

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1107 (Delegate Kelly)
 Health and Government Operations

Counselors-Alcohol and Drug - Certification - Waiver Requirements Deadlines

This bill extends from October 1, 2001 to October 1, 2003 the date by which a supervised counselor-alcohol and drug, an associate counselor-alcohol and drug, or a professional counselor-alcohol and drug may apply to the Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists for a waiver from certification or requirements to receive certification.

The bill is effective July 1, 2003.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues would increase by \$122,500 in FY 2004 due to 700 new certifications for alcohol and drug counselors. No effect on expenditures.

(in dollars)	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
SF Revenue	\$122,500	\$0	\$105,000	\$0	\$105,000
Expenditure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Effect	\$122,500	\$0	\$105,000	\$0	\$105,000

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal effect on small businesses providing counseling services.

Analysis

Current Law: The waiver period from certification requirements ended October 1, 2001. Under current law, the board will receive the revenues estimated in this note for fiscal 2004 in fiscal 2003 because the waiver period has already expired, and any new applicants will be required to pay fees for certification in fiscal 2003. If the waiver is extended, the fee will not be paid until fiscal 2004.

State Fiscal Effect: Special fund revenues will increase by \$122,500 in fiscal 2004 due to 700 counselors being certified with a \$175 certification fee. Out-year revenues will reflect a \$150 recertification fee and the biennial license cycle.

The board has currently granted certification to 3,000 alcohol and drug counselors. The board estimates that an additional 700 counselors will seek certification under the waiver program. These applicants would be required to pay a certification fee and meet other requirements as soon as the waiver period expired.

One position is currently dedicated to alcohol and drug counselors. When recertification occurs for all of the alcohol and drug counselors, the board has borrowed staff time from other functions within the board. The workload vastly exceeds the resources dedicated to certification and inspection of alcohol and drug counselors.

The department indicates that special fund expenditures could increase by an estimated \$63,923 in fiscal 2004. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one administrative officer and one-half health occupations investigator III to review certification applications and investigate complaints against alcohol and drug counselors. However, this bill does not explicitly create additional duties for the board; it simply delays the receipt of revenues from certifications. The Department of Legislative Services advises that the bill itself will not require additional personnel.

Small Business Effect: This bill will permit small businesses that offer counseling services to delay payment of certification fees until fiscal 2004.

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 - March 17, 2003
lc/jr

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