

**Maryland Department of Health
Maryland Department of the Environment**

**2022 Annual Report
Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council
Health-General Article, §13-1506(8)**

November 2022

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

Laura Herrera Scott
Secretary of Health

Serena McIlwain
Secretary of the Environment

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Background

The Children's Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council (CEHPAC) was established in 2000 pursuant to Chapter 585 of the Acts of 2000. CEHPAC advises the Governor and General Assembly on environmental issues that may pose a threat to children. Specifically, Health General §13–1506 requires CEHPAC to:

- (1) Review and comment on existing rules, regulations, and standards to ensure that the rules, regulations, and standards adequately protect the health of children from environmental hazards by taking into account the special vulnerability of children because of their developing physiology, and because their exposures, behaviors, and diets can differ greatly from those of adults;
- (2) (i) Review proposed regulations submitted to CEHPAC, and (ii) recommend to the promulgating unit measures that would avoid or minimize any negative impact that the proposed regulation may have on the health of children;
- (3) Comment on any proposed regulations that may be submitted by any other principal department of the Executive Branch during the public comment period if CEHPAC determines that the proposed regulation will have an adverse impact on children's health;
- (4) Gather and disseminate information to the public, including the research and medical communities, community-based organizations, schools, and State agencies, on how to reduce, treat, and eliminate children's exposures to environmental hazards to further the public's understanding of the environmental hazards that may potentially affect children;
- (5) Recommend uniform guidelines for State agencies to follow to help reduce and eliminate children's exposure to environmental hazards, especially in areas reasonably accessible to children;
- (6) Create and promote education programs, in partnership with health and environmental professionals, for parents, guardians, and caregivers of children that include information on: (i) the potential health effects of environmental hazards; (ii) practical suggestions on how to reduce children's exposure to environmental hazards; and (iii) any other relevant information to assist parents, guardians, and caregivers in protecting children from environmental hazards;
- (7) Provide input to the General Assembly on legislation that may impact environmental hazards that affect the health of children; and
- (8) Report to the Governor and the General Assembly annually on the activities of CEHPAC.

Mission

CEHPAC seeks to identify environmental hazards that may affect children's health and recommend solutions to those hazards through interdisciplinary problem-solving and coalition building. CEHPAC's goals were developed in 2001 and are reaffirmed annually. They are to:

- Ensure that the rules, regulations, and standards of the State protect children from environmental hazards;
- Educate involved parties regarding the environmental hazards that impact children's health and the means to avoid those hazards; and
- Enable children in Maryland to grow up in a safe and healthy environment.

Membership

CEHPAC is composed of nineteen members, including those from the General Assembly, State agencies, private sector representatives, and parents with interest and expertise in the area of children’s health and the environment (see Appendix A for current CEHPAC membership).

CEHPAC Activities

CEHPAC convened virtually in public session six times in 2022 as of this report, once with the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities (CEJSC) and once with CEJSC and the Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission (LPPC). One additional meeting with CEJSC is planned for late 2022.

During the 2022 legislative session, CEHPAC discussed the following legislation:

Bill #	Bill Title
HB0101	Landlord and Tenant - Repossession for Failure to Pay Rent - Lead Risk Reduction Compliance
HB0131 (SB0321)	Environment - Synthetic Turf and Turf Infill - Chain of Custody
HB0141 (SB0023)	Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses
HB0171 (SB0135)	Climate Crisis and Environmental Justice Act
HB0250	Private Well Safety Act of 2022
HB0361 (SB0320)	Mold Inspection and Remediation - Standards, Reporting, Penalties, and Tax Credit
HB0387 (SB0268)	Pesticide Regulation - Transfer to Department of the Environment
HB0402 (SB0221)	Department of the Environment - Enforcement Authority
HB0570	Pesticides – Mosquito Control Products and PFAS Chemicals
HB0596 (SB0783)	Constitutional Amendment - Environmental Rights
HB0653 (SB0348)	Conservation Finance Act
HB0665 (SB0576)	Public Schools - Air Quality
HB0686	Public Schools – Health and Safety – Carbon Dioxide Monitoring in Classrooms (Safe School Indoor Air Act)
HB0708	Comprehensive Climate Solutions
HB1033	Environment and Energy - Investment in Overburdened Communities
HB1110	Environment - Lead Poisoning Prevention - Elevated Blood Lead Level
SB0176	Vehicle Laws - Rear-Facing Child Safety Seats - Requirement

CEHPAC submitted to the chairs of the House Ways and Means Committee; the House Environment and Transportation Committee; and the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee a letter in support of efforts to improve indoor air quality in schools, which is available on the CEHPAC website.

In 2022, CEHPAC engaged in topics related to children's environmental health, COVID-19, and school environments. Specifically, these topics included:

- Indoor air quality and ventilation in schools,
- Use of safer cleaning products in schools for COVID-19 cleaning procedures,
- Housing and health, and
- Asthma.

CEHPAC also heard regular updates regarding the State's progress addressing childhood asthma, and climate change as it relates to children's health.

Future Priorities

CEHPAC continues to work on the topics described above, as well as a number of new priorities for the coming year. These include continuations of previous activities (WiFi radiation and other environmental hazards in schools), responding to emerging concerns (asthma and housing), and addressing concerns identified by CEHPAC's members. CEHPAC is also making plans to revisit some of the issues and concerns identified in the 2008 CEHPAC report, "Maryland's Children and the Environment" with the intention of updating the document for publication.

CEHPAC is also focused on filling the three vacancies among its members.

Conclusion

The issue of children's environmental health continues to be a major concern, and CEHPAC's role is to provide education and advice regarding these issues to policymakers and the public in Maryland. CEHPAC will continue to review proposed regulations and legislation to protect Maryland's children from environmental health hazards. CEHPAC will also maintain its current efforts to educate its members and other interested parties on the growing body of knowledge related to children's environmental health.

Appendix A. CEHPAC Membership 2022

Maryland Senate Vacant	Licensed Healthcare Professional 1) Benjamin A. Gitterman, MD 2) Laura Allen, MA, MS, RN
Maryland House of Delegates Vacant	Representative from an academic institution Kristen Rawlett, Ph.D, FNP-BC
Maryland Department of Health (Chair) Clifford Mitchell, MS, MD, MPH	Parent or Guardian Jovonne Walker
Maryland Department of the Environment (Vice Chair) Devon Dodson	Environmental Epidemiologist Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, MPH
Department of Agriculture Kelly Love	Economist Paul Ferraro, Ph.D
Maryland State Department of Education Alicia Mezu, MSN/Ed, BSN, BS, RN	Environmental Toxicologist Megan Latshaw, Ph.D
Department of Human Services Shawnett Mills, LCPC	Maryland Association of Counties Dianna Abney, MD FAAP
Department of Housing and Community Development Jack Daniels	Private Industry Vacant
The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services Christina Drushel Williams	Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities Camille Burke (CEJSC Chair)