

Chapter 780

(House Bill 809)

AN ACT concerning

Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program – Funding

FOR the purpose of specifying the intern fellowships that exist in the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program; *increasing the maximum scholarship award amount under the Program*; requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation for the Program that is at least a certain percentage of the appropriation provided in a prior fiscal year; and generally relating to the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Education

Section 18–1702 and 18–1704

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Governor Wes Moore has made commitment to public service a preeminent issue of his administration by establishing the Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation, launching the service year option for high school graduates, and expanding on the promise of Maryland Corps; and

WHEREAS, Governor Wes Moore has continued to build on his work by allocating over \$50 million in both the fiscal year 2025 and fiscal year 2026 budget bills to provide public service in the State, including securing federal funding; and

WHEREAS, This is vital work that the State must build on to ensure a new generation grows up to serve our State and its people; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

18–1702.

(a) **(1)** There is a scholarship program known as the Walter Sondheim Jr. Public Service Internship Scholarship Program in the State.

(2) THE PROGRAM CONSISTS OF AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC SERVICE INTERN FELLOWSHIPS:

(I) THE GOVERNOR’S SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM;

(II) THE SONDHEIM MARYLAND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP INTERNSHIP PROGRAM; AND

(III) THE SONDHEIM PUBLIC SERVICE LAW FELLOWS PROGRAM.

(b) The purpose of the Program is to assist college and graduate students to explore public service career opportunities through internships.

(c) The Shriver Center shall administer the Program.

(d) An institution of higher education in the State may nominate eligible students to participate in the Program on or before:

(1) January 1 of each year for summer and fall internships; and

(2) October 1 of each year for spring internships.

(e) Priority for participation in the Program shall be given to an eligible student who:

(1) Is a resident of the State;

(2) Has demonstrated an interest in a career in public service; and

(3) Assists in providing:

(i) Legal services:

1. To low-income residents in the State who cannot afford legal services; or

2. In a public service position;

(ii) Social work services to low-income residents in the State;

(iii) Nursing services in nursing shortage areas in the State as defined in § 18–802 of this title; or

(iv) Other services in the public or nonprofit sectors in which there is a shortage of qualified practitioners to low-income or underserved residents or areas of the State.

(f) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, for eligible students who have agreed to serve in a public service internship, the Shriver Center shall award scholarships on or before:

- (i) January 15 of each year for spring internships;
- (ii) May 1 of each year for summer internships; and
- (iii) August 1 of each year for fall internships.

(2) Funds for the scholarships awarded under this subtitle shall be as provided in the State budget.

(g) Subject to the availability of funds, the scholarship award under the Program shall be at least \$2,000 and no more than ~~\$5,000~~ \$6,000.

(h) The Shriver Center shall serve as a clearinghouse for public and nonprofit entities that wish to hire public service interns participating in the Program.

18-1704.

(a) **(1)** Funds for the Program [may] **SHALL** be provided on an annual basis in the State budget **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBSECTION.**

(2) BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2028, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PROGRAM THAT IS AT LEAST ~~150%~~ 125% OF THE APPROPRIATION PROVIDED IN FISCAL YEAR 2026.

(3) THE APPROPRIATION SHALL INCLUDE FUNDING FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY THAT IS AT LEAST ~~150%~~ 125% OF THE FUNDING PROVIDED IN FISCAL YEAR 2026 FOR:

- (I) THE GOVERNOR'S SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM;**
- (II) THE SONDHEIM MARYLAND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP INTERNSHIP PROGRAM; AND**
- (III) THE SONDHEIM PUBLIC SERVICE LAW FELLOWS PROGRAM.**

(b) The Governor may provide funding in the State budget to the Shriver Center to administer the Program.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 26, 2026.