

BILL: House Bill 536 **DATE:** February 19, 2024

SUBJECT: Correctional Services Apprenticeships Start-Up Grant Program - Establishment **COMMITTEE:** Judiciary

POSITION: Information Only

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EXPLANATION:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 536 Correctional Services Apprenticeships Start-Up Grant Program - Establishment, which requires the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee to determine whether changes to the rules, regulations, procedures, or funding of MSDE are necessary to implement the Correctional Services Apprenticeship Grant Program. One purpose of the grant program is to provide high school students and career changers with opportunities to begin a career in correctional services in Maryland.

In June 2023, the Public Safety Apprenticeship Workgroup issued a [report](#) to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee. The report identifies several limiting factors regarding apprenticeships addressing workforce issues for public safety employers. These limitations would need to be addressed through a combination of policy, regulation, and possibly legislation to establish apprenticeship programs in correctional services. As it relates specifically to youth, factors one, three, and ten more than likely have the largest impact. Because of the one-on-one mentorship that is the hallmark of apprenticeship, many occupations allow 16-year-olds to participate in registered apprenticeships. However, depending on the level of risk associated with the occupation, not all are appropriate for high school-aged youth.

Factor	
1. Age Limits	Apprenticeship cannot alter an occupation’s minimum qualification processes or standards including statutory or policy-based age limits. Cadets and youth apprentices may not be eligible for union membership and the bargaining unit protections associated with membership.
2. Screening Processes & Onboarding	Apprenticeship cannot alter an occupation’s minimum qualification processes or standards including pre-employment and onboarding requirements
3. Degree Requirements	Apprenticeship cannot remove degree requirements from an occupation. Apprenticeship itself does not pay the costs of tuition and fees associated with education, employers must still invest in their apprentices’ education or identify resources to minimize the cost to the apprentice.
4. Academy Capacity	Apprenticeships cannot supplant completion of a certified academy program if it is required for employment. Apprenticeship cannot independently increase the capacity of approved academy programs.

Factor	Limitations of Apprenticeship
5. Wages	Apprenticeship does not generally assist employers in paying wages to their apprentices, employers must be willing to invest in their workers and their apprenticeship programs.
6. Career Advancement	Apprenticeship does not guarantee an apprentice higher paid positions or better assignments.
7. Overlapping Labor Markets	Different jurisdictions and departments may be organized under different unions, apprenticeship standards must be consistent with collective bargaining agreements. The extent to which joint apprenticeship programs can accommodate multi-employer arrangements across regions or jurisdictions may be limited by the occupations involved and preexisting collective bargaining.
8. Community Relationships with Law Enforcement	Apprenticeship cannot solely change public perception and community relations with law enforcement.
9. Workplace Culture	Apprenticeship cannot independently change workplace culture.
10. Occupational Hazards and Risk	Apprenticeship cannot mitigate the inherent dangers associated with careers in public safety.

The last factor to consider is funding. Establishing a correctional services apprenticeship program should not require funding from the Maryland State Department of Education. What would be required is staff time. Additionally, funds from the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) does not allow funds to support youth apprenticeship salaries if it were deemed that youths could apprentice in this area. However, MSDE CTE staff members are happy to collaborate with staff members from the Maryland Department of Labor and the CTE Committee in developing a correctional services apprenticeship.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 536**. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne at 410-767-0504, or Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov