

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

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 447 (Delegate O'Donnell, *et al.*)

Judiciary

Judicial Proceedings

**Calvert County Child Visitation and Exchange Monitoring Pilot Program**

This bill establishes the Calvert County Child Visitation and Exchange Monitoring Pilot Program in the Circuit Court for Calvert County. The purpose of the program is to authorize the Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court for Calvert County to enter into contracts with eligible providers to provide “exchange monitoring” and supervised visitation services to parents and children in Calvert County in order to promote and encourage healthy parent and child relationships between noncustodial or joint custodial parents and their children, while ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of children.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures could increase by as much as \$75,000 in FY 2002, which reflects the bill’s October 1, 2001 effective date, if full funding for the Calvert County Child Visitation and Exchange Monitoring Pilot Program is provided by the State. Out-year expenditures reflect annualization and the bill’s September 30, 2004 sunset.

(in dollars)	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	75,000	80,100	80,100	20,000	0
Net Effect	(\$75,000)	(\$80,100)	(\$80,100)	(\$20,000)	\$0

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

**Local Effect:** Calvert County Child Visitation and Exchange Monitoring Pilot Program Fund revenues and expenditures could increase by as much as \$75,000 in FY 2002, by \$80,100 in FY 2003 and FY 2004, and by \$20,000 in FY 2005.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal.

## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** Exchange monitoring is defined as a third person supervision of the movement of a child from the custodial to the noncustodial parent or between joint custodial parents at the start of a visit and at the end of a visit as required under a court order or with the mutual consent of the child's parents for the purposes of facilitating a visitation. The administrative judge must develop a fee schedule for exchange monitoring services that is applicable only to parents who voluntarily participate in the program and incorporates a sliding scale of fees based on each parent's ability to pay.

The bill also creates the Calvert County Child Visitation and Exchange Monitoring Pilot Program Fund, a special, nonlapsing fund consisting of moneys appropriated in the State budget to the fund, investment earnings, revenue generated by fees for exchange monitoring services, and any other moneys from any governmental or private source.

The Governor may provide for a deficiency appropriation to the fund in the State budget for fiscal 2001, and may appropriate moneys to the fund in the State budget for fiscal 2002 and each year thereafter.

The administrative judge must report to the General Assembly on specified matters relating to the program by October 1, 2002 and annually thereafter.

The bill sunsets September 30, 2004.

**Current Law:** None applicable.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Calvert County has previously estimated one-time start-up costs for the program created by the bill at \$15,000, which includes office furniture and supplies. Ongoing costs are estimated at \$80,050 on an annual basis, which includes salary expense for a case manager, visitation supervisors, and security personnel; lease expense; and costs for miscellaneous supplies. (Ongoing costs would be \$60,038 in fiscal 2002 due to the bill's October 1, 2001 effective date, and \$20,013 in fiscal 2005 due to the bill's September 30, 2004 sunset.) The Governor's proposed fiscal 2002 budget does not include funding to implement this bill. Calvert County did not provide information regarding expected fee levels or the amount of expected revenues from fees.

## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** This bill was introduced during the 2000 session as HB 772. It passed the House, but no further action was taken on the bill after the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee held a hearing.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Calvert County, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader – February 16, 2001  
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