

Department of Fiscal Services
 Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 394 (Delegate Nathan-Pulliam, et al.)
 Environmental Matters Referred to Economic and Environmental Affairs

**State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors -
 Alcohol and Drug Counselors - Certification**

This enrolled bill provides for the qualification and certification of specified categories of counselors who provide alcohol and drug counseling. The membership of the State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors is increased from seven to nine by requiring that an additional member be a certified professional counselor-alcohol and drug and by increasing the consumer membership from one to two members.

The bill provides for waivers of specified examination and certification provisions. The bill also repeals the exemption of employment related activities and services of specified employees from the Maryland Psychologists Act effective October 1, 2001.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors revenues would increase by \$14,000 and expenditures would increase by \$31,200 in FY 1997. Future year revenue increases reflect biennial fee collections and expenditure increases reflect inflation.

(in dollars)	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001
SF Revenues	\$14,000	\$10,500	\$22,500	\$19,500	\$29,750
SF Expenditures	31,200	34,500	35,700	37,000	38,300
Net Effect	(\$17,200)	(\$24,000)	(\$13,200)	(\$17,500)	(\$8,550)

Note: () - decrease; GF - general funds; FF - federal funds; SF - special funds

Local Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: The current initial application fee charged by the Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors for the certification of professional counselors is \$175; renewal licensees pay \$150. Renewals are made on a two-year cycle. All fee revenue is paid into the State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors' special fund.

The board anticipates that approximately 80 new alcohol and drug counselors would be "grandfathered" in under the provisions of the bill in fiscal 1997, and would pay the \$175 initial fee (for a total of \$14,000 in new revenue). In fiscal 1998, the board estimates an additional 60 new applications (\$10,500); in fiscal 1999, 80 renewals and 60 new applications (\$22,500); in fiscal 2000, 60 renewals and 60 new applications (\$19,500); and in fiscal 2001, 140 renewals and 50 new applications (\$29,750).

State Expenditures: State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors Fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$31,160 in fiscal 1997, which reflects the bill's October 1, 1996 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one Office Secretary to provide the necessary clerical functions attendant to additional certifications and renewal for the new classes of certified counselors created by this bill. It includes a salary of \$19,128, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Future year expenditures reflect (1) full salaries with 3.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and (2) 2% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors), Department of Fiscal Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 9, 1996
ncs Revised - House Third Reader - April 4, 1996
Revised - Enrolled Bill - April 22, 1996

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