

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 425 (Senator Hafer)

Judicial Proceedings

Foster Care - Child Support Obligations

This bill requires the Social Services Administration (SSA) to adopt regulations that require background checks for child support obligations and arrearages on a prospective foster parent who is also a biological parent. The regulations must also require that (1) a prospective foster parent whose child support payments are in arrears be given 60 days to bring the obligation current before a decision is made to place a foster child in the individual's home; and (2) a foster parent whose child support payments are in arrears be given 30 days to bring the obligation current before a decision is made to remove a foster child from the individual's home.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential indeterminate special fund revenue increase for child support collections and potential minimal general and federal fund expenditure increase for out-of-home care.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: State special fund revenues could increase to the extent that the bill's provisions lead to increased child support collections. Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) recipients must assign their support rights to the State and federal government as partial reimbursement for TCA payments made on behalf of the children of the obligor; as a result, TCA child support collections are distributed 50% to the State and 50% to the federal government. It is not possible to reliably estimate the amount of increased State collections,

however, since that amount depends on the number of TCA child support cases affected by the bill's provisions.

State Expenditures: There are approximately 3,700 foster care homes in Maryland. The bill could result in fewer foster homes if a foster parent with a child support obligation in arrears decides against providing out-of-home care to children rather than bringing the obligation current. In this event, expenditures for other types of placements could increase if replacement foster homes are not available. Any such impact is assumed to be minimal.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Legislative Services

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