

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 500
Judiciary

(Howard County Delegation)

Howard County - Marriage License Fee - Increase Ho. Co. 12-05

This bill increases the maximum amount of the additional marriage license fee that the Howard County Council is authorized to set from \$25 to \$50.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: Potential significant increase in Howard County marriage license fee revenues earmarked for battered spouse shelters and domestic violence programs.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The basic statewide marriage license fee is \$10, of which \$5 is retained by the clerk of the circuit court and \$5 is paid into the general fund of the county where the fee is assessed. Except as otherwise specified by law, individual or groups of counties are authorized to set additional marriage license fees of up to \$25. In Howard County, the county council may set, by resolution, an additional fee of up to \$25 for each license to fund battered spouse shelters and domestic violence programs. The clerk pays the additional fees to the Director of Finance monthly.

Howard County currently sets an additional marriage license fee of \$25. The total fee for a marriage license in Howard County is \$35.

Background: The additional marriage license fees charged by the various counties for funding domestic violence programs are as follows.

Exhibit 1
Additional Marriage License Fees by County

<i>County</i>	<i>Additional License Fee</i>
Allegany	\$25
Anne Arundel	\$45
Baltimore City	\$25
Baltimore County	\$25
Calvert	\$45
Caroline	\$15
Carroll	\$25
Cecil	\$20
Charles	\$30
Dorchester	\$25
Frederick	\$65
Garrett	\$40
Harford	\$30
Howard	\$25
Kent	\$25
Montgomery	\$45
Prince George's	\$45
Queen Anne's	\$25
Somerset	\$5
St, Mary's	\$15
Talbot	\$25
Washington	\$50
Wicomico	\$10
Worcester	\$25

Local Revenues: There were approximately 1,664 marriage licenses issued in Howard County in 2004. The total marriage license fee is \$35. Of this amount, the clerk of the circuit court and the county each receive \$5 and the domestic violence programs receive \$25. Last year, the domestic violence programs received \$41,600 from Howard County. To the extent that the county commissioners increase the additional marriage license fee

as a result of the bill, revenues payable to battered spouse and domestic violence programs would increase.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 8, 2005
mp/jr

Analysis by: Kineta A. Rotan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510