

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

Senate Bill 580 (Senator Jennings, *et al.*)  
 Education, Energy, and the Environment

State Government - Walk-In Service Requirements

This bill requires specified State divisions and programs to provide walk-in service to the public on a first-come, first-served basis at a reasonable frequency, but not less than 1 day per week between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. If the specified division or program regularly provides in-person appointments to the public, they must provide walk-in service at each location where in-person appointments are held. If the specified division or program does not regularly provide in-person appointments to the public, it must establish at least one location to provide walk-in service, as specified.

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by at least \$60,000 in FY 2027 for additional office space; future years reflect ongoing costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Net Effect	(\$60,000)	(\$60,000)	(\$60,000)	(\$60,000)	(\$60,000)

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

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill applies to:

- the Durable and Medical Equipment Re-Use Program in the Department of Aging;

- the Maryland Business Express Program in the Department of Commerce (Commerce);
- the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing in the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor);
- the (1) Licensing and Registration Service Centers and (2) Wildlife and Heritage Service in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR);
- the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) in the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT);
- the (1) Division of Vital Records and (2) Maryland's Commitment to Veterans Program in the Maryland Department of Health (MDH);
- the Service Program Offices in the Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families (DVMF);
- the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange;
- the Transportation Division in the Public Service Commission; and
- the Reference Services Department in the Maryland State Archives.

**Current Law:** Generally, there is no relevant statute that requires State entities to establish hours or accept walk-in service to the public.

**State Expenditures:** The Maryland State Archives, the Health Benefits Exchange, the Maryland Department of Aging, the MD Labor, and the Public Service Commission advise they already comply with the bill's requirements. DNR and DVMF advise they can comply with the bill's requirements with existing resources. However, DNR and DVMF advise that there may be a loss of service to the extent they must divert staff from an appointment-only service system to one that also provides walk-in service.

Commerce advises that the Maryland Business Express Program is housed within the World Trade Center in Baltimore, Maryland. Commerce advises that it does not own the building and that the general public is not authorized to enter the building without prior clearance by the building's owner. As a result, the Maryland Business Express Program only facilitates services via appointments, and that to comply with bill's requirements, Commerce advises it must procure three additional office locations to allow for walk-in service and hire staff to operate those locations at an estimated cost of approximately \$721,500 in fiscal 2027.

The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) agrees that Commerce cannot provide walk-in service in its current location in the World Trade Center. However, the bill requires only one location for walk-in service if a program does not regularly provide in-person appointments to the public. Therefore, general fund expenditures increase by \$60,000 in fiscal 2026 for Commerce to procure an additional office location to facilitate walk-in service for the Maryland Business Express Program. For one day a week,

Commerce can reassign existing program staff to the off-site location to provide walk-in services.

MDOT advises that all MVA branches provide appointment-only service Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to noon. However, MDOT advises that it also accommodates service to walk-in customers as there are usually enough missed or vacant appointments times to serve walk-ins. Nevertheless, MDOT advises that in order to comply with the bill's requirements, it must alter its current schedule and set aside a single day for walk-in service and hire 54 temporary employees at an estimated cost of \$2.0 million in fiscal 2027.

DLS disagrees; the bill does not require affected programs to dedicate certain days to walk-in appointments. Instead, the bill merely requires that the specified programs that provide appointment-only service also provide walk-in service at the locations where appointments are held. MDOT already provides walk-in service concurrently with appointments, although it does not advertise that it offers such an option to the public. Therefore, it is assumed MDOT can satisfy the bill's requirements with existing staff and resources, but it may need to publicize the availability of walk-in service on its website.

MDH did not provide any information regarding its ability to comply with the bill's requirements, and as a result any potential impact is not included in this analysis.

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### **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 Commerce; Maryland Department of Aging; Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Natural Resources; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Veterans and Military Families; Maryland State Archives; Health Benefit Exchange; Public Service Commission; Department of Legislative Services

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