

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 785

(Senator Zucker, *et al.*)

Finance

Appropriations

Foster Youth Summer Internship Program

This bill permanently establishes a Foster Youth Summer Internship Program in the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to provide “foster youth” with training and experience through internships in agencies within the Executive Branch of State government.

The bill takes effect January 1, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: DHR can continue the program using existing resources. Because the internships under the program may be unpaid, any potential expenditures for State agencies participating in the program are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law/Background: Chapters 316 and 317 of 2013 established the Foster Youth Summer Internship Pilot Program. “Foster youth” means an individual who (1) is in out-of-home care under the responsibility of the State or (2) is an adult younger than age 26 and was in out-of-home care under the responsibility of the State on the individual’s eighteenth birthday. To be eligible to participate in an internship, an individual must be a foster youth who is at least age 15.

Pursuant to Chapters 316 and 317, the Secretary of Budget and Management was required to (1) develop and implement the pilot program with the assistance of the Secretary of Human Resources and in consultation with the directors of local departments of social services and (2) coordinate with State agencies to establish internships in State agencies that are open to participants in the program. The pilot program must be established in multiple regions of the State. Internships may be paid or unpaid. A State agency participating in the pilot program may specify requirements for internship applicants and select its interns from among the available applicants. Under current law, the provisions establishing the pilot program terminate December 31, 2016. This bill continues and codifies these requirements, but transfers the primary responsibility for the program to the Secretary of Human Resources. The bill also eliminates references to a “pilot” program.

By October 1, 2019, the Secretary of Human Resources, in consultation with DHR, must report to the Senate Budget and Taxation, the Senate Finance, and the House Appropriations committees on (1) the number of foster youth participating in the program; (2) the location and type of internships in the program; (3) efforts to recruit eligible individuals to participate in the program; and (4) factors that affect program participation.

According to a December 2015 report submitted pursuant to Chapters 316 and 317, there were 6 pilot program participants in 2014 and 11 in 2015. Most of the internships were with DHR within local departments of social services; however, others were sponsored by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation and the Maryland State Police. The report noted that due to the confidentiality of individuals in foster care, the Department of Budget and Management had to rely entirely on DHR for outreach, recruiting, and all communication with pilot program participants. The report also stated that because internships were generally unpaid, the pilot program was at a disadvantage in competing with other paid internship opportunities and that feedback from foster youth indicated little interest in unpaid work.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1162 (Delegate Reznik) - Appropriations.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 8, 2016
min/jc

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