

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 1060 (Delegate Jacobs, *et al.*)  
 Health and Government Operations

State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists - Meetings and Timeliness  
 of Certification and Licensure Issuance

This bill requires the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists to meet at least once a month. By January 1, 2018, the board must collaborate with the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to establish goals for the timeliness of issuing certificates and licenses. By January 1, 2019, and annually thereafter, the board must report to the Secretary on the degree to which the goals established under the bill have been achieved.

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Special fund expenditures increase by \$4,300 annually, beginning in FY 2018, to conduct two additional meetings a year for per diem and travel reimbursement for committee members and food expenses. The remainder of the bill’s requirements can be handled within existing budgeted resources. Special fund revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	4,300	4,300	4,300	4,300	4,300
Net Effect	(\$4,300)	(\$4,300)	(\$4,300)	(\$4,300)	(\$4,300)

*Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Current Law:** The State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists licenses and certifies professional counselors, alcohol and drug counselors, marriage and family therapists, art therapists, and behavior analysts; receives and resolves complaints regarding professional counselors and therapists; and sets standards for the practice of professional counseling through regulations and legislation. The board consists of 13 members: 4 licensed clinical professional counselors; 3 licensed clinical marriage and family therapists; 3 licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselors; 1 licensed professional art therapist; and 2 consumers.

**Background:** In total, the board regulates 14 different credentials across five areas of specialization. In fiscal 2016, the board regulated more than 7,500 individuals, a 66% increase from fiscal 2007. Statute dictates that the board meet at least once a year. However, the board advises that current practice is to meet 10 times annually with two months off.

As part of the *Managing for Results* (MFR) process, each health occupations board and commission has a goal of issuing initial and renewal licenses to 95% of qualified applicants within 10 days of receipt of the last qualifying document, or to improve upon that standard if it has already been met. According to MFR data, the board reports that it exceeded this goal (issuing licenses to 100% of qualified applicants) in fiscal 2013 through 2016. It is not clear if the board includes issuance of certificates under these goals.

**State Expenditures:** Special fund expenditures for the board increase by \$4,300 annually beginning in fiscal 2018 to conduct an additional two meetings a year. The information and assumptions used in calculating this estimate are stated below:

- per diem costs for board members increase by \$2,600 (based on a \$100 per diem expense for 13 board members for two additional meetings);
- travel reimbursement costs increase by \$1,000 annually, which is based on an average of travel reimbursement costs in fiscal 2014 and 2015; and
- board meetings last all day so the board serves a working lunch at a cost of approximately \$350 per meeting, increasing food costs by \$700 annually.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 7, 2017  
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