

Introduced _____
Public Hearing _____
Council Action _____
Executive Action _____
Effective Date _____

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2026 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 2

Bill No. 16 -2026

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of the County Executive
Co-Sponsored by: Opel Jones, Deb Jung, Christiana Rigby, and Liz Walsh

Short Title: Emergency Act - Amending – Howard County Building Code – I-3 Use group

Title: AN EMERGENCY ACT amending the Howard County Building Code to provide that only a government agency is eligible to make application, obtain or hold a permit for the I-3 Use group; to provide that the building official may suspend or revoke a permit other than one issued to a government agency that has not passed final inspection; generally relating to the regulation of building and construction in Howard County; and declaring this to be an emergency act.

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/Vetoed 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.

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

3 *By adding:*

4 *Section 3.101. Howard County Building Code; adoption of international codes.*
5 *Subsection (b), paragraph (23)*

6
7 *By renumbering:*

8 *Section 3.101. Howard County Building Code; adoption of international codes.*
9 *Subsection (b), paragraph (22) to be paragraph (23A)*

10
11 **Title 3. Buildings.**

12 **Subtitle 1. Building code.**

13
14 **Section 3.101. Amendments to the International Building Code, 2024 Edition.**

15 (b) *Local Amendments.* The following amendments modify certain provisions of the
16 adopted code.

17 (22) *Subsection 104.8.1 Legal defense.*

18 In the first sentence of this subsection, delete "legal representation of the
19 jurisdiction until the final termination of the proceedings" and substitute "Howard
20 County in accordance with Maryland Law".

21 (23) *SECTION 105.1 REQUIRED.*

22 ADD AN EXCEPTION AS FOLLOWS:

23 EXCEPTION: NO OWNER OR OWNER’S AUTHORIZED AGENT, OTHER THAN A
24 GOVERNMENT AGENCY, IS ELIGIBLE TO MAKE APPLICATION, OBTAIN, OR HOLD A
25 PERMIT FOR I-3 USE GROUP. THE BUILDING OFFICIAL IS AUTHORIZED TO SUSPEND
26 OR REVOKE A PERMIT FOR ANY OWNER OR OWNER’S AUTHORIZED AGENT, OTHER
27 THAN A GOVERNMENT AGENCY, WHICH HAS BEEN ISSUED A PERMIT BUT WHICH HAS
28 NOT PASSED FINAL INSPECTION AS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS LEGISLATION.

29 ([[22]]23A) *Subsection 105.1.1 Annual Permit.*

30 Delete this subsection and substitute the following:

1 **105.1.1. Master permit.** Instead of an individual permit for each alteration to an
2 already approved building, electrical, fire, gas, mechanical, or plumbing
3 installation, the Building Official may issue a master permit upon application by
4 any person, firm, or corporation regularly employing one or more qualified
5 professional or tradesperson in the building, structure, or on the premises owned
6 or operated by the Applicant.

7
8 ***Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted*** by the County Council of Howard County,
9 *Maryland that subsections 3.101(b)(1) through (21) and (24) through (80), as adopted by*
10 *Council Bill No. 24-2025, shall remain unchanged and in effect.*

11
12 ***Section 3. And Be It Further Enacted*** by the County Council of Howard County,
13 *Maryland that an emergency exists because Institutional Group I-3 are facilities, that are*
14 *inhabited by more than five persons which require the occupants be under restraint or*
15 *security and such uses consist of correctional centers, detention centers, jails, prerelease*
16 *centers, prisons and reformatories and receiving a use and occupancy permit for such*
17 *uses should remain with and under the oversight of governmental entities and not private*
18 *entities.*

19
20 ***Section 4. And Be It Further Enacted*** by the County Council of Howard County,
21 *Maryland that allowing a private entity to own or operate a detention facility, which*
22 *typically requires great responsibility and oversight of the government, in Howard*
23 *County will negatively impact the health, safety, and welfare of our communities.*

24
25 ***Section 5. And Be it Further Enacted*** by the County Council of Howard County,
26 *Maryland that this Act is adopted as an emergency measure to address an immediate*
27 *emergency affecting public health, safety, or welfare and having been passed by two-*
28 *thirds of its members, this Act shall be effective immediately upon its enactment.*