

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1197 (Delegate Guyton, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

Task Force on Adults With Autism Spectrum Disorder

This bill establishes the Task Force on Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Members of the task force may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget. The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) must staff the task force. By December 1, 2019, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Developmental Disabilities Administration, and specified committees of the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2019, and terminates June 30, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DLS can staff the task force with existing resources. Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs are also assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The task force must study:

- needs relating to housing, employment, health and mental health care, transportation, and social and leisure opportunities of adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) throughout the State;

- employment opportunities and barriers for adults with ASD, including any regulations, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and tax incentives; and
- services available to adults with ASD related to employment training and on-site job support; training on independent living, communication, and social skills; behavior support; and crisis intervention.

The task force must also (1) evaluate available support for adults with ASD, including disability accommodations, college disability programs, and job training programs and (2) make recommendations on transitioning high school students with ASD to independent adult living.

Current Law/Background: According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 50 eight-year-old children were identified with ASD in Maryland in 2014. Boys were 4.5 times more likely to be identified with ASD than girls. No significant differences were found in the percentage of white, black, and Hispanic children identified with ASD.

Multiple programs exist within the State for individuals with ASD and their families. For example, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) within the Maryland State Department of Education operates the Pathways program, which provides educational support services for people with ASD. Pathways is a collaboration between DORS and two- and four-year colleges throughout the State. Students participating in Pathways enroll in credit/certificate classes and register with the Disability Support Services (DSS) at their college. DORS Pathways coordinators work with students, their families, and DORS counselors, as well as DSS staff and faculty at the college.

The Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities, within the Department of Disabilities, is a partnership of State and local government agencies, educators, family members, and advocates. The council's purpose is to help improve the policies and practices that affect Maryland students with disabilities preparing to transition from high school to adult services, college, employment, and independent living.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Department of Legislative Services

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