

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 61

(Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee)(By Request -
Departmental - Human Services)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

**Child Support - Noncustodial Parent Employment Assistance Pilot Program -
Documentation and Reporting**

This departmental bill repeals requirements for the Noncustodial Parent Employment Assistance Pilot Program to (1) document a noncustodial parent's compliance status at 14 days after a consent agreement is effective and (2) evaluate whether participants are employed full time. It also streamlines evaluation criteria by requiring the program's evaluation to be measured in part by the number of participants who are in compliance with their employment plans, instead of by the number of participants who attend the meetings, classes, or workshops specified in their employment plans.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill is procedural in nature and does not affect government finances or operations.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Human Services (DHS) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: Chapter 312 of 2016 established the Noncustodial Parent Employment Assistance Pilot Program in the Child Support Administration (CSA) within DHS. The program's purpose is to provide eligible unemployed or underemployed

noncustodial parents assistance in obtaining employment that will enable the noncustodial parents to achieve economic self-sufficiency and meet their child support obligations. To be eligible to participate in the program, an individual must be (1) a noncustodial parent of a child who is receiving services in Baltimore City under federal law provisions; (2) unable to meet a child support obligation due to the noncustodial parent's unemployment or underemployment; (3) able to work; and (4) subject to the jurisdiction of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. The program terminates September 30, 2019.

Chapter 312 established numerous requirements for noncustodial parents who choose to participate in employment services under the program, including the execution of a consent agreement between the noncustodial parent and CSA that sets forth (1) the noncustodial parent's rights and responsibilities under the program; (2) an employment plan; and (3) the consequences of failure to comply with program requirements. The program must also include intensive case management, including documentation of the noncustodial parent's compliance status at 14, 30, 60, 90, and 180 days after the effective date of the consent agreement.

The Secretary of Human Services must conduct evaluations of the program using specified measures, including the number of participants who attend the meetings, classes, or workshops specified in their employment plans and whether any employment is full time. The Secretary must report to the General Assembly annually on the effectiveness of the program based on the evaluation.

DHS advises that because it takes an average of one to two weeks after enrollment for participants to connect with an employment partner, the 14-day compliance status check is unnecessary as it does not afford the participant enough time to be compliant with any referrals. Furthermore, the data source used to obtain wage data (the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation's Quarterly Wage Data report) does not identify whether employment is full or part time, and that the only way to obtain that information would be from self-reporting by participants, which is not considered reliable for evaluation purposes. Finally, the current practice of employment partners is to indicate only a "yes" or "no" regarding a participant's compliance.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Services; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 15, 2018
mm/jc Third Reader - January 31, 2018

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Child Support – Noncustodial Parent Employment Assistance Pilot Program – Reporting

BILL NUMBER: SB 61

PREPARED BY: Department of Human Services
(Dept./Agency)

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS