



# The State of Maryland

## Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2025.04

### Governor's Office of Community Initiatives

(Rescinds Executive Orders 01.01.2004.57, 01.01.2007.18, 01.01.2007.19, 01.01.2007.21, 01.01.2007.22, 01.01.2007.25, 01.01.2009.07, 01.01.2012.11, and 01.01.2012.17)

WHEREAS, In 2004, the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives ("GOCI") was established by Executive Order 01.01.2004.57 to direct and coordinate the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, the Volunteer Maryland program, and community initiatives throughout the State, and to connect and collaborate with local, regional, and federal counterpart organizations;

WHEREAS In 2007, the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs was established and housed within GOCI by Executive Order 01.01.2007.19; the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs was established and housed within GOCI by Executive Order 01.01.2007.21; and the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs was established and housed within GOCI by Executive Order 01.01.2007.22;

WHEREAS In 2008, the General Assembly codified the establishment of GOCI and transferred the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs from the Department of Human Services to GOCI, 2008 Maryland Laws Ch. 521, codified within Title 9.5, Subtitles 1 and 3 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland;

WHEREAS In 2009, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs was established and housed within GOCI by Executive Order 01.01.2009.07;

WHEREAS, In 2012, the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs was established and housed within GOCI by Executive Order 01.01.2012.11; and the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs was established and housed within GOCI by Executive Order 01.01.2012.17;

WHEREAS, In 2021, the General Assembly created what is now codified as the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs and housed the commission within GOCI, 2021 Maryland Laws Ch. 648, codified within

Title 9.5, Subtitle 5 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland;

WHEREAS, In 2023, the Governor's Office of Service and Volunteerism and Volunteer Maryland were moved out of GOCI into the newly created Department of Service and Civic Innovation, 2023 Maryland Laws Ch. 99, codified in Title 21 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland;

WHEREAS, The mission of GOCI has evolved since its formation from focusing on the coordination of volunteer services within the State of Maryland to coordinating, overseeing, and guiding the various Ethnic Commissions created by Executive Order, and administratively supporting the legislatively created entities within the Governor's Office that represent immigrant and minority communities across the State; and

WHEREAS, The Ethnic Commissions provide valuable input and advice to the Governor's Office regarding the community needs and cultural representation of the many diasporic communities in Maryland, and their effective operation and support through GOCI is a priority for the Moore-Miller Administration.

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 RESCIND EXECUTIVE ORDERS 01.01.2004.57, 01.01.2007.18, 01.01.2007.19, 01.01.2007.21, 01.01.2007.22, 01.01.2007.25, 01.01.2009.07, 01.01.2012.11, AND 01.01.2012.17, AND PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

I. Governor's Office of Community Initiatives

- A. The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives ("GOCI") shall include the following units, created by Executive Order: the Governor's Commission on African Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Asian and Pacific American Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Hispanic and Latin American Community Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs, and the Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs (together, the "Ethnic Commissions"), and any other commission designated by the Governor as a unit of GOCI.
8. GOCI also houses the legislatively created Commission on Indian Affairs, Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, and Governor's Office of Immigrant

Affairs.

- C. Executive Director. GOCI shall be managed by an Executive Director, who serves at the pleasure of the Governor. The Executive Director shall:
  - 1. Supervise, direct, manage, and coordinate the Ethnic Commissions designated in Section 1.A of this Order;
  - 2. Provide administrative supervision and support to the legislatively created units designated in Section 1.B of this Order;
  - 3. Direct community initiatives across State government and coordinate with federal and local governments, private sector entities, academia, and community organizations to strengthen community engagement; and
  - 4. Represent the Governor on boards, forums, and councils as appropriate.
  
- D. Staffing.
  - 1. GOCI shall be composed of staff appointed by the Executive Director, with the approval of the Governor.
  - 2. GOCI staff serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director, subject to the concurrence of the Governor.
  
- E. Duties. GOCI shall be responsible for the following activities:
  - 1. Conducting a review of State programs in cooperation with appropriate State departments and agencies to identify legislative and regulatory barriers that impede the effectiveness of community organizations to deliver results-based social services;
  - 2. Advising the Governor on policies and measures to enhance and improve the delivery of services to ethnic, immigrant, and faith-based communities;
  - 3. Conducting public outreach on behalf of the Governor to encourage greater involvement and participation by community organizations and constituent groups;
  - 4. Reviewing State and federal legislation to assist in the identification of funding opportunities for community organizations to implement initiatives that benefit the State of Maryland; and
  - 5. Serving as principal liaison to the faith-based community and associated organizations.
  
- F. All State departments, agencies, commissions, and boards are directed to cooperate with GOCI in implementing the provisions of this Executive Order.
  
- G. Reports. By December 31 of each year, GOCI shall submit an annual report to the Governor on its activities.

## II. Ethnic Commissions

### A. There are the following Ethnic Commissions within GOCI:

1. The Governor's Commission on African Affairs;
2. The Governor's Commission on Asian and Pacific American Affairs;
3. The Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs;
4. The Governor's Commission on Hispanic and Latin American Community Affairs;
5. The Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs; and
6. The Governor's Commission on South Asian American Affairs.

### B. Membership.

1. Each Ethnic Commission shall consist of fifteen (15) voting members appointed by the Governor.
2. The Commission members shall:
  - a) Reflect the diverse ancestry and national origins of the respective communities of Maryland; and
  - b) Provide representation from different geographic regions in the State.
3. Members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor for up to two consecutive four-year terms.
4. If a member is appointed to a vacant seat with less than two years remaining in a term, such service does not count as a full term. Such a member is eligible to serve two additional four-year terms.
5. A Commission member holds a seat until a successor is appointed.
6. The Governor shall designate a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from among the members of the Commission. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.
7. In the event of a vacancy on a Commission, the Governor shall appoint a successor.
8. Commission members are subject to the direction of the Executive Director and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

### C. Eligibility and Appointment.

1. Members of the Ethnic Commissions shall demonstrate an affinity to the diasporic community that the commission represents. A Commission member may demonstrate affinity by being:
  - a) An immigrant of a diasporic community;
  - b) A descendant of a diasporic community;
  - c) A proven advocate for the interests of a diasporic community;
  - d) A scholar or educator of the history of a diasporic community;
  - e) An expert on issues important to a diaspora community; or
  - f) A former resident of a diasporic community.

2. In making appointments to the Ethnic Commissions, the Governor shall consider the demographic and geographic diversity of the State.

D. Procedures. The following procedures govern the Ethnic Commissions:

1. The Commissions are public bodies subject to the Open Meetings Act.
2. The Commissions shall meet at the call of the Chairperson, in coordination with GOCI, at least six times each year. Sufficient notice of meetings shall be published to encourage public attendance.
3. The Commissions shall hold at least one administrative planning session each year for onboarding and scheduling purposes.
4. A majority of the Commission members then serving shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.
5. The Commissions may adopt such other procedures and by-laws as may be necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business.
6. The Commissions may create committees or subcommittees subject to the approval of the Executive Director.
7. By June 30th of each year, the Commissions shall submit an annual report to the Governor detailing the activities in the preceding calendar year, along with any appropriate recommendations.

E. Expenses. Ethnic Commission members may not receive any compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, in accordance with the Standard State Travel Regulations, and as provided in the State budget.

F. Operational Support. GOCI shall provide publication, operational, and other support as needed to the Ethnic Commissions.

G. Duties. The Ethnic Commissions shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Serve as an advisory body to the Governor and agencies within the Executive Department on matters relating to the Commission's diasporic community within Maryland, including matters relating to economic, workforce, and business development domestically and abroad;
2. Identify needs or problems affecting the Commission's diasporic community, and make recommendations to the Governor on appropriate responses and programs;
3. Conduct outreach to the Commission's diasporic community groups within the State, and communicate information to them concerning public and private programs that are beneficial to their interests;
4. Review and provide recommendations to the Governor on any proposed federal, State, or local legislation, regulations, policies, or programs that affect the Commission's diasporic community of Maryland;

5. Make recommendations to the Governor on matters affecting the health, safety, and welfare of the Commission's diasporic community of Maryland; and
6. Perform any other duties that may be requested by the Governor or the Executive Director.

H. The diasporic communities of the Ethnic Commissions are as follows:

1. Governor's Commission on African Affairs: The diasporic countries of the Governor's Commission on African Affairs include, but are not limited to: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Western Sahara, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
2. Governor's Commission on Asian and Pacific American Affairs: The diasporic countries, territories, and states of the Governor's Commission on Asian and Pacific American Affairs include, but are not limited to: Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, East Timor, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guam, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lord Howe Island, Macau, Malaysia, Melanesia, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Norfolk Island, North Korea, Oceanic islands of the Eastern Pacific, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Polynesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Thailand, the Revillagigedo Islands, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vietnam.
3. Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs: The diasporic countries of the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs include, but are not limited to: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, St. Barths, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Martin, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos.

4. Governor's Commission on Hispanic and Latin American Community Affairs: The diasporic countries of the Governor's Commission on Hispanic and Latin American Affairs include, but are not limited to: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, French Guyana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela.
5. Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs: The diasporic countries of the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs include, but are not limited to: Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.
6. Governor's Commission on South Asian Affairs: The diasporic countries of the Governor's Commission on South Asian Affairs include, but are not limited to: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis this 7th day of January, 2025.



Wes Moore  
Governor

ATTEST:



Susan C. Lee  
Secretary of State

