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, GIVE ORDERS TO ANY MEMBER, OR ASSIGNED EMPLOYEE OF A BOARD OR COMMISSION LISTED IN SUBSECTION ~~(D)~~ (C) OF THIS SECTION, NOR MAY THEY IN ANY MANNER ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE A MEMBER OR ASSIGNED EMPLOYEE BY COMMUNICATING WITH THEM OFF THE RECORD AND OUT OF THE PRESENCE OF THE PARTIES OF A PROCEEDING, OR COERCE ANY SUCH MEMBER OR EMPLOYEE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.

(C) *THIS SECTION SHALL APPLY TO THE FOLLOWING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:* THE BOARD OF APPEALS, THE HEARING EXAMINER, THE PERSONNEL BOARD, THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES HEARING BOARD, THE PLANNING BOARD, THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL, THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, THE ADVISORY BOARD ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, THE CITIZENS' ELECTION FUND COMMISSION, THE ANIMAL MATTERS HEARING BOARD, THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE, TRIAL BOARD(S), THE INSPECTOR GENERAL ADVISORY BOARD, THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, AND THE ETHICS COMMISSION.

1    (D) COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND STAFF. THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION SHALL ALSO APPLY TO THE  
2    COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S STAFF.

3    ***Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland that this Act***  
4    ***shall become effective 61 days after its enactment.***

**Amendment 1 to Council Bill No. 7 - 2026**

**BY: Opel Jones**

**Legislative Day 1  
Date: January 05, 2026**

**Amendment No. 1**

*(This Amendment strikes references to subsection “(D)” and substitutes references to subsection “(C)”.)*

- 1 On page 1, in line 15, strike “(D)” and substitute with “(C)”.
- 2
- 3 On page 1, in line 19, strike “(D)” and substitute with “(C)”.

I certify that this a true copy of

Am 1 to CB7-2026  
passed on Feb 2, 2026

Nichelle D. Jones

Council Administrator

Amendment 2 to Council Bill No. 7 - 2026

BY: Opel Jones  
Christiana Rigby  
David Yungmann

Legislative Day 2  
Date: February 2, 2026

Amendment No. 2

*(This Amendment expands the applicability of the bill by adding certain County Boards and Commissions)*

- 1 On page 1, in line 27, after "CITIZENS' ELECTION FUND COMMISSION," insert the following:
- 2 "THE ANIMAL MATTERS HEARING BOARD, THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE, TRIAL
- 3 BOARD(S), THE INSPECTOR GENERAL ADVISORY BOARD, THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,".
- 4
- 5

I certify that this a true copy of

Am 2 to CB7-2026  
passed on Feb 2, 2026  
Michelle Dierckx  
Council Administrator

Amendment 3 to Council Bill No. 7 - 2026

BY: Deb Jung

Legislative Day 2  
Date: February 2, 2026

Amendment No. 3

*(This Amendment includes the County Executive and County Executive's staff in the prohibition against interfering with County boards and commissions )*

1 Strike beginning with "and" in line 1 of the Title through "staff" on line 2 of the Title and  
2 substitute the following::

3 "County Council staff, the County Executive, and the County Executive's staff"

4

5 On page 1, in line 28 insert the following:

6 "(D) COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND STAFF. THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION SHALL ALSO APPLY TO THE

7 COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S STAFF."

I certify that this a true copy of

Am 3 to CB7-2026  
passed on Feb 2, 2026  
Michelle D. Dwyer  
Council Administrator

Amendment 4 to Council Bill No. 7 - 2026

BY: Deb Jung

Legislative Day 2  
Date: February 2, 2026

Amendment No. 4

*(This Amendment provides exceptions to the bill)*

1 On page 1, in line 28 insert the following:

2 “(D) EXCEPTIONS. THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBTITLE SHALL NOT APPLY TO A COUNCILMEMBER OR  
3 A MEMBER OF THEIR STAFF:

4 (1) CONDUCTING THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF A COUNCILMEMBER OR A COUNCIL  
5 DISTRICT OFFICE. SUCH DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS SHALL INCLUDE THE COUNCIL’S  
6 AUTHORITY PROVIDED IN SECTIONS 205, 206, AND 207 OF THE HOWARD COUNTY CHARTER  
7 AND ANY OTHER PROVISION OF THIS CODE THAT PROVIDES THE COUNCIL WITH AUTHORITY;

8 (2) CONDUCTING LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH;

9 (3) PERFORMING USUAL AND CUSTOMARY CONSTITUENT SERVICES;

10 (4) COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE WORK OF A HOWARD COUNTY  
11 BOARD OR COMMISSION;

12 (5) COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE DECISIONS AND CONDUCT OF  
13 MEMBERS OF A BOARD OR COMMISSION;

14 (6) APPEARING AT A PUBLIC HEARING;

15 (7) APPEARING AT PUBLIC GATHERINGS;

16 (8) TESTIFYING AT PUBLIC HEARINGS;

17 (9) SPEAKING AT PUBLIC GATHERINGS;

18 (10) RECEIVING PUBLIC TESTIMONY; AND

19 (11) RESPONDING TO TESTIMONY PROVIDED AT A PUBLIC HEARING.

I certify that this is a true copy of  
Am 4 to CB7-2026  
passed on Feb 2, 2026  
Michaela Hadden  
Council Administrator

FAILED

1 (E) NOTHING IN THIS SUBTITLE PREVENTS A COUNCILMEMBER OR A MEMBER OF THEIR STAFF FROM  
2 EXERCISING THEIR RIGHTS UNDER THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED  
3 STATES OF AMERICA OR THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND.”.

4



Introduced \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Hearing \_\_\_\_\_  
Council Action \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Action \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Introduced and read first time \_\_\_\_\_, 2026. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026 and Passed \_\_\_\_\_, Passed with amendments \_\_\_\_\_, Failed \_\_\_\_\_.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026 at \_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

By order \_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive \_\_\_\_\_, 2026

Calvin Ball, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

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7 *Section 5.600. "Noninterference with Boards and Commissions"*  
8  
9

10 **Title 5. County Council**

11 **Subtitle 6. Noninterference with Boards and Commissions**

12 **SEC. 5.600. NONINTERFERENCE WITH BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

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18 ANY MEMBER, OR ASSIGNED EMPLOYEE OF A BOARD OR COMMISSION LISTED IN SUBSECTION  
19 (D) OF THIS SECTION, NOR MAY THEY IN ANY MANNER ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE A MEMBER OR  
20 ASSIGNED EMPLOYEE BY COMMUNICATING WITH THEM OFF THE RECORD AND OUT OF THE  
21 PRESENCE OF THE PARTIES OF A PROCEEDING, OR COERCE ANY SUCH MEMBER OR EMPLOYEE IN  
22 THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.
- 23 (C) *THIS SECTION SHALL APPLY TO THE FOLLOWING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:* THE BOARD OF  
24 APPEALS, THE HEARING EXAMINER, THE PERSONNEL BOARD, THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  
25 HEARING BOARD, THE PLANNING BOARD, THE DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL, THE HISTORIC  
26 PRESERVATION COMMISSION, THE ADVISORY BOARD ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, THE  
27 CITIZENS' ELECTION FUND COMMISSION, AND THE ETHICS COMMISSION.

28  
29 **Section 2. *And Be It Further Enacted*** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland that this Act  
30 *shall become effective 61 days after its enactment.*  
31

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, stands enacted on February 5, 2026.

Michelle R. Harrod  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been passed by the yeas and nays of two-thirds of the members of the Council notwithstanding the objections of the Executive, stands enacted on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having received neither the approval nor the disapproval of the Executive within ten days of its presentation, stands enacted on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, not having been considered on final reading within the time required by Charter, stands failed for want of consideration on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been disapproved by the Executive and having failed on passage upon consideration by the Council stands failed on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, the withdrawal of which received a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council, is withdrawn from further consideration on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council