

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 503 (Delegate Smith, *et al.*)
Government, Labor, and Elections

Baltimore City Sheriff's Office - Collective Bargaining - Compensation

This bill alters statutory provisions that govern collective bargaining rights for certain employees of the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office. The bill specifies that full-time sworn law enforcement officers and court security officers may seek recognition by the sheriff (or designee) in order to organize and bargain collectively in good faith with the sheriff (or designee) *and* the city concerning the following matters: (1) compensation, *including* salary, wages, merit step increases, and those benefits determined, offered, administered, controlled, or managed by the city; (2) leave, holidays, and vacations; and (3) hours, working conditions, and job security. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: **Baltimore City did not respond to repeated requests for information on the fiscal and operational impact of the bill.** Baltimore City expenditures may increase due to the collective bargaining rights established in the bill, as discussed below. Baltimore City revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Full-time sworn law enforcement officers at or below the rank of lieutenant and court security officers in the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office are authorized to seek recognition by the sheriff (or designee) to organize and bargain collectively in good faith concerning the following matters: (1) compensation, *excluding salary, wages, and those benefits determined, offered, administered, controlled, or managed by the city*; (2) leave,

holidays, and vacations; and (3) hours, working conditions, and job security. Sworn law enforcement officers and court security officers may seek recognition in order to organize and bargain collectively in good faith with the city concerning merit step increases and those benefits determined, offered, administered, controlled, or managed by the mayor and city council.

Numerous other counties in Maryland, including Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties have collective bargaining for deputy sheriffs.

Local Expenditures: Generally, Baltimore City expenditures may further increase if, and to the extent that, personnel costs under any negotiated agreement are higher than they would have otherwise been. Any potential expenditures cannot be reliably estimated in advance.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 1091 of 2025.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

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