

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 894

(Senator Kasemeyer)

Finance

Appropriations

Human Services - Weighted Caseload Analysis - Study

This bill requires the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to study the feasibility of performing a weighted caseload analysis that considers the number and type of public assistance cases handled by personnel of the Family Investment Administration (FIA) and the local departments of social services and the time and effort required for each type of case with the potential of (1) using the results to allocate the number of personnel necessary to efficiently and effectively carry out FIA's programs and (2) annually reviewing caseloads and reallocating personnel as necessary based on the results of the analysis. By December 1, 2016, DHR must report the results of the study to the Governor and specified legislative committees.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2016.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DHR can handle the bill's requirements using existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: DHR's FIA is the central coordinating and directing agency of all public assistance programs in the State, including (1) the Family Investment Program and the related temporary cash assistance programs; (2) public assistance to adults; (3) emergency assistance; (4) food stamps; (5) medical assistance eligibility determinations; and (6) energy assistance programs.

Staffing levels and caseloads are regularly reviewed for caseworkers at both FIA and the Social Services Administration. The *2014 Joint Chairmen's Report* requested DHR to conduct an independent workload study of FIA and make staffing recommendations. DHR submitted the workload study in December 2014, which was completed by the Regional Economic Studies Institute at Towson University. One recommended action within the report was to better account for caseworker time by incorporating a time management system that would use an internal computer clock to track cases from when they are first entered into the system in order to determine how long routine functions take to perform. The report indicated that knowing the time it takes to process a case, as well as the number of staff members who directly encounter each case, would assist in forecasting workload demand in order to ensure efficiency. However, this would result in significant expenditures associated with upgrading DHR's case management system.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1190 (Delegate Hettleman, *et al.*) - Appropriations.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Budget and Management, Regional Economic Studies Institute, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 2016
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Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510