

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2001 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 564      (Delegates Petzold and Hecht)  
Judiciary

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**Crimes - Child Abuse - Abuse by a School Employee**

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This bill includes “school employees” under provisions prohibiting child sexual abuse.

A school employee is defined as a paid or unpaid worker at the educational institution a child attended at the time of the abuse who within the previous year had some supervisory authority over the child.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures due to the bill’s incarceration penalty provisions. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** The bill would not materially affect local operations or finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Sexual abuse is defined as any act that involves sexual molestation or exploitation of a child by a parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a child, or by any household or family member.

A person who is convicted of child abuse, including sexual abuse of a child, is guilty of a felony and subject to a maximum term of imprisonment of 15 years. If the victim dies, the maximum term is increased to 30 years.

**Background:** The Division of Correction (DOC) advises that in fiscal 2000 there were 69 intakes for child abuse.

**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures could increase minimally as a result of the applicable incarceration penalties due to more people being committed to DOC facilities. The number of additional people convicted as a result of the bill is expected to be minimal.

Persons serving a sentence longer than one year are incarcerated in DOC facilities. Currently, the average total cost per inmate, including overhead, is estimated at \$1,700 per month. This bill alone, however, should not create the need for additional beds, personnel, or facilities. Excluding overhead, the average cost of housing a new DOC inmate (including medical care and variable costs) is \$288 per month.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Division of Correction), Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader – March 2, 2001  
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