

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2024 SESSION

CHAPTER 457

An Act to direct the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and the Maternal Mortality Review Team to convene a work group to expand the work of the Maternal Mortality Review Team; report.

[H 831]

Approved April 4, 2024

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the Department of Health and the Maternal Mortality Review Team shall convene a work group to develop a plan for expanding the composition and scope of work of the Maternal Mortality Review Team.*

The work group shall develop:

- 1. Methods for collecting information about maternal morbidity in the Commonwealth;*
- 2. Criteria for selecting cases for investigation and review;*
- 3. Criteria for selecting cases for in-depth review, which may include interviews with families and community members who have information on such cases;*
- 4. Procedures for maintaining confidentiality and security with regard to reviews undertaken by the Maternal Mortality Review Team;*

5. A five-year plan for the expansion and operation of the Maternal Mortality Review Team, which shall include (i) identification of necessary staff and equipment; (ii) identification of annual goals; (iii) provisions for coordination among stakeholders; (iv) identification of funding sources available to support and sustain the Maternal Mortality Review Team; (v) a proposed annual budget for each year; and (vi) a proposed data dissemination plan that includes data to be disseminated, methodology for dissemination, frequency of dissemination, and a list of key stakeholders and community partners who may be interested in the data and other outputs; and

6. Any recommendations for further study, legislative actions, or implementation of the Maternal Mortality Review Team.

The work group shall include the Chief Medical Examiner, the Director of the Office of Family Health, the State Registrar of Vital Records, the Commissioner of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Commissioner of Social Services, the Director of the Department of Corrections, the Maternal Child Health Epidemiologist, the Maternal Mortality Program Manager, and the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services, or their designees; the Director of the Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative or his designee; community stakeholders, including doulas working with impacted communities, local nonprofit organizations, mental health treatment providers, and other community stakeholders; representatives of medical professionals with experience in maternal health; staff and members of such state agencies as may be appropriate; and the presidents of (i) the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, (ii) the Virginia Chapter of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, (iii) the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and (iv) the Virginia Affiliate of the American College of Nurse-Midwives, or their designees.

The work group shall, in its expansion and operation plan, include plans to: (a) collect data on the incidence and causes of maternal death in the Commonwealth, including severe maternal morbidity; (b) create a comprehensive integrated review of all maternal deaths and incidence of severe maternal morbidity in the Commonwealth, which shall include a statewide retrospective review of all existing records relating to each maternal death and instance of severe maternal morbidity; (c) develop policies and recommendations to address the circumstances that may negatively impact maternal health and to improve services, systems of care, and resources for women, infants, and families; and (d) work with communities and partners to implement such policies and recommendations and create actionable processes of change. Community health care workers, community doulas and doula organizations, and other relevant stakeholders shall be included in the review of the data, the development of policy recommendations, and the implementation of the policies.

The work group shall report its findings and provide its plan to the Chairmen of the House Committees on Appropriations and Health and Human Services and the Senate Committees on Finance and Appropriations and Education and Health by July 1, 2026.