

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 71 (Chairman, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee)
 (Departmental – Health and Mental Hygiene)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

Environmental Matters

**Alcohol and Drug Administration - Certification and Licensure Requirements -
 Alcohol and Drug Counseling**

This departmental bill allows the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (board) to waive certification requirements for a certified professional counselor-alcohol and drug, a certified associate counselor-alcohol and drug, or a certified supervised counselor-alcohol and drug if the individual files a letter of intent with the board by October 1, 2001, meets the specified criteria, and works in an agency or facility that is either accredited or certified. Also, an individual may practice alcohol and drug counseling or clinical alcohol and drug counseling without certification or licensure for a limited period of time while fulfilling the experiential or course of study requirements for certification, if the individual is working as a trainee “under the supervision of an approved alcohol and drug supervisor.”

This bill takes effect July 1, 2001.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues could increase by \$35,000 in FY 2002 due to the collection of fees from individuals who become certified under this waiver. Future year revenues reflect bi-annual recertification and a 2% growth rate in the number of certificates issued.

(in dollars)	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
SF Revenue	\$35,000	\$700	\$36,400	\$2,100	\$37,800
Expenditure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Effect	\$35,000	\$700	\$36,400	\$2,100	\$37,800

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law: In order to be eligible for certification as a professional counselor-alcohol and drug, a certified associate counselor-alcohol and drug, or a certified supervised counselor-alcohol and drug, the law requires the completion of a minimum number of credit hours in alcohol and drug counselor training in addition to educational and other requirements. Existing law created a waiver to some of these requirements, allowing alcohol and drug abuse counselors who were otherwise ineligible for certification to become certified so long as they filed a letter of intent by July 1, 1998.

Current law does not address provisions for trainee status.

Background: The Maryland Psychologists Act requires anyone who provides counseling services to be licensed or certified by October 1, 2001. Existing law created a grandfathering period wherein alcohol and drug abuse counselors could become certified if they filed a letter of intent by July 1, 1998. According to DHMH there was uncertainty as to whether certification was going to become mandatory. Consequently, many of the counselors missed this opportunity. If these individuals do not become certified by October 1, 2001, they will not be able to work as alcohol and drug counselors until they fulfill all of the certification requirements called for under the law. In order to avoid this dilemma, this bill reopens the grandfather period from July 1, 2001 to October 1, 2001, and in doing so allows otherwise ineligible individuals to become certified without having to complete all of the normal certification training requirements, and modifies the waiver criteria to include a greater number of currently practicing clinicians.

As of October 1, 2001, two years' experience in treating alcohol and/or drug abusing clients will be required before a person who is training to become an alcohol and drug counselor can practice.

State Revenues: Special fund revenues could increase by \$35,000 in fiscal 2002. This estimate assumes that the passage of this bill would increase the number of eligible applicants for certification by 200 in fiscal 2002, at a fee of \$175 each. The estimate also

assumes bi-annual recertification and a 2% annual growth rate in the number of certificates issued.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader – January 19, 2001
jm/jr Revised – Enrolled Bill – April 12, 2001

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