

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 149 (Delegates Morhaim and Nathan-Pulliam)  
Environmental Matters

---

**Task Force to Study Increasing the Availability of Substance Abuse Programs**

---

This amended bill establishes a 22-member Task Force to Study Increasing the Availability of Substance Abuse Programs. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), in cooperation with other appropriate State and local units, is to staff the task force to the extent possible within existing budgeted resources. The task force must issue a final report of its findings to the Governor and General Assembly by January 1, 2000.

The bill takes effect June 1, 1998. It remains in effect for one and a half years and terminates on January 1, 2000.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill's requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

**Fiscal Analysis**

**State Expenditures:** Task force members would serve without compensation but would be reimbursed for expenses under the standard State travel regulations. Any such expenditures would depend upon the time, location, and frequency of the task force's meetings. It is expected that reimbursements could be handled with the existing resources of the governmental entities represented on the task force.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene advises that general fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$38,295 in fiscal 1999, which reflects the bill's June 1, 1998

effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring a part-time (50%) contractual position (Coordinator Special Programs) to staff the task force, due to the inability to absorb the additional tasks required by the bill. It includes salaries and fringe benefits (\$14,531), one-time start-up costs (\$4,845), travel and per diem (\$15,480), and ongoing operating expenses (\$3,439).

The Department of Legislative Services advises, however, that the bill specifies that DHMH staff the task force to the extent possible within existing budgeted resources, and believes that the bill's staffing requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources. The bill authorizes DHMH to staff the task force in cooperation with other State and local units; this provision allows the department to find resources for the task force from the existing staff of several governmental agencies.

---

**Information Source(s):** Department of Legislative Services, Office of the Governor,  
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 23, 1998  
tlw Revised - House Third Reader - March 19, 1998

---

Analysis by: Sue Friedlander	Direct Inquiries to:
Reviewed by: John Rixey	John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
	(410) 841-3710
	(301) 858-3710