

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 975
Judiciary

(Delegate Barkley, *et al.*)

Public Safety - Correctional Officers - Minimum Age

This bill provides that the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services must adopt regulations requiring that, beginning October 1, 2006, a correctional officer hired by the Division of Correction (DOC) be at least 21 years old.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal effect on DOC operations and finances. No effect on revenues.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Under current regulations, an applicant for a State or local correctional officer position must be at least 18 years old, be a U.S. citizen or resident alien (and submit proof of status), and possess at least a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) certificate. A college degree may be accepted in place of the high school diploma.

State Fiscal Effect: This bill should not have a significant fiscal or operational impact on DOC. DOC hiring data shows relatively few correctional officers under the age of 21. Of the current 4,881 correctional officers in DOC, 173 are under that age. However, the extent to which this bill could affect the agency's ability to fill future vacancies cannot be reliably predicted. Any prolonged vacancies could lead to additional overtime costs.

Exhibit 1 show the systemwide interviews and hiring done by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) over the past three years.

Exhibit 1
DPSCS Correctional Officer Interviews and Hires
Including Applicants Under 21
Calendar 2003 – 2005

	<u>Applicants Interviewed</u>	<u>Applicants Hired</u>
Calendar 2003		
Total	1,474	608
Under 21	145	25
Calendar 2004		
Total	2,130	798
Under 21	302	152
Calendar 2005		
Total	2,573	987
Under 21	523	219

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services,
Department of Legislative Services

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mll/jr

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