



The State of Maryland

Executive Department

Executive Order

01.01.2026.20

Directing State Media and Advertising Procurement Spending to Maryland News Organizations

- WHEREAS, A thriving independent press and trusted community media sources are critical components of a healthy democracy;
- WHEREAS, In recent years, out-of-state corporations, hedge funds and national media conglomerates have bought out locally owned news outlets, diminishing the quality and quantity of news products and sources available to Maryland communities;
- WHEREAS, The sources from which Marylanders receive their information have evolved considerably in the digital age, with a majority of Marylanders receiving their news from a combination and variety of traditional and on-line news sources;
- WHEREAS, Strengthening the quality and the content of the news consumed by Marylanders will lead to better informed and more active and engaged citizens;
- WHEREAS, In Calendar Year 2025, the Board of Public Works approved \$268 million in marketing and advertising contracts for State agencies, underscoring the considerable amount of taxpayer dollars expended for these services; and
- WHEREAS, Consistent with the socioeconomic procurement policies, goals, and objectives of the Moore-Miller Administration, it is in the State's best interest to ensure that local, independent community news and media outlets benefit from marketing and advertising contracts paid for with Maryland taxpayer dollars.

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. "Maryland news organization" means an entity that engages professionals to create, edit, produce, and distribute original content concerning matters of public interest through reporting, conducting interviews, observing current events, or analyzing information; and
1. Has at least one full-time equivalent employee who is dedicated to providing coverage of events in Maryland and who reside in Maryland or within 50 miles of Maryland;
 2. In the case of a print publication, has published at least 10 issues over the previous 12 months and:
 - i. Holds a valid U.S. Postal Service periodical permit; or
 - ii. Has at least 25% of its content dedicated to Maryland news;
 3. In the case of an entity that publishes content in only digital form:
 - i. Has published at least one original piece about events in Maryland per week over the previous 12 months; and
 - ii. For which at least 33% of its audience, averaged over a 12-month period, is located in Maryland;
 4. Has disclosed in its print publication or on its website, or on another publicly available website:
 - i. Its corporate structure, including a list of beneficial owners; or
 - ii. In the case of a nonprofit entity, its board of directors;
 5. Maintains and has disclosed in its print publication or on its website an editorial policy aimed at correcting errors which includes an accessible process for the public to report errors or register complaints;
 6. In the case of an entity that is organized under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is neither a print publication nor an entity that only publishes content in digital form:
 - i. Has declared coverage of Maryland news as its stated mission in a filing with the Internal Revenue Service; or
 - ii. Has received a community service grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting prior to 2026; and
 7. In the case of a broadcast entity, an entity that is a "broadcast station" as defined under Section 3 of the Federal Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. § 153 (including a "television broadcast station" as defined in 47

C.F.R. § 73.681 (i.e., collectively, a broadcast radio or broadcast television station)), that is licensed to a community located in Maryland, as assigned by the Federal Communications Commission.

- B. "Maryland news organization" does not include an entity that receives more than 50% of its gross receipts from;
 - 1. A political organization described in 26 U.S.C. § 527; or
 - 2. Any entity organized under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(4), (5), or (6).
- C. State agencies shall structure procurements to achieve an aspirational goal of 50% of the agency's total dollar value of procurement contracts for advertising being made directly to Maryland news organizations.
- D. In so doing, State agencies - whenever feasible - shall prioritize the use of Maryland news organizations that have a primary mission of reporting on and serving underserved communities in Maryland.
- E. No later than November 1, 2026, the Department of General Services (DGS) shall produce and maintain a list of eligible Maryland news organizations pursuant to the criteria contained in this Executive Order. In producing and maintaining such a list, DGS may consult with a third party non-profit organization.
- F. No later than December 1, 2026, the Office of State Procurement (OSP) shall issue procurement guidance to State agencies on the application of this new policy.
- G. This Executive Order does not apply to any procurement or contract for advertising with the primary audience focus outside of Maryland for the purposes of:
 - 1. Promoting tourism to the State;
 - 2. Out-of-state student recruitment for public universities and colleges;
 - 3. Employee recruitment; or
 - 4. Economic investment.
- H. 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.
- I. 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 Annapolis, this 16th Day of
October 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wes Moore', written over a horizontal line.

Wes Moore
Governor



ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan C. Lee', written over a horizontal line.

Susan C. Lee
Secretary of State