

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2004 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 1141

(Delegate Zirkin, *et al.*)

Judiciary

Judicial Proceedings

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Juvenile Services - Step-Down Aftercare

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This bill requires the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to establish a program of “step-down aftercare” for all children discharged from committed DJS residential placements. In addition, by December 31, 2004, DJS must report on the population of children who are in need of intensive and high-need aftercare supervision, the staffing ratios for these populations, the staffing levels that would be needed to adequately serve these populations, and a timetable for adequately serving the populations.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** DJS currently provides aftercare services to children exiting committed residential placements. The reporting requirements could be accomplished with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** “Step-down aftercare” is defined as a network of programs providing education and rehabilitation; and services and treatment to ease the transition of children from the custody of DJS to their homes and communities. Each child discharged from a committed residential placement must receive step-down aftercare for a period to be determined by DJS. The child’s aftercare must be monitored by step-down aftercare staff, who must prepare an aftercare plan for each child. Step-down aftercare staff must

file monthly progress reports for each child on step-down aftercare and annual reports on outcomes for all children on step-down aftercare.

**Current Law:** DJS is the central administrative department for juvenile aftercare services.

**Background:** A September 2002 report by the former Department of Juvenile Justice, *Aftercare Strategy*, discussed the use of aftercare teams for high-risk and/or high-need youths. The report suggested that aftercare ratios of 30 youths for a team of two casemanagers would be maintained in targeted areas. The report also notes that, in future years, DJS would like to attain a ratio of 20 high-risk youths per team of two caseworkers. **Exhibit 1** shows the percentage of youths on probation or in aftercare for whom DJS met current case management ratio goals.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Attainment of Case Management Ratio Goals**  
**Actual Fiscal 2002 and 2003 Data**

<u>Program</u>	<u>Case Management Ratio Goal</u>	<u>FY 2002 Ratio Attainment</u>	<u>FY 2003 Ratio Attainment</u>
Informal supervision	50:1	19%	49%
Low/moderate risk probation/aftercare	30:1	60%	39%
High risk probation and aftercare	30:2	30%	14%
Intensive aftercare	30:2	100%	100%

Source: *Fiscal 2005 Maryland Operating Budget Book*

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In addition to case management ratios, the aftercare report noted some additional strategies planned for aftercare. These include the development of treatment service plans for youths in aftercare; standardized youth assessments at regular intervals for educational, health, substance abuse, and family needs; and the formation of youth support teams involving family members, community agencies, service delivery agencies, and other neighborhood resources.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 767 (Senator Giannetti) – Judicial Proceedings.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 3, 2004  
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