

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 733
Ways and Means

(Delegate Barve, *et al.*)

Elections - Election Judges - Shifts at Polling Places on Election Day

This bill specifies that a local election director may appoint an election judge to serve for all or part of a day at a polling place on election day. A local board must apportion the compensation for an election judge on the basis of each day or part of a day that the election judge actually serves.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: The bill's changes would not materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each local election director, with the approval of the local board, appoints election judges for each polling place for a term that begins 13 weeks before a statewide primary election and continues until 13 weeks before the next statewide primary election, unless the person is excused for good cause or is not needed for a special election held during the term.

Similar to the bill, under State law a local board may adopt guidelines that provide for the appointment of an election judge, other than a chief judge, to serve for less than a full day and for the judge to be compensated on a pro rata basis.

At least four election judges must be provided to staff each polling place, though in a precinct with fewer than 200 registered voters, the local board only must provide two election judges. One or two election judges assigned to each polling place are designated chief election judges that supervise the other judges. Each judge must take and subscribe to a written oath prescribed in the Maryland Constitution.

Background: A number of jurisdictions experienced problems with recruitment of election judges during the 2006 elections. Baltimore City also experienced a substantial problem during the 2006 primary of election judges not showing up for work, which led to a number of polling places opening late.

Among the counties, chief election judge salaries generally range from \$120 to \$300 with a median salary of \$175. Salaries for regular election judges range from \$110 to \$250 with a median salary of \$145. Compensation for training is generally in the range of \$25 in most counties, though some consider training to be compensated for as part of the judges' election day salary.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Caroline County, Howard County, State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2007
mll/jr

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