

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 748
Economic Matters

(Delegate Sophocleus, *et al.*)

Workers' Compensation - Heart Disease or Hypertension Presumption - Anne Arundel County Deputy Sheriffs

This bill extends to Anne Arundel County deputy sheriffs the presumption of compensability under the workers' compensation law for heart disease or hypertension if the heart disease or hypertension results in partial or total disability or death. The bill also requires any workers' compensation benefits paid be in addition to qualified retirement benefits deputy sheriffs receive.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: This bill would not materially affect State government operations. Anne Arundel County is self-insured for workers' compensation.

Local Effect: Potential significant expenditure increase due to inclusion of deputy sheriffs in heart disease and hypertension presumption for workers' compensation.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The presumption of compensability for heart disease and hypertension extends to a paid police officer employed by an airport authority, a county, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, a municipality of the State; a deputy sheriff of Montgomery County and Prince George's County; or a correctional officer of Prince George's County.

Background: The Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s Office is primarily responsible for serving civil processes, providing court security, and transporting prisoners. The sheriff is authorized to appoint deputy sheriffs. There are currently 76 deputy sheriffs in Anne Arundel County.

Applicants for deputy sheriff in Anne Arundel County generally fall into one of two categories: (1) retired police officers working on a second career; and (2) young applicants who use the training to gain preference for a position with some other full-service police department. Over half of the county’s current deputy sheriffs were hired at age 40 or above. The age demographics of Anne Arundel County deputy sheriffs are shown below.

<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
60 or over	5	6.6%
50 to 59	32	42.1%
40 to 49	17	22.4%
30 to 39	20	26.3%
Under 30	<u>2</u>	2.6%
Total	76	

Local Expenditures: Anne Arundel County estimates that two or three deputy sheriffs may be eligible. If so, the cost to the county will be between \$1-3 million. This estimate reflects initial claims and surviving spouse benefits. The Department of Legislative Services is unable to concur with this estimate.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Uninsured Employers’ Fund, Workers’ Compensation Commission, Injured Workers’ Insurance Fund, Subsequent Injury Fund, Anne Arundel County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 25, 2003
lc/jr

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