

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 911
Judiciary

(Delegate Krimm, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Workgroup to Study Shelter and Supportive Services for Unaccompanied
Homeless Minors

This bill establishes the Workgroup to Study Shelter and Supportive Services for Unaccompanied Homeless Minors, which is to be staffed by the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness. An unaccompanied homeless minor is a minor (1) who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or (2) whose status or circumstances indicate a significant danger of experiencing homelessness in the near future. By December 1, 2019, the workgroup must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2019, and terminates June 30, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The Department of Legislative Services, as staff to the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness, can meet the bill's requirements with existing budgeted resources. Any expense reimbursements for the workgroup are assumed to be minimal and absorbable with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The Senate and House chairs of the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness must serve as co-chairs of the workgroup. The workgroup must (1) compile existing information on, identify, and study the unique needs of unaccompanied homeless

minors and identify the public and private sector programs and resources available to meet those needs; (2) identify gaps in public and private sector programs and resources available to meet the needs of unaccompanied homeless minors; and (3) identify barriers unaccompanied homeless minors face in accessing safe shelter and compile information on and study shelter practices in other states. The workgroup must also make recommendations regarding (1) legislation, regulations, and policy initiatives to address the needs of unaccompanied homeless minors in the State; (2) funding requirements and budgetary priorities necessary to address these needs; and (3) any other relevant issues or considerations identified by the workgroup.

Members of the workgroup may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget.

Current Law/Background: Chapter 427 of 2014 established the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness to ensure that public resources, programs, and policies are coordinated and effective in preventing, mitigating the effects of, and ending homelessness in Maryland. The committee must:

- study issues relating to homelessness, including housing, income, health care, education, government supports, and veterans experiencing homelessness;
- consult with governmental agencies, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders to identify State policies, programs, and actions that should or could prevent, mitigate the effects of, and end homelessness in Maryland;
- review and make recommendations to align State statutes, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary priorities with State policies and actions that should or could prevent, mitigate the effects of, and end homelessness in Maryland;
- search for any intradepartmental or interdepartmental gaps, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies in the implementation or attainment of State policies, programs, and actions that should or could prevent, mitigate the effects of, and end homelessness in Maryland; and
- identify new laws, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary priorities that are needed.

The committee must submit a report to the General Assembly by December 1 of each year that includes a description of the committee's work and any recommendations. The Department of Legislative Services provides staff assistance to the committee.

A person who is age 18 or older is an adult for all purposes and has the legal capacity, rights, privileges, powers, and duties of adults. Article 1, § 24 of the Annotated Code of Maryland establishes that the age of majority is age 18. Except as otherwise specified, the term "minor," as it pertains to legal age and capacity means an individual younger than

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age 18. In the most recent Youth Count, a project that attempts to identify unaccompanied homeless youth (ages 24 and younger) in the State, 14% of the youth represented were younger than age 18.

The Office of Community Programs within the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) oversees efforts to reduce homelessness in the State. DHCD does not provide direct housing placement or emergency support services specifically to homeless individuals; instead, it coordinates with and awards grant funding to local administering agencies and service providers to support various programs.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 930 (Senator Washington, *et al.*) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Garrett, and Montgomery counties; City of Laurel; Maryland Municipal League; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Department of Health; Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Human Services; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Department of Natural Resources; Maryland Department of Transportation; SchoolHouse Connection; University System of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

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