

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 425

(Senator Jennings)

Budget and Taxation

State Archives - Record Services - Fees

This bill repeals the authorization for the State Archivist to independently establish reasonable fees for the care and preservation of records and other services provided by the Maryland State Archives (MSA). Instead, the bill establishes that the State Archivist may establish fees *by regulation*.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The change is procedural in nature and does not directly affect governmental finances.

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

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Generally, the State Archivist may establish reasonable fees for the care and preservation of records and other services provided by MSA. The fees may be in the form of (1) a percentage not to exceed 2% of an existing fee charged at the time of the creation of a record in any form or format or (2) a flat rate subscription charge for an MSA publication. In general, fees are paid to the State Archives Fund, which may be used (1) to prepare, edit, and publish volumes of the *Archives of Maryland* series and (2) for the general dissemination of materials. Of the fees collected, 7% must be deposited into the Archives Endowment Account of the State Archives Fund as an educational and entrepreneurial reserve, which may be used for (1) research on Maryland citizens who

achieve national, State, or local prominence; (2) research on historical and geographical aspects of Maryland; and (3) for an outreach program to schools. The fiscal 2027 budget as introduced uses revenues in the State Archives Fund to cover about 11% of MSA's operating costs; general funds cover almost all of the remaining costs.

Among other things, MSA may charge (1) a reasonable fee to the State Roads Commission, the State Highway Administration, and the courts to recover the cost of electronically posting and maintaining the images of plats; (2) a reasonable fee, not to exceed \$3, to the public for the cost of reproducing a copy of a plat; and (3) a reasonable fee to cover the expense of copying vital records or indexes to a vital record, as specified.

Exhibit 1 provides a non-exhaustive list of some of the fees collected by MSA for specified records and searches of records.

Exhibit 1
Selected Records Fees for the Maryland State Archives
Fiscal 2026

<u>Description of Fee</u>	<u>Fee Rate</u>
Self-service copies in the Search Room from microfilm	\$1.00 per page
Staff produced copies from secondary sources	\$1.00 per page
Staff produced oversize copies	\$10.00 per page
Preview file at low resolution (for reference purposes only)	\$15.00 per image
Vital records (birth and death records)	\$25.00 per search
Research requests for specified marriage and family court records	\$25.00 per search
Condition Report and Conservation Treatment Proposal	\$50.00 per item
Creating a digital file from original cartographic material (up to 36")	\$50.00 per image
Legal Research request for civil and criminal case files	\$50.00 per search
Conservation work	\$75.00 per hour, plus materials
Unrestricted records from microfilm reels.	\$85.00 per reel
Land patent application fee	\$100.00 per application
Land records from microfilm, paper, book, or digital source image	Varies based on format
Books and Pamphlets	Varies based on publication
Charter records filed with SDAT	\$2,675.00 (annual fee)

SDAT: State Department of Assessments and Taxation

Sources: Maryland State Archives; Department of Legislative Services

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 576 (Delegate Griffith, *et al.*) - Government, Labor, and Elections.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Archives; Maryland Department of Health; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Municipal League; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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