

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 634
Appropriations

(Delegate Robinson, *et al.*)

State Personnel - Fees Charged by State Employees - Prohibition

This bill prohibits a State employee from charging a fee for assisting another person with the completion of an application form or other document required by the unit of State government for which the employee works. The prohibition applies regardless of whether or not the assistance is provided during the employee's regular workday.

The bill applies to all employees of all units of the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative branches of State government, including units with an independent personnel system.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Although State law generally prohibits employees from intentionally using the prestige of office or public position for their private gain, there is currently no statutory provision prohibiting a State employee from charging a fee for assisting another person with documents required by the employee's unit of government.

Thus, State employees may be charging fees for helping to complete application forms, especially in cases where an applicant has limited English proficiency.

The General Assembly establishes that the inability to speak, understand, or read English is a barrier that prevents access to essential public services provided by State departments, agencies, and programs. Thus, it is the policy of the State that its departments, agencies, and programs must take reasonable steps to provide equal access to public services for individuals with limited English proficiency. While this policy relates to the provision of public services, it does not extend to persons applying for employment with the State.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Maryland Department of Transportation, University System of Maryland, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 18, 2010
mlm/ljm

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