



# The State of Maryland

## Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER  
01.01.2024.39

### Strengthening Maryland's Business Climate to Bolster Economic Competitiveness

- WHEREAS, The State of Maryland has tremendous assets that position the State to be a national leader in key industries and sectors leading to increased economic opportunities for communities across the State and generating revenues to fund public services and priorities;
- WHEREAS The Moore-Miller Administration is committed to strengthening Maryland's economic competitiveness through policies, regulations, and actions that improve and enhance Maryland's business climate;
- WHEREAS, State government plays a vital role in cultivating an environment that is conducive to the successful attraction, retention, and growth of businesses and workforce within the State;
- WHEREAS The Maryland Economic Council, established by Governor Wes Moore via Executive Order 01.01.2023.09, has issued a set of recommendations related to the functions and culture of State government in supporting business and workforce development;
- WHEREAS, The Maryland Economic Development Commission, as charged by Economic Development Article 2.5-206, has developed an economic strategic plan for the State which outlines an ambitious roadmap to strengthen Maryland's economy that will lead to expanded access to work, wealth, and wages for all Marylanders; and
- WHEREAS, In order for Maryland to effectuate the recommendations of the Maryland Economic Council and the Maryland Economic Development Commission's Strategic Plan, State government must be positioned to operationalize recommendations and execute programs and initiatives that lead to economic growth and competitiveness.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WES MOORE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

A. Scope.

This Executive Order applies to executive departments and agencies that report to the Governor.

B. Governor's Economic Competitiveness Subcabinet.

1. Establishment. There is a Governor's Economic Competitiveness Subcabinet ("Subcabinet").
2. Membership. The Subcabinet shall consist of the following members:
  - a. The Secretary of Commerce, who shall serve as chair of the Subcabinet;
  - b. The Secretary of Agriculture;
  - c. The Secretary of Budget and Management;
  - d. The Secretary of the Environment;
  - e. The Secretary of Higher Education;
  - f. The Secretary of Housing and Community Development;
  - g. The Secretary of General Services;
  - h. The Secretary of Labor;
  1. The Secretary of Planning;
  - J. The Secretary of Transportation;
  - k. The Special Secretary of the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs;
  - l. The Chancellor of the University System of Maryland;

- m. The State Superintendent of Schools;
- n. The Executive Director of the Maryland Economic Development Corporation;
- o. The Executive Director of the Maryland Clean Energy Center;
- p. The Chief Executive Officer of the Maryland Technology Development Corporation; and
- q. Such other officials of the executive departments and agencies as the Governor may from time to time designate.

3. Duties of the Subcabinet. The Subcabinet shall:

- a. Advise the Governor on, and identify and recommend policies, regulations, strategies, and actions that strengthen Maryland's economic competitiveness and growth on an ongoing basis;
- b. Review proposed policies and procedures by executive departments and agencies impacting economic development and workforce development;
- c. Coordinate the implementation of executive directives and legislation that support business and talent development in the state;
- d. Track the progress of the cross-agency implementation of the Economic Strategic Plan approved by the Maryland Economic Development Commission;
- e. Track the progress of the cross-agency implementation of the economic goals under the Moore-Miller Administration's Maryland State Plan; and
- f. On a biannual basis, develop and publish a consolidated economic competitiveness plan that incorporates strategies and action plans from every executive department and agency represented on the Subcabinet.

4. Meetings of the Subcabinet.

- a. The Subcabinet shall meet at least once per month.

5. Administrative Support for the Subcabinet.

- a. The Department of Commerce shall provide administrative support to the Subcabinet.

C. Governor's Office of Business Advancement.

1. Establishment. No later than December 31, 2024, a Governor's Office of Business Advancement ("Office") shall be established within the Department of Commerce.

2. Purpose. The Office shall:

- a. Provide wraparound concierge service and support to businesses and corporations seeking to locate or expand in Maryland;
- b. Assist major businesses, employers, and developers navigate State and local permitting and licensing requirements and, when necessary, assist in the resolution of disputes between business customers and State and local agencies;
- c. Assist businesses looking to expand or relocate in Maryland navigate and secure financial incentives through available State programs, for which they are eligible;
- d. Assist the Secretary of Commerce in attracting, negotiating, and closing deals on major development projects, including but not limited to large-scale commercial, residential, mixed-use, manufacturing, infrastructure, and attraction or entertainment projects;
- e. Assist major businesses and employers with talent and workforce needs by connecting them to State programs and non-government resources;
- f. Collaborate with the Chief Performance Officer to set performance metrics on the effectiveness of State financial incentive programs and other economic and workforce development programs; and

- g. Maintain a centralized database of resources available to businesses seeking to locate, expand, or remain in Maryland.
- 3. The Office shall be led by a Director of Business Advancement who shall report to the Secretary of Commerce.
- 4. Each executive branch department and agency shall designate a point of contact for the Office to resolve issues and concerns directed to the Office.
- 5. The Director of Business Advancement shall produce a quarterly report to the Governor and the Secretary of Commerce beginning April 1, 2025 on activities conducted by the Office, as well as any recommendations to strengthen the work of the Office.

#### D. Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council.

- 1. Establishment. No later than July 1, 2025, the Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council ("Council") shall be established. The Council shall be housed under the Maryland Department of Planning.
- 2. Purpose. The purpose of the Council is to facilitate interagency coordination and efficient processing of approvals required to advance priority infrastructure and place-based projects within the State to bolster transparency, ensure predictability, and foster interagency coordination to grow Maryland's economy while safeguarding the health and safety of residents.
- 3. Authority. To achieve this purpose, the Council shall:
  - a. Establish eligibility criteria and application processes for projects that may be designated as covered projects.
  - b. Coordinate interagency plan review and permitting of covered projects through a working group of permitting leads from each state agency represented on the Council.

The activity of the permitting working group shall include:

- i. developing a coordinated project plan for each covered project;
  - ii. developing timetables for completion of required plan reviews and responses, and permit approvals for Projects;
  - iii. providing accountability and oversight of the execution of each coordinated project plan and timetable; and
  - iv. when applicable, engaging federal and local government agencies that have jurisdiction over critical areas of review and permit approvals identified in the project plan for covered projects.
- c. Develop an online internal intake system and a public facing dashboard for tracking project plan reviews and permitting processes to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability for the timely response and determination of plans and permits.
  - d. Ensure that necessary processes are established to facilitate interagency information sharing, communication, and cooperation necessary for the working group to be successful.
4. Membership. The Permitting Council shall be comprised of the deputy secretary or the equivalent of the following executive departments and state agencies:
- a. The Department of Agriculture;
  - b. The Department of Commerce;
  - c. The Department of the Environment;
  - d. The Department of Housing and Community Development;
  - e. The Department of Information Technology;

- f. The Department of Natural Resources;
- g. The Department of Planning;
- h. The State Highway Administration;
- i. The Maryland Economic Development Corporation;
- J. The Maryland Department of State Police Office of the State Fire Marshall;
- k. Maryland Energy Administration.
- l. The following members, appointed by the Governor:
  - i. one representative of an urban county;
  - ii. one representative of a rural county;
  - iii. one representative of an urban municipality;  
and
  - iv. one representative of a rural municipality.
- m. In addition to those named in this Order, the Council may engage members of the design, construction and development industry to deepen its understanding of the user permitting experience.

5. The Secretary of Planning shall serve as Chair of the Council.

6. Administrative Support for the Council.

- a. The Department of Planning shall provide administrative support for the Council that will include:
  - i. coordination and management of Council meetings and communications;
  - ii. facilitation of the permitting working groups to ensure project plans and timelines are being met, issues are identified and progress reports are made to the Council;

- iii. development and maintenance of an internal intake system and a public facing dashboard outlining projects, associated timetable, milestones, and progress; and
- iv. preparation of required reports on Council progress and findings to the Governor.

7. Pilot Initiative.

- a. The Council shall develop a set of criteria to be used in selection of an initial set of high impact projects to serve as proofs of concept.
- b. Selection criteria for initial projects shall include a representation of project scales based on cost and complexity, types, and geographic location and consider the stage of project design and development.
- c. The pilot project selection criteria will result in a manageable portfolio of projects that will be subject to the processes set by the Council by Section D.3 of this Executive Order.

8. Reporting.

- a. The Council will provide regular updates of not less than quarterly to the Governor with a comprehensive report on preliminary findings and outcomes by July 1, 2026.

E. Government Loaned Executive Program.

- 1. Establishment. There is a Government Loaned Executive Program ("Loaned Executive Program") within the Department of Commerce. The Program aims to enhance collaborations between government and the private sector through temporary assignments of private sector executives to the Department of Commerce to cultivate a culture of innovation and excellence to more effectively execute the mission and goals of the Department.



2. Purpose. The Loaned Executive Program shall:
  - a. Leverage the expertise of private sector executives to support the Maryland Department of Commerce's initiatives;
  - b. Facilitate the temporary engagement of private sector executives in the Department to provide technical expertise, leadership, and strategic counsel on best practices and sector engagement; and
  - c. Enhance the Department of Commerce's capacity to execute high-impact projects and foster greater public-private collaboration.

F. Devoting State Government Resources to Priority Industries and Sectors.

1. Executive departments and agencies covered by the scope of this Executive Order shall, to the extent practicable, leverage existing State resources - including prioritization or preference through eligible financial incentive programs - to support the development and growth of the following priority industries and emerging sectors:
  - a. Industries.
    - i. Life Sciences;
    - ii. Information Technology;
    - iii. Aerospace; and
    - iv. Defense.
  - b. Emerging Sectors.
    - i. Computational biology;
    - ii. Quantum technology; and
    - ii. Position, navigation, and timing.

G. Coordinated Economic Development, Marketing, and Branding Efforts with Local Governments.

1. The Department of Commerce shall develop strategies to establish formal economic development, marketing, and branding campaign plans with local governments to promote industries and sectors located in various geographic regions across the State.

H. Review of Business Tax Credit, Financial Assistance and Incentive Programs.

1. Each executive department that administers business tax credit programs and other forms of financial assistance to businesses shall develop methodologies and operation plans to conduct return on investment analyses. These plans shall include:
  - a. Logic models for each qualifying program;
  - b. Standard methodologies of analysis for qualifying programs of similar purpose and intended outcome;
  - c. A plan for neutral review of qualifying programs;
  - d. Qualitative elements, if necessary and applicable, that indicate the value of qualifying programs should some values not be quantifiable;
  - e. Methodologies to track both the short-term and long-term success of program beneficiaries, including qualifying program beneficiary surveys where necessary;
  - f. Regional impact assessments when prudent and practicable;
  - g. An established cadence for programmatic analysis for a period not exceeding 4 years, and, to the extent practicable, completed at least one year prior to the termination date of the program;
  - h. Recommendations about whether the benefit mechanism is most effective to achieve program goals, particularly in assessing tax credits; and

- i. Recommendations about whether qualifying programs require any structural alterations to ensure that proper analysis can be conducted,
2. By June 30, 2025, the Governor's Economic Competitiveness Subcabinet shall review and approve executive department plans to conduct these analyses.

I. Site Readiness Program at the Maryland Economic Development Corporation.

1. Establishment. The Maryland Business Ready Sites Program ("Site Readiness Program") is established within the Maryland Economic Development Corporation.
2. Purpose. The Site Readiness Program shall:
  - a. Identify commercial and industrial sites that offer significant economic development value;
  - b. Make investments that ready identified sites to accommodate impactful, sustainable, and equitable business expansion, investment, and attraction opportunities; and
  - c. Market readied sites across the State and the country to establish Maryland as a prime place to invest, locate, and grow business.

J. Evaluation and Review of Certain Business Licensing Programs.


1. No later than June 30, 2025, the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation ("SDAT") shall submit a report to the Governor detailing the processes and recommendations for operational efficiency and improvements related to Charter Business Services administered by SDAT.
  - a. SDAT shall include in its report recommendations on reducing processing wait times, potential opportunities for automation, and a portal providing applicants visibility into the status of their charter business service applications.

- b. SDAT shall review other states' internal processes to identify potential best practices that can be replicated in Maryland.
2. No later than June 30, 2025, the Maryland Department of Transportation ("MDOT") - in consultation with the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs and the Office of State Procurement at the Department of General Services - shall submit a report to the Governor detailing the processes and recommendations for operational efficiency and improvements related to the certification and recertification processes for the Minority Business Enterprise Program.
  - a. MDOT shall include in its report recommendations on reducing processing wait times, potential opportunities for automation, and a portal providing applicants visibility into the status of their MBE certification and recertification applications.
  - b. MDOT shall review other states' internal processes to identify potential best practices for socioeconomic procurement program certifications and recertifications that can be replicated in Maryland.

K. General Provisions.

1. This Executive Order shall be implemented in a manner that is consistent with all applicable statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Executive Order shall operate to contravene any State or federal law or to affect the State's receipt of federal funding.
2. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of the Executive Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are severable.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in  
the City of Frederick, this 19th Day of December, 2024.



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Wes Moore  
Governor



ATTEST:



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Susan C. Lee  
Secretary of State