

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1407

(Howard County Delegation)

Judiciary

Judicial Proceedings

Howard County - Orphans' Court Judges - Salary
Ho. Co. 12-13

This bill increases the salaries of the orphans' court judges for Howard County from \$8,000 to \$10,000, and, for the Chief Judge, from \$9,500 to \$11,500. The salary increases take effect at the beginning of the next term of office.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: County expenditures increase by \$4,200 in FY 2015 and by \$7,100 annually thereafter.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each judge of the orphans' court for Howard County receives annual compensation of \$8,000, paid monthly. The annual salary of the Chief Judge is \$9,500, paid monthly. Each judge also receives an expense allowance.

Background: Under the Maryland Constitution, each county elects for a term of four years three judges to the orphans' court of their respective jurisdictions, with the exception of Montgomery and Harford counties where a circuit court judge sits as the orphans' court. The orphans' courts are the State's probate courts. The courts supervise the handling of estates and also have certain jurisdiction over the guardianship of minors and their property.

The salaries of the orphans' court judges in Howard County were last increased under Chapter 85 of 2002 (HB 753) from \$6,380 to \$8,000 and, for the Chief Judge, from \$7,400 to \$9,500.

In Howard County, orphans' court judges are not required to be attorneys; however, an orphans' court judge in the county may practice law during a term of office provided it is in connection with cases outside the jurisdiction of the orphans' court and unrelated to the administration of an estate or guardianship.

Local Fiscal Effect: County expenditures increase by approximately \$4,169 in fiscal 2015 and by \$7,147 annually thereafter. This estimate accounts for the salary increases taking effect in early December 2014, the beginning of the next term of office, and includes fringe benefits.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Register of Wills, Howard County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 11, 2013
mlm/kdm

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