

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 83

(Chair, Finance Committee)(By Request - Departmental -
Human Resources)

Finance

Appropriations

Human Services - Child Welfare Workforce

This departmental bill requires the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to develop and implement mandatory standards to exempt newly hired casework staff with specified experience or an appropriate license from participation in a preservice training program. A caseworker who is exempt from the training program but fails a competency test must participate in the training program and pass the competency test before being granted permanent employment status.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal reduction in training expenditures for the Department of Human Resources. The actual reduction depends on the number of caseworkers who are eligible for exemption and pass a competency test. Assuming 10% of newly employed caseworkers become exempt from the preservice training requirement, State expenditures could decrease by \$73,400 annually. In addition, local departments of social services will be able to assign cases to some newly employed caseworkers on a timelier basis.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Human Resources has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: All newly employed casework staff are hired provisionally and must complete a 40-hour preservice training program and pass a competency test before being granted permanent employment status.

Background: DHR advises that this bill will streamline the hiring process for some experienced caseworkers and prevent the department from using its time and resources to train staff who are already experienced. Local departments of social services will be able to assign cases sooner and fill vacant positions with experienced workers in a timelier manner.

State Fiscal Effect: DHR will avoid costs associated with training some newly employed caseworkers who will be exempt under the bill's provisions. Although the number of caseworkers who will be exempt cannot be reliably predicted beforehand, DHR estimates savings of \$1,836 per trainee. This estimate is based on training costs of \$122.37 per day for 15 days of training per caseworker. DHR further advises that approximately 400 people are trained per year. *For illustrative purposes only*, if the bill exempts 10% or 40 individuals from training, DHR could save \$73,440 in training expenditures each year.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources; Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Carroll, Harford, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 20, 2009
JB/hlb

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Human Services – Child Welfare Workforce

BILL NUMBER: SB 83

PREPARED BY: Department of Human Resources

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed legislation will have no impact on small business in Maryland.