

1. Maryland CARES Act: The CARES Act played a significant role in facilitating the early release of certain incarcerated individuals in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially at the federal level. While it was a federal law, Maryland and other states took similar measures to reduce the prison population in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 in crowded facilities

2. Second Chance Act (Maryland): The Second Chance Act in Maryland allows certain individuals with non-violent criminal records to shield their records from public view. This means that under certain conditions, people can apply to have certain charges or convictions removed from public databases. It is a form of relief aimed at giving individuals a "second chance" by allowing them to find employment or housing without their criminal history affecting their prospects.

### 3. Maryland Criminal Law Articles 8505-8507

Section 8-505 Motion: Under Maryland Criminal Procedure Section 8-505, a court can order an evaluation to determine whether a defendant is in need of substance abuse treatment. This motion is often filed after a conviction when there is reason to believe that substance abuse contributed to the defendant's criminal behavior. If the evaluation finds that the defendant would benefit from treatment, the court may consider modifying the sentence to include mandatory treatment.

Section 8-507 Motion: This section allows a defendant who has been convicted of a crime and suffers from a drug or alcohol dependency to request commitment to a treatment facility, rather than serving time in prison. Under Section 8-507, the court can commit a person to a Department of Health-approved treatment program as an alternative to incarceration. The individual must successfully complete the program, and failure to do so could result in the re-imposition of their original sentence.

4. Compassionate Release: Compassionate release allows inmates who are terminally ill or facing extreme circumstances to be released early from prison. Both Maryland and the federal system have provisions for compassionate release, though it is more commonly known under federal law. Compassionate release applications must show that the prisoner's continued detention is no longer justified due to their medical condition, age, or changes in sentencing law.

5. Sentence Modification (Maryland): In Maryland, after a conviction, individuals have a right to ask the court to modify or reduce their sentence under Maryland Rule 4-345. The motion must typically be filed within 90 days after sentencing, although there are exceptions. Sentence modifications are usually granted for cases where circumstances have significantly changed after sentencing, or where the original sentence may have been unduly harsh.

6. IRAA Act (Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act): While the IRAA is primarily associated with Washington, D.C., it is relevant because it allows individuals convicted of certain crimes as juveniles to apply for a sentence reduction after serving 15 years. Maryland does not have an identical law, but discussions about juvenile sentencing reform have mirrored this trend across the U.S. The focus is on recognizing that juveniles should have an opportunity for rehabilitation and reconsideration.

7. Presidential Pardon/Commutation: A pardon is a complete forgiveness of a crime granted by the President of the United States (at the federal level) or by a governor (at the state level). A commutation reduces a sentence, either shortening it or allowing for an immediate release, but it does not erase the conviction. These forms of clemency are often sought after someone has been incarcerated or has served time.

8. Exoneree: An exoneree is a person who has been officially cleared of all legal wrongdoing after being wrongfully convicted. This often happens when new evidence, such as DNA, proves the individual did not commit the crime, or when legal errors come to light. In Maryland, exonerees may be eligible for compensation or other reparations for the time they spent wrongfully incarcerated.