

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1040 (Delegate Marriott)

Appropriations

State Personnel - Applicants for State Employment - High School Transcripts

The bill provides that each unit of State government, including units with independent personnel systems such as the Maryland Department of Transportation and the University System of Maryland, must require each applicant for employment with the unit to provide a copy of the applicant's high school transcript.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for administrative expenses could increase by \$97,900 in FY 2001 to handle the transcript requirement. Future year estimates reflect annualization and salary increases.

Local Effect: Increase in administrative expenditures by local boards of education to respond to approximately 12,000 requests for transcripts per year.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Applicants for employment with the State are not required to provide a copy of their high school transcripts.

Background: Listed below are current operational procedures of the Recruitment and Examination Division of the Office of Personnel Services and Benefits (OPSB) in DBM for reviewing and verifying applicant's minimum qualifications.

Current procedure for reviewing minimum qualifications - Staff from the Recruitment and Examination Division of OPSB, as well as personnel staff from State agencies that have

decentralized personnel responsibilities, review applications to determine if applicants meet the minimum qualifications for the position for which they have applied. The qualifications that an applicant lists on their State application are not independently verified at this step in the employment process.

Current procedure for verifying minimum qualifications - State agencies are required to verify the minimum qualifications of persons selected from an eligible (hiring) list. In practice, the appointing authority generally verifies graduation from high school by requiring candidates to provide a copy of their high school diploma (although a high school transcript is acceptable). This ensures that candidates for positions that require high school graduation or a GED certificate submit official documentation verifying this fact. OPSB does not require a high school transcript in lieu of a copy of the applicant's high school diploma because additional information listed on the transcript is not needed to determine if the individual meets the minimum qualifications.

An applicant's qualifications are verified by the State agency (appointing authority) that selected an individual from an eligible list to fill a vacancy. On an annual basis, DBM randomly selects a sample of appointments to audit for compliance with the requirement that the agency verify the selected applicant's qualifications. At the present time, a random sample of approximately 5% of candidates selected from eligible lists is being reviewed by OPSB to determine if the individuals met the minimum qualifications. This audit involves a complete review of verification documentation that the appointing authority has collected to confirm that the employee has the education/training, experience and/or licenses/certifications required to meet the minimum qualifications for the position to which the employee was appointed.

State Expenditures: The Office of Personnel Services and Benefits received 39,751 applications in fiscal 1999 from 11,816 applicants. This bill mandates that each applicant submit a copy of the applicant's high school transcript. This would require OPSB staff to spend additional time processing applications for State employment by determining if the transcript has been submitted by the applicant, and by corresponding with applicants to request high school transcripts when they have not been submitted or are not on file. Additional staff time would be required to determine if the high school transcript was submitted with the application or whether it had been previously submitted. OPSB/Information Technology staff would be required to create a database to maintain this information, and to make this information available to State agencies via the Internet.

DBM will require three additional personnel associates (Grade 11) to handle the additional workload. General fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$97,861 in fiscal 2001, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2000, effective date. This estimate includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses. Future year expenditures reflect (1) full salaries with 4.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and (2) 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses. In addition, agencies that do their own hiring will experience additional workload; the amount of any additional expenditures by these agencies cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Local Expenditures: Local boards of education will be required to fill approximately 12,000 requests for transcripts from high school graduates each year (or more, if applicants request a transcript more than one time). This will result in additional administrative expenses (including postage, photocopying and computer expenses) for the boards of education; the amount of such increase cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

Additional Comments: The additional requirement in the application process may discourage some qualified applicants from applying for State positions, and the potential delay in the hiring process as a result of this proposed legislation may result in candidates finding other employment. For older applicants, it may be difficult to obtain a transcript if the school has closed or archived its records. For positions that require college degrees it may be superfluous to require a high school transcript.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

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