

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 575 (Senator Zirkin)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Juvenile Services - Maryland Rising Program - Volunteer Mentors

This bill requires the Maryland Rising Program to provide a volunteer mentor for any child who has spent at least 30 days in a committed placement. The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) is required to adopt regulations to implement the program.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$520,700 in FY 2011 to reimburse mentors for costs associated with background checks and to hire additional staff to recruit mentors. Future years reflect annualization and inflation. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	520,700	583,100	610,600	639,500	669,900
Net Effect	(\$520,700)	(\$583,100)	(\$610,600)	(\$639,500)	(\$669,900)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Chapter 526 of 2007 established the Maryland Rising mentoring program, which required DJS to *attempt* to provide a volunteer mentor for each child in the State who has spent at least 30 days in a committed placement. DJS must develop a statewide network of groups, including State agencies that will attempt to recruit a volunteer mentor for each child in the program. Mentors must have frequent

contact with the children to whom they are assigned and may provide counseling, tutoring, life skills training, and other support services.

One of the responsibilities of the Community and Family Partnerships Unit within DJS is to enhance volunteer and mentoring programs. DJS advises that there is currently one half-time position devoted to mentoring.

Background Checks

DJS advises that it requires every volunteer to have a State and national background check. The Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) Central Repository is established within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) to collect, manage, and disseminate Maryland Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) for criminal justice and noncriminal justice (*e.g.*, employment and licensing) purposes.

CJIS is a fingerprint-supported system for positive identification. Fingerprints can be taken at many police departments, private organizations that have been certified by CJIS, and the CJIS Customer Service Center at Reisterstown Road Plaza in Baltimore. Fingerprints may also be taken at Motor Vehicle Administration “Hazmat” sites. The CJIS Customer Service Center charges a \$20 fingerprinting fee and the Maryland State Police charges \$5.00 per fingerprint card to offset the cost of taking the fingerprints. Local police departments and private organizations charge varying fees for fingerprinting. One fingerprint card is required for a Maryland-only CHRI check; two fingerprint cards (Maryland/FBI) are needed for a State and national CHRI check.

The following are representative costs to an applicant:

<u>State and National CHRI Check</u>	<u>Maryland CHRI Check</u>
\$19.25 FBI fee	\$18.00 CJIS fee
18.00 CJIS fee	<u>20.00</u> Fingerprinting fee
<u>20.00</u> Fingerprinting fee	\$38.00 Total
\$57.25 Total	

State Fiscal Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$520,700 in fiscal 2011, which accounts for the bill’s October 1, 2010 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring eight resource specialists to coordinate the process of recruiting mentors for approximately 1,800 youth. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses. The estimate also includes costs for reimbursing mentors for fingerprinting costs, as DJS requires a background check on all volunteers, including mentors.

Positions	8
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$414,133
Background Checks	68,850
Operating Expenses	<u>37,740</u>
Total Fiscal 2011 Expenditures:	\$520,723

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with 4.4% annual increases and 3% employee turnover and 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses. Future year expenditures for fingerprinting costs assumes a constant rate of reimbursement and that there will be 25% mentor turnover per year, resulting in reimbursement for 450 additional background checks per year for new mentor applicants.

As illustrated above, the cost for a State and national background check is \$57.25. DJS advises that it currently reimburses applicants \$38.25 for background checks. The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) notes that some prospective mentors may be deterred from applying if they are required to pay out-of-pocket for the remaining fees associated with background checks.

DJS estimated additional program costs of at least \$937,440 annually to reflect transportation for youth in the community and entertainment costs. DLS advises that a less ambitious program could meet the requirements of the bill with the lower expenditure totals estimated in this analysis.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Legislative Services

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ncs/kdm

Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510