

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 359

(Senator Zirkin)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

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**Department of Juvenile Services - Reorganization and Regionalization**

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This bill requires the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to provide services on a regional basis and establishes operational requirements the department must meet in providing services.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Potential significant increase in State operating and capital expenditures to construct and operate new facilities and staff regional operations, depending on the number and configuration of the operating regions.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The bill requires DJS to deliver services on a regional basis through at least four operational regions. Each region must include at least one secure facility solely for children pending court disposition and children awaiting placement after disposition. The region also must include committed facilities for the diagnosis, care, training, education, and rehabilitation of children in DJS custody. A region may include a nonpublic facility only if that facility has a successful record of providing effective care based on the standards of the department. A child may be placed outside of his or her region only if required specialized services are not available in the region.

The bill also specifies that DJS programming must ensure the safety of the community and the child, hold children accountable for their actions, and assist children in developing core competencies. The programming must be delivered through a regional system of facilities that are operationally separate. Each facility owned by the department may serve no more than 48 children at one time.

The bill also requires DJS to submit to the Department of Budget and Management a revised facilities master plan by November 1, 2007 that reflects the required changes.

**Current Law:** DJS acts as the central administrative department for juvenile diagnostic, training, detention, and rehabilitation institutions. DJS operates facilities to diagnose, care for, train, educate, and properly rehabilitate children who need these services. DJS is also authorized to contract with private providers to place children in group homes or other facilities that meet State licensing criteria.

Although the Secretary of Juvenile Services has the authority to designate operational regions, it is not required by State law.

**Background:** Pursuant to Chapter 431 of 2004, DJS contracted with Development Services Group to complete a Facilities Master Plan. Phase I of the Facilities Master Plan (*Gap Analysis Report*) divided the State into five operational areas (**Exhibit 1**).

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Current DJS Program and Service Areas**

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|-----------|--|
| Area I:   | Baltimore City   |
| Area II:  | Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard  |
| Area III: | Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, Washington                                   |
| Area IV:  | Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester |
| Area V:   | Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, St. Mary's                            |

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Phase 2 of the Facilities Master Plan proposed dividing the State into four operational regions (**Exhibit 2**). DJS recommends that each region contain shelter care, secure detention, and a youth center. The plan recommends 15 projects over 10 years with a

total estimated cost for design, construction, and equipment of \$111.8 million. Eleven of the 15 projects involve renovation or replacement of existing facilities.

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**Exhibit 2**  
**Implementation Report Proposed DJS Operational Regions**

- Region 1: Greater Baltimore (Baltimore City and Baltimore County)
  - Region 2: Southern Maryland (Anne Arundel, Prince George’s, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s)
  - Region 3: Western Maryland (Montgomery, Howard, Carroll, Frederick, Washington, Allegany, and Garrett)
  - Region 4: Eastern Shore (Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, Harford, and Worcester)
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DJS currently divides services among five program and service areas.

**State Expenditures:** Additional facilities may be required to meet the bill’s requirement that each region have appropriate facilities to serve youth in the region unless specialized services are otherwise unavailable. At a minimum, facilities would be needed to address bed shortages already identified in the four regions recommended in the Facilities Master Plan:

	<b><u>Region 1</u></b> <b><u>Central</u></b>	<b><u>Region 2</u></b> <b><u>Southern</u></b>	<b><u>Region 3</u></b> <b><u>Western</u></b>	<b><u>Region 4</u></b> <b><u>Eastern</u></b>
Nonsecure		-40		-29
Youth Centers	-65	-35		-27
Secure Committed		-15	-17	-7
Group Home				-6
Substance Abuse		-26		

Several new facilities may also be required to meet the bill’s maximum standard of 48-bed committed facilities. DJS advises that secure committed facilities could be considered a specialized function, which would reduce capital and operational resource requirements. If other functions were considered specialized services, it is possible that those services could be provided on a multi-region or statewide basis and further reduce

the need for new facilities. Construction costs are estimated at \$4 million for each facility, with a minimum of \$1.5 million in annual operating costs. These costs could be partially offset if committed youth currently placed in per diem arrangements were instead placed in newly constructed facilities.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill was introduced in the 2006 session as HB 1417 and a favorable report from the House Judiciary Committee was adopted, but the House of Delegates did not consider the bill on third reading.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Juvenile Services, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 28, 2007  
ncs/rhh Revised - Senate Third Reader - April 9, 2007

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