

implementation of a new computerized eligibility system for the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, shall notify the Department of Legislative Services, 90 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401 in writing of the implementation.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Human Resources, and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services shall convene a work group consisting of interested stakeholders to make recommendations on actions to be taken to break the cycle of rearrest and reincarceration for individuals with mental illnesses who become involved with the criminal justice system, including the following:

(1) recommended agency responsibility for and actions to be taken to ensure that suspension and reinstatement of benefits occur in a seamless fashion;

(2) review and clarification of current and recommended agency responsibility for case management services for individuals released from incarceration;

(3) measures to ensure that timely assistance is provided to inmates with psychiatric disabilities who are not on eligibility rolls for federal benefits but who are likely to be eligible for those benefits on release;

(4) recommendations regarding the creation of a State bridge program for released inmates with mental illnesses whose applications for federal benefits are pending;

(5) review and clarification of current and recommended agency responsibility for providing access to medically necessary mental health services for inmates both while incarcerated and on release;

(6) actions to be taken to ensure that an individual who is released from incarceration receives in a timely manner a photo identification card that does not disclose the individual's incarceration; and

(7) any other strategies identified and supported by the work group to address the work group's mission.

(b) The work group shall report its findings and recommendations on or before December 1, 2005, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the House Health and Government Operations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.

SECTION 2. 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, ~~That this Act shall take effect October~~ That, except as provided in Section 2 of this Act, this Act shall take effect July 1, 2005.

Approved April 12, 2005.