

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 669

(Delegate Cullison)

Health and Government Operations

Finance

Health and Human Services Referral System - Modifications

This bill repeals the Health and Human Services Referral Board (HHSRB) and instead requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to assume HHSRB’s duties, in consultation with 2-1-1 Maryland. Funding for 2-1-1 Maryland is subject to an audit by the Office of Legislative Audits. The bill also repeals a limitation on the number of call centers that may be approved by 2-1-1 Maryland in the State. By December 1, 2020, MDH must conduct a cost analysis of the 2-1-1 services provided in the State and report the results to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Chair of the Board of Directors of 2-1-1 Maryland.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MDH general fund expenditures increase by \$76,500 in FY 2021 to hire staff to oversee and consult with 2-1-1 Maryland, as discussed below. Future year expenditures reflect annualization and ongoing costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	76,500	91,800	94,100	97,300	100,700
Net Effect	(\$76,500)	(\$91,800)	(\$94,100)	(\$97,300)	(\$100,700)

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

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Bill Summary: HHSRB oversees the 2-1-1 Maryland call centers and operation of the Health and Human Services Referral System in the State. The board (1) maintains public information available from State agencies, programs, and departments that provide health and human services; (2) supports projects and activities that further 2-1-1 Maryland development; (3) examines and make recommendations to maximize the use of information technology in making 2-1-1 services available throughout the State; (4) evaluates the performance of each call center; (5) makes recommendations to 2-1-1 Maryland regarding the quality of service provided or the performance of call centers; (6) makes recommendations regarding corrective action to be taken by a call center; and (7) develops policies and procedures governing conflict of interest standards for board members. By December 31 each year, the board must report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the activities performed throughout the year. Under the bill, the functions of the board are assumed by MDH.

Under current law, no more than five call centers may be approved by 2-1-1 Maryland to provide 2-1-1 telephone services in the State. The bill repeals this limitation.

Under the bill, MDH must conduct a cost analysis of 2-1-1 services, including a determination regarding the amount of funding required to (1) fully support a statewide 2-1-1 hotline; (2) continue to use 2-1-1 as the primary information and referral number in the State; and (3) increase enforcement of the requirement that a unit of State government that provides health and human services consult with 2-1-1 Maryland if the unit establishes a public information telephone line or hotline.

Background: The three-digit number 2-1-1 is established in statute as the primary information and referral telephone number for health and human services in the State. 2-1-1 Maryland is a private, nonprofit organization that maintains an information and referral service network that is available to Maryland residents via telephone and Internet. 2-1-1 Maryland offers 24/7 guidance in accessing health, crisis, and social services. Currently, no more than five call centers may be approved by 2-1-1 Maryland to provide 2-1-1 services in the State.

HHSRB comprises one member of the Senate of Maryland; one member of the House of Delegates; the secretaries of Human Services, Health, Information Technology, and Aging (or the secretaries' designees); a representative of the Office of Homeland Security; a representative of 2-1-1 Maryland; a representative of each 2-1-1 Maryland call center; a representative of the Maryland Child Care Resource Network; a representative of the Maryland State Association of United Ways; and two members of the public with experience in telecommunications. HHSRB is currently staffed by the Maryland State Association of United Ways and 2-1-1 Maryland, Inc.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures increase by \$76,453 in fiscal 2021, which accounts for the bill’s October 1, 2020 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one program manager to, in consultation with 2-1-1 Maryland, assume the oversight responsibilities of HHSRB, including conducting the cost analysis and completing the required report. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

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Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$71,087
Operating Expenses	<u>5,366</u>
Total FY 2021 State Expenditures	\$76,453

The Office of Legislative Audits can audit funding for 2-1-1 Maryland using existing budgeted resources.

Future year expenditures reflect a full salary with annual increases and employee turnover and ongoing operating expenses.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: SB 584 (Senator Zucker) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Department of Information Technology; Maryland Department of Aging; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services - Office of Legislative Audits

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