

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 481

(Senator McKay)

Judicial Proceedings

Family Law - Denial or Interference With Visitation Rights

This bill *requires* the court, on a determination that a party to a custody or visitation order has unjustifiably denied or interfered with visitation, to order additional periods of visitation to be scheduled that are (1) of the same type, including weekend, holiday, or summer visitation time, and of the same duration as the visitation that was denied or interfered with; (2) at a time that the other party chooses; and (3) within two years after the court determination that the visitation had been unjustifiably denied or interfered with. Consistent with requirements under current law, any action by the court under the bill must be in a manner consistent with the best interests of the child.

Fiscal Summary

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

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

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: In any custody or visitation proceeding, if the court determines that a party to a custody or visitation order has unjustifiably denied or interfered with visitation granted by a custody or visitation order, the court *may*, in addition to any other remedy available to the court and in a manner consistent with the best interests of the child, take any of the following actions: (1) order that the visitation be rescheduled; (2) modify the custody or visitation order to require additional terms or conditions designed to ensure future compliance with the order; or (3) assess costs or counsel fees against the party who has unjustifiably interfered with visitation rights.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 481 (Delegate S. Johnson) - Judiciary.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 10, 2026
sj/jkb

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