

SEC. 26. *And be it further enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, That Sections 18, 19B, 25 and 39 of Article 59 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition and 1968 Replacement Volume), title "Lunatics and Insane," subtitle "Department of Mental Hygiene," be and they are hereby repealed and re-enacted, with amendments, all to read as follows:*

18.

The Department of Mental Hygiene is hereby vested with full and plenary powers, *subject to the approval of the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene*, and charged with the duties and functions of supervision of all matters relating to the custody, care and treatment of the insane; said Department shall secure to the insane just and humane care and careful and adequate treatment of their malady, or maladies, and shall do and effectuate whatever may be feasible for the amelioration and improvement of their condition, and said Department shall furthermore secure to the insane in this State all their rights and privileges as involuntary wards of the State. It shall also be the duty of said Department, and it is hereby given full powers for the purpose, to make investigations and examinations into and respecting and concerning all institutions, public or private, or whether the same be incorporated or be conducted or controlled by individuals, which may be authorized by law to receive and care for insane persons, and to inquire into the nature and methods of detention, treatment, government and management of all persons therein confined, detained or treated. Said Department shall also investigate and examine into the condition of all buildings, grounds and other property connected with any such institution or institutions, and into all matters relating to their maintenance, conduct and management, for such purpose or purposes any representative or representatives of said Department shall have free access to the grounds, buildings, equipment and appurtenances and all books and papers relating to patients confined in any such institution, or institutions, and to said patients themselves. All persons connected with any such institution shall give such information and afford such facilities for any such examination or inquiry as the Department may require. The Department shall encourage scientific investigations by the medical staffs of the various institutions under its supervision, and to this end may, in its discretion, publish from time to time bulletins and reports of the scientific and business work done therein, and may prescribe to the superintendent and managers of the several institutions under its supervision the forms of and periods covered by the statistical returns to be made by them in their annual report to the Department. One or more representatives of the Department appointed for the purpose by the Department shall visit all public, corporate and private institutions, almshouses or county asylums where the insane or feeble-minded are kept, at least once in every six months. The Department of Mental Hygiene shall cause to be ascertained by actual examination or inquiry whether the laws relating to the persons in custody in said institutions and to those in control thereof are properly observed, shall give such directions as will insure correctness in the returns required relative to them, and may use such means as may be necessary to collect all desired information. Such visits shall be made on such days and such hours of the day or night, and for such length of time as the representative or representatives of the Department may choose. The representative