

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 653
Judiciary

(Prince George's County Delegation)

Judicial Proceedings

Prince George's County - Marriage License Fee – Increase
PG 411-07

This bill increases the maximum amount of the additional marriage license fee that the Prince George's County Council is authorized to set from \$45 to \$60. The clerk of the court is required to pay the proceeds from the additional fee to the Director of Finance for Prince George's County who must distribute the proceeds on a monthly basis to the Family Crisis Center of Prince George's County.

If the Family Crisis Center of Prince George's County changes its name or objectives or ceases to exist, the proceeds must be used to fund battered spouse shelters and domestic violence programs.

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: Prince George's County revenues from marriage fees could increase by \$75,000 annually. Expenditures would not be directly affected.

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 Prince George’s County, the county council may set, by resolution, an additional fee of up to \$45 for each license to fund battered spouse shelters and domestic violence programs. The clerk pays the additional fees to the director of finance monthly. The Prince George’s County Executive is required to make available an annual report by December 1 on the disposition of the proceeds from the additional marriage license fee during the previous fiscal year. Prince George’s County currently sets an additional marriage license fee of \$45. The total fee for a marriage license in Prince George’s County is \$55.

Background: The maximum additional marriage license fees that may be charged by the various counties for funding domestic violence programs are shown in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1
Maximum Additional Marriage License Fees by County

<u>County</u>	<u>Additional License Fee</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Additional License Fee</u>
Allegany	\$25	Harford	\$40
Anne Arundel	\$45	Howard	\$50
Baltimore City	\$25	Kent	\$25
Baltimore	\$15	Montgomery	\$45
Calvert	\$55	Prince George’s	\$45
Caroline	\$15	Queen Anne’s	\$25
Carroll	\$25	Somerset	\$25
Cecil	\$20	St, Mary’s	\$25
Charles	\$35	Talbot	\$25
Dorchester	\$25	Washington	\$50
Frederick	\$65	Wicomico	\$25
Garrett	\$40	Worcester	\$25

Prince George’s County advises that the Family Crisis Center of Prince George’s County is the only domestic violence program funded by the county. In addition to the proceeds from the additional marriage license, the county will also provide \$119,000 in general funds to the Family Crisis Center for fiscal 2007.

Local Revenues: There were 5,424 marriage licenses issued in Prince George's County in fiscal 2006. The total marriage license fee is \$55. Of this amount, the clerk of the circuit court and the county each received \$5 and the domestic violence programs received \$45. In fiscal 2006, domestic violence programs received \$244,080 from Prince George's County. The county estimates that 5,333 marriage licenses will be issued in fiscal 2007 and the director of finance will allocate \$240,000 to the Family Crisis Center.

Prince George's County advises that for fiscal 2008, it expects to issue 5,000 marriage licenses. With a maximum charge of \$70 per license, the county could receive an additional \$75,000 (\$15 per license) to allocate to the Family Crisis Center of Prince George's County under the provisions of this bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 20, 2007
mll/hlb Revised - Enrolled Bill - May 4, 2007

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