

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1177

(Delegate McComas, *et al.*)

Judiciary

Courts - Expert Witnesses - Licensed Certified Social Workers-Clinical

This bill authorizes a licensed certified social worker-clinical who is licensed under the Maryland Social Workers Practice Act and qualified as an expert witness to testify on ultimate issues, including insanity, competency to stand trial, and matters within the scope of the social worker's special knowledge, in any court or administrative hearing.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for the Office of the Public Defender may decrease minimally to the extent the bill reduces costs associated with expert witness fees in some cases. Otherwise, the bill is not anticipated to materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Under § 9-120 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, a *psychologist* licensed under the "Maryland Psychologists Act" and qualified as an expert witness may testify on ultimate issues, including insanity, competency to stand trial, and matters within the scope of that psychologist's special knowledge, in any case in any court or in any administrative hearing.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Office of the Public Defender; Maryland Department of Health; Office of Administrative Hearings; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2022

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Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

Direct Inquiries to:

(410) 946-5510

(301) 970-5510