

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1247
Judiciary

(Delegate Otto)

Correctional Services - Parole, Commutation of Sentence, Pardon, and
Remission of Sentence - Notification

This bill alters existing requirements for the notification that the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) must provide to a victim or victim's representative regarding (1) the scheduled parole hearing or a parole decision by the Maryland Parole Commission (MPC) or (2) MPC's consideration of a commutation of sentence, pardon, or remission of sentence of an incarcerated individual sentenced to the Division of Correction (DOC) and MPC's decision of such an action. DPSCS must provide the required notices by certified mail, and MPC must make at least two attempts in writing by certified mail to notify the victim or the victim's representative of MPC's decisions.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures for DPSCS to provide notifications as required by the bill. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law: *Under current law*, at least 90 days before an incarcerated individual's parole release hearing, DPSCS must notify the victim or the victim's representative in writing, directed to the most current address on file, that the parole release hearing has been scheduled if (1) the victim or the victim's representative filed a notification request form, as specified, or (2) the victim makes a written request to DPSCS

for notification and maintains a current address on file with the department. The victim may designate in writing to DPSCS the name and address of a representative who is a resident of the State to receive notice for the victim. *Under the bill*, the written notification must be provided by certified mail. *Under current law*, DPSCS must also promptly notify the victim or the victim's representative of MPC's decision regarding parole for the incarcerated individual. *Under the bill*, DPSCS must make at least two attempts in writing, by certified mail, to notify the victim or the victim's representative of MPC's decision regarding parole.

Under current law, if the victim made a written request to DPSCS for notification and maintains a current address on file with the department or the victim or the victim's representative filed a notification request form, as specified, DPSCS must notify the victim or the victim's representative in writing that an incarcerated individual sentenced to DOC is being considered for a commutation of sentence, pardon, or remission of sentence. *Under the bill*, the written notification must be provided by certified mail. *Under current law*, DPSCS must also promptly notify the victim or the victim's designated representative of MPC's decision regarding a commutation of sentence, pardon, or remission of sentence. *Under the bill*, DPSCS must make at least two attempts in writing, by certified mail, to notify the victim or the victim's representative of MPC's decision regarding a commutation of sentence, pardon, or remission of sentence.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services;
Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 28, 2025
km/lgc

Analysis by: Shirleen M. E. Pilgrim

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510