

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 420	(Chairman, Environmental Matters Committee)
	(Departmental – Health and Mental Hygiene)
Environmental Matters	Economic and Environmental Affairs

Reporting of Communicable Diseases

This departmental bill adds certain diseases to the list of diseases that the director of a medical laboratory must report within 48 hours to the county health officer where the laboratory is located, and creates an exemption for a report of noncholera vibriosis if the specimen was obtained from the patient’s teeth, gingival tissues, or oral mucosa.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill’s requirements could be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: Potential expenditure increase for local health departments.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: The State of Maryland requires laboratories to report findings that indicate the presence of certain diseases of public health importance.

Background: In the past decade, several additions have been made to the list of diseases that must be reported, but no comprehensive update has been made. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) asserts that these changes will: (1) make the list of

diseases reportable by Maryland's medical laboratories consistent with reporting required of Maryland's health care providers; (2) make Maryland law consistent with the list of reportable diseases recommended by the national health authorities; (3) assist in detecting "emerging" infectious diseases that have an impact on the public's health; and (4) assist in the detection of diseases that could be used as bioweapons.

Local Fiscal Effect: It is anticipated that the impact on local health departments would be minimal, and absorbable within existing resources since personnel are already in place to report communicable diseases. Nevertheless, if the reporting requirements place a greater than expected demand on existing resources, the local health departments may experience a more significant impact.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Community Public Health Administration, Laboratories Administration, AIDS Administration), Garrett County, Prince George's County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader – February 18, 2001
ncs/jr

Analysis by: Sandra Steele

Direct Inquiries to:
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510