

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2014 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

House Bill 1399

(Washington County Delegation)

Environmental Matters

Judicial Proceedings

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**Washington County - Sheriff and County Commissioners - Salaries**

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This bill increases the annual salary of the Washington County Sheriff from \$88,000 to the greater of \$100,000 or the salary set by the Washington County Commissioners. The bill sets the annual base salary of a Washington County Commissioner to the greater of \$30,000 or the salary set by the Washington County Commissioners. Similarly, the additional salary received by the president of the county commissioners is set at the greater of \$3,000 or the amount set by the county commissioners. The \$2,000 limit on reimbursements for expenses incurred by county commissioners is repealed; instead the county commissioners may set the amount by local law.

The bill requires the Washington County Commissioners to set by local law the salary of the county sheriff and the county commissioners, which in each case may not be above the salary recommended by the Washington County Salary Study Commission (WCSSC). Within 60 days after receiving recommendations of the WCSSC, the county commissioners must set by local law the salary for each office included in the recommendations. The bill repeals a requirement that the Washington County Commissioners submit recommendations to the Washington County legislative delegation concerning the salaries of the county commissioners and the county sheriff.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Washington County expenditures increase by \$10,000 in FY 2015 and by \$17,200 annually beginning in FY 2016 to cover increased salary and benefits for the Washington County Sheriff, beginning with the next term of office. Revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## **Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Sheriff of Washington County receives a salary of \$88,000 and is reimbursed for certain expenses. The annual salary of a Washington County Commissioner is \$30,000. The commissioner elected president of the board of county commissioners receives an additional \$3,000 annually. Each county commissioner is entitled to health insurance and other fringe benefits and may be reimbursed up to \$2,000 annually for reasonable expenses.

The WCSSC must study the salaries of the following positions:

- county commissioners;
- board of education;
- orphans' court judges;
- sheriff;
- treasurer; and
- board of liquor license commissioners.

Every four years the WCSSC must issue a report containing recommendations to the county commissioners for review and consideration. Except regarding the salary of county commissioners and the sheriff, the county commissioners must set by local law the salary for each office included in the salary study recommendations. Established salaries must not violate the State constitution respecting limitations on salary increases for public officials while still in office. The county commissioners may accept, reduce, or reject but may not increase the recommendations of the WCSSC.

**Background:** In 2012, the WCSSC recommended a salary of \$100,000 for the Washington County Sheriff, which is consistent with the minimum salary set by the bill. The WCSSC also recommended a salary of \$40,000 for the president of the Washington County Commissioners, an increase of \$7,000, and a salary of \$35,000 for county commissioners, an increase of \$5,000 for each member. In March 2013, the Washington County Commissioners, through ordinance 2013-09, indicated approval of the \$100,000 salary of the sheriff but also indicated that the salary of county commissioners remain unchanged (at \$33,000 for the president and \$30,000 for other commissioners.) Washington County advises that annual reimbursements to county commissioners typically total less than the \$2,000 per member limit and that the county does not plan to alter the limit. The salary of the Washington County Sheriff was last changed by Chapter 448 of 2009, when it increased from \$80,000 to \$88,000. **Exhibit 1** shows the salaries for sheriffs in selected counties.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Sheriff Salaries for Selected Maryland Counties**  
**Fiscal 2014**

<u>County</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Salary</u>
Allegany	74,012	\$65,279
Anne Arundel	550,488	128,657
Baltimore City	621,342	114,050
Baltimore	817,455	90,000
Carroll	167,217	75,910
Frederick	239,582	100,000
Garrett	29,854	75,000
Harford	248,622	113,732
Howard	299,430	85,000
Montgomery	1,004,709	154,000
Washington	149,180	88,000

Source: *Salary, Health Benefits, and Pension Survey of Maryland County Government, FY 2014*, Maryland Association of Counties

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**Local Fiscal Effect:** The next term of office for the Washington County Sheriff begins in December 2014. Accordingly, Washington County personnel expenditures increase by \$10,010 in fiscal 2015 for salary (\$7,000) and fringe benefits (\$3,010). This reflects salary adjustments for a seven-month period (December 2014 through June 2015). Washington County expenditures increase by \$17,160 annually beginning in fiscal 2016 for salary (\$12,000) and fringe benefits (\$5,160), assuming a constant fringe benefits rate of 43% as advised by the county.

The salary of Washington County Commissioners remains unchanged from current law.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 1046 (Senator Shank, *et al.*) - Judicial Proceedings.

**Information Source(s):** Washington County, Maryland Association of Counties, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 7, 2014  
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