

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1028
Appropriations

(Delegates Bartlett and Jenkins)

Local Correctional Facilities - Inmates - Fees for Medical and Dental Visits

This bill increases the maximum fees that may be charged for medical and dental visits for individuals incarcerated in a local correctional facility. The fees must be deducted from an inmate's account maintained by the detention center's managing official at a rate of \$8 for each visit to an institutional medical unit and \$35 for each visit to an institutional dentist.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Minimal increase in local revenues from higher fees for medical and dental visits for inmates in local correctional facilities. Local governments can track, assess, and collect the fees with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The governing body of each county must establish a reasonable fee, not to exceed \$4, for each visit by an inmate in a local correctional facility to an institutional medical unit or noninstitutional physician, dentist, or optometrist. The per-visit fee must be deducted from an inmate's spending financial account, reserve financial account, or similar account held by the managing official on behalf of the inmate. The fees collected must be deposited in the county's general fund.

These requirements do not apply to a visit by an inmate to a medical unit or a physician, dentist, or optometrist if the visit is:

- required as a part of the intake process;
- required for an initial physical examination;
- due to a referral by a nurse or physician's assistant;
- provided during a follow-up visit that is initiated by a medical professional from the local correctional facility;
- initiated by a medical or mental health staff member of the local correctional facility; or
- required for necessary treatment.

Local Revenues: Local government revenues increase minimally from higher fees for medical and dental visits for inmates in local correctional facilities. The increased revenues are estimated at \$1,500 in Cecil County, \$2,000 in Carroll County, and \$15,000 in Harford County. This estimate is based on the following information:

- Harford County collected approximately \$1,650 in the fourth quarter of 2009 from inmates for dental and medical visits, \$250 from dental visits, and \$1,400 from medical visits. On an annualized basis, this amount totals approximately \$6,600.
- Cecil County collected \$668 in fiscal 2009 from inmates which represented 167 dental and medical visits. The county estimates that 15% of the visits were dental related and 85% were medical related. So far in fiscal 2010, the county has collected \$404 from inmates which represent 101 visits.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 810 (Senators Brinkley and Munson) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Montgomery, and St. Mary's counties; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Department of Legislative Services

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