

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1420
Judiciary

(Delegate Woorman, *et al.*)

Registers of Wills - Identity Verification Without Government-Issued
Identification

This bill requires each register of wills, in consultation with the Maryland Registers of Wills Association, to offer a method by which an individual without government-issued identification may prove the individual's identity as an heir or a beneficiary of a will.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A requirement, of an heir or beneficiary of a will, to show a government-issued identification or other proof of identity to the register of wills is not specified in the Estates and Trusts Article.

Section 1-102 of the Estates and Trusts Article establishes that when a writing is required to be verified by the article, verification is sufficient if the writing is signed by the person required to make the verification, and if it contains the representation "I do solemnly declare and affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of the foregoing document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief." Section 1-102 requires that every inventory, account, and other document containing recitations of fact be verified.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2025
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