

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 63

(Senator Bailey)

Judicial Proceedings

Motor Vehicles - School Vehicle Drivers - Medical Examinations

This bill expressly requires a school bus driver to pass an appropriate medical examination both before employment and once during each two years of employment thereafter. The biennial requirement established by the bill reduces the frequency with which such a medical examination must be completed, as existing State regulations require a school bus driver to complete an annual medical examination. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues likely decrease negligibly due to fewer commercial driver's license (CDL) corrections for individuals whose license has expired due to noncompliance with the medical examination requirement. The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) can implement the bill's changes with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: Local school system expenditures decrease minimally in certain jurisdictions, as discussed below. Local revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: An individual may not drive a school vehicle on any highway in the State unless the individual (1) passes an appropriate medical examination and (2) with respect to driving a school bus, has been issued a CDL with a school bus endorsement.

MVA, with the advice of the Maryland State Department of Education, is authorized to adopt regulations concerning the qualifications of school vehicle drivers. MVA [regulations](#) specify that a school vehicle driver must pass a physical examination before employment and once during each 12 months of employment.

State Revenues: If an individual's CDL school bus endorsement expires due to failure to submit medical certification, the individual is subject to a \$20 correction fee to have the CDL endorsement reinstated. MVA advised for a prior introduction of the bill that, in 2022, 108 individuals lost medical certification and subsequently paid the \$20 fee to have the endorsement reinstated.

Because the bill doubles the period of time individuals have to comply with the medical examination requirement, fewer individuals are expected to lose the endorsement and subsequently pay the \$20 correction fee. However, given the relatively small number of individuals who paid the fee for losing the endorsement in 2022, the Department of Legislative Services advises any effect on TTF revenues is likely negligible.

Local Expenditures: Any local school system that currently pays for the annual medical examination is expected to realize cost savings under the bill, as CDL licensees with the school bus endorsement will need to be examined less frequently.

Several school systems report that the bill's biennial examination requirement is expected to result in cost savings compared to the current annual requirement. For example, Anne Arundel County Public Schools anticipates saving approximately \$25,000 annually while St. Mary's County Public Schools anticipates saving about \$15,000 per year.

Small Business Effect: Small businesses that are involved in student transportation activities may benefit from the extended compliance period established by the bill. Additionally, any school bus contracting companies that currently pay for the annual medical examination are expected to realize cost savings.

Additional Comments: MVA advised for a prior introduction of the bill that, while federal regulations only require a biennial medical examination for these types of CDL holders, Maryland's annual examination has been required by State regulation for several decades.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 71 of 2023.

Designated Cross File: HB 478 (Delegate Sample-Hughes) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Transportation; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; Prince George's County Public Schools; Frederick County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 28, 2024
km/ljm

Analysis by: Eric F. Pierce

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510