

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 901 (Delegates Rosenberg and Branch)
 Appropriations

Family Investment Program - Domestic Violence and Depression Screening Pilot Program

This bill requires the Secretary of Human Resources, cooperating with the local director of social services in Baltimore City, to establish a pilot program to screen adult and minor parent applicants for, and recipients of, Family Investment Program (FIP) assistance for indications of domestic violence or depression. The pilot program’s total annual cost may not exceed \$250,000.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2006 and terminates June 30, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures would increase by \$250,000 in FY 2007 to implement the pilot program. Future years assume a stable amount of funding in FY 2008 and 2009 and the program terminating at the end of FY 2009. No effect on revenues.

(in dollars)	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	250,000	250,000	250,000	0	0
Net Effect	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Under the pilot program, a mental health specialist must assess the need of the specified individual for treatment resulting from domestic violence or depression at the initial application for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) or when it is considered appropriate by the FIP case manager of the local department of social services. The mental health specialist must screen the applicant or recipient to expose any potential barriers, such as domestic violence or depression, the applicant or recipient may have in obtaining employment. The specialist must inform the individual of the availability of services or treatment.

If the screening reveals that the individual shows signs of domestic violence or depression, the specialist must:

- conduct or refer the individual for a detailed assessment;
- refer the individual for appropriate services;
- forward the individual's name, with the individual's approval, to the appropriate service provider; and
- obtain any necessary treatment information from the service provider.

The specialist may notify the FIP case manager if an individual:

- is referred for appropriate services;
- is waiting for the appropriate services to become available;
- is enrolled in a service program; or
- has successfully completed a service program.

The specialist also may notify the FIP case manager about the individual's ongoing treatment status.

An individual who participates in the pilot program must receive a full TCA benefit as long as the individual meets the other TCA eligibility requirements. A participating individual also may be exempt from work activity requirements for a period of time determined by the local department of social services in consultation with the specialist.

The Secretary must report annually to specified legislative committees on the pilot program's status.

Current Law: An adult applying for or receiving FIP assistance must meet specified requirements. Among them, all applicants and recipients must be assessed to determine:

- the reasons for applying for or continuing to rely on assistance;
- the educational level, job skills and readiness, and interests to evaluate appropriate work activities; and
- personal and family resources available to facilitate independence.

Individuals receiving FIP assistance must participate in specified work activities.

Background: TCA provides monetary help to needy families with dependent children when available resources do not fully address the families' needs. Generally, families with incomes above 40% of the federal poverty level are ineligible for TCA.

The Department of Human Resources advises that the Baltimore City Department of Social Services operates a program citywide that is similar to the pilot program the bill would establish. The city's program began as a pilot program in its Southwest Family Investment Center four years ago. Under Baltimore City's existing program, in fiscal 2005 eligibility case managers referred 841 Baltimore City clients to an outside contractor for screening and services at a total cost of \$452,287, or \$537.80 per client.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures would increase by \$250,000 in fiscal 2007 for the pilot program. At an anticipated cost per participant of \$537.80, 464 FIP applicants and recipients could participate in the program annually. Individuals would be referred for screening and services to an outside contractor that would provide those services. Future years assume a stable level of funding and a stable number of FIP applicants and recipients participating in the program in fiscal 2008 and 2009, with the program terminating at the end of fiscal 2009. General fund expenditures are assumed because some FIP applicants would not be eligible for federal funds but would receive services under the pilot program and federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds Maryland receives are not sufficient to cover the pilot program expenditures as well.

Additional Comments: Although the bill requires the local director of social services in Baltimore City to provide expertise in establishing this pilot program, it does not specify in which jurisdiction(s) the program would be established.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Baltimore City, Department of Legislative Services

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ncs/ljm

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