

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 1034

(Senator Carozza, *et al.*)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Health and Government Operations

9-1-1 Specialist Recruitment and Retention Workgroup

This bill establishes the 9-1-1 Specialist Recruitment and Retention Workgroup to identify and examine recruitment and retention challenges that affect 9-1-1 specialists in the State and make related recommendations. The workgroup must be staffed by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) and the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM). By December 1, 2024, the workgroup must submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations, and by December 1, 2025, the workgroup must submit a final report of its findings and recommendations, both to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2024, and terminates December 31, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DLS and MDEM can likely staff the workgroup with existing resources; however, to the extent that the workgroup requires subject-specific expertise or skills that exceed their capacity, general fund expenditures may increase for contractual support. Expense reimbursements are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local governments can likely supply the data and information necessary for the workgroup to conduct its research using existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The workgroup must review the reports submitted by the Commission to Advance Next Generation 9-1-1 Across Maryland and identify and examine recruitment and retention challenges that affect 9-1-1 specialists in the State, including:

- the number of 9-1-1 specialists who retire annually;
- the number of 9-1-1 specialists who are hired annually;
- current salary ranges for 9-1-1 specialists;
- current offerings of specified benefits for 9-1-1 specialists;
- training hour requirements for 9-1-1 specialists;
- recruitment techniques;
- requirements for promotion and advancement within the emergency response field;
- the impact of current State and local laws on 9-1-1 specialists; and
- other specified work history, workers' compensation, and perception issues, to the extent such information is available.

The workgroup must make recommendations regarding:

- the effectiveness and viability of uniform incentives, offerings, or practices employed in other states to attract, support, and retain individuals in 9-1-1 specialist roles;
- the feasibility of, and any barriers to, incorporating 9-1-1 specialists into the Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System; and
- any other issues the workgroup considers relevant to enhancing and supporting career 9-1-1 specialists in the State.

A member of the workgroup may not be compensated as a member of the workgroup, but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses as provided in the State budget.

Current Law: The State's 9-1-1 system operates primarily through public safety answering points (PSAPs), which are generally owned and operated by local governments. 9-1-1 specialists working within PSAPs answer, redirect, and take action on 9-1-1 calls received based on the location of the originating 9-1-1 call. State and local governments are preparing for "next generation" 9-1-1 technology that will allow PSAPs to access not only more accurate information about caller location but also other information that will assist emergency personnel in communicating with callers and responding more efficiently. Legislation has been enacted in recent years to, among other things:

- transfer the Maryland 9-1-1 Board that is responsible for administering the 9-1-1 Trust Fund and overseeing the State’s 9-1-1 system from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to MDEM;
- expand the uses of the 9-1-1 Trust Fund to include providing funding for 9-1-1 specialist training activities; and
- increase funding for the State’s 9-1-1 system.

The Maryland 9-1-1 Board’s other responsibilities include (1) dispersing funds to local governments from the 9-1-1 Trust Fund for authorized costs; (2) reviewing and approving or disapproving requests for reimbursement of the costs of enhancing 9-1-1 systems; (3) ensuring the inspection of PSAPs; (4) auditing counties to ensure that 9-1-1 Trust Funds are being used for authorized purposes; (5) establishing training standards for PSAP personnel based on national best practices and related to Next Generation 9-1-1; and (6) consulting with the Maryland Cybersecurity Council to establish cybersecurity standards for PSAPs.

Additional Comments: MDEM advises that the [Next Generation 9-1-1 Commission](#), which was established June 1, 2018 and terminated June 30, 2022, explored and made recommendations on many 9-1-1 specialist staffing and recruitment issues.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 1162 (Delegate Rogers, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Emergency Management; Department of Legislative Services

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