

"Health," subtitle "Miscellaneous Provisions," to follow immediately after Section 33 thereof and that new Section 6A be and it is hereby added to Article 62 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1972 Replacement Volume), title "Marriages," to follow immediately after Section 6 thereof and all to read as follows:

33A.

(a) *For the purposes of this section:*

(1) *"Sickle cell anemia" shall mean the hereditary disease causing hemoglobin to crystallize within the red blood cells upon their emitting of oxygen;*

(2) *"Sickle cell trait" shall mean the condition caused by the presence of the inheritable gene which, if present in both parties to a marriage, shall lead to a high probability of the occurrence of sickle cell anemia in children born of that marriage;*

(3) *"Secretary" shall mean the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene.*

(b) *In a manner prescribed by the Secretary each applicant for a marriage license in this State shall be informed at the time of the application of the existence of the disease known as sickle cell anemia. This information shall include but not be limited to the following:*

(1) *that there exists a simple and inexpensive test to identify those persons who have the disease and those persons who carry the sickle cell trait;*

(2) *that the occurrence of the sickle cell trait in both parties to a marriage leads to a high probability of the occurrence of sickle cell anemia in children born of that marriage.*

(c) *Each applicant shall be informed of the nearest available facility where persons may be tested for sickle cell anemia and the sickle cell trait, and also be informed of the fee charged by the facility for the testing.*

(d) *Each applicant shall be informed of the local, State and national organizations which are approved by the Secretary and which can provide further information and personal counseling concerning sickle cell anemia and the sickle cell trait.*

(e) *To protect public health and safety the Secretary shall compile a list of all local, State and national sickle cell anemia organizations, and shall approve only those organizations which can provide a high quality of services to the citizens of this State.*

(f) *The Secretary shall establish in each health district of the State facilities for the testing of sickle cell anemia and the sickle cell trait, and shall maintain at each health district information concerning sickle cell anemia and the sickle cell trait which shall be available to the public at no cost.*

(g) *Facilities for this testing and providing of information may be established on a contractual basis by the Secretary with another organization or community agency located within the health district, and laboratory services located either within or beyond the boundaries of the health district may be utilized.*