

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 86 (Delegate Vogel)
Government, Labor, and Elections

State and Local Employees - Cancer Screening - Paid Leave

This bill may entitle all State employees (including temporary and part-time employees) and all local government employees to up to four hours of paid cancer screening leave in any 12-month period after obtaining approval from their appointing authorities. The Secretary of Budget and Management and the governing body of each county or municipality must adopt regulations governing cancer screening leave. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Expenditures (all funds) may increase, potentially significantly for some State agencies, beginning in FY 2027 for overtime costs related to coverage for employees using cancer screening leave. State revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local government expenditures may increase beginning in FY 2027 for overtime costs related to coverage for local government employees using cancer screening leave. Local revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: State employment leave policies are generally comparable across branches and personnel systems, with some variations.

Sick Leave in the State Personnel Management System

State employees in the State Personnel Management System (SPMS), except temporary employees, currently accrue paid sick leave at the rate of 1.5 hours for every 26 hours

worked in no overtime status. Employees earn a maximum of 15 days, or 120 hours, of sick leave each year. Cancer screening is an allowable use of accrued sick leave for employees in SPMS.

Annual and Personal Leave in the State Personnel Management System

Most employees in SPMS, except temporary employees, also earn annual and personal leave. Annual leave accruals are based on the employee's years of service, which range from a maximum of 80 hours of annual leave each year for employees with less than 5 years of service to a maximum of 200 hours of annual leave each year for employees with at least 20 years of service. Annual leave may be used for any reason, upon supervisor approval. State employees in SPMS are generally entitled to six days (seven days during a leap year) of personal leave with pay at the beginning of the first full pay period of the calendar year. If an employee begins employment on or after March 1, the number of personal days is reduced, based on the employee's start date. Personal leave may be used for any purpose, generally, after notice is given to the employee's immediate supervisor.

Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

Generally, the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act requires an employer (including the State and local governments) with 15 or more employees to have a sick and safe leave policy under which an employee earns at least 1 hour of paid sick and safe leave, at the same rate as the employee normally earns, for every 30 hours an employee works. An employer with 14 or fewer employees, based on the average monthly number of employees during the preceding year, must at least have a sick and safe leave policy that provides an employee with at least 1 hour of unpaid sick and safe leave for every 30 hours an employee works.

An employer is not required to allow an employee to earn or carry over more than 40 hours of earned sick and safe leave in a year, use more than 64 hours of earned leave in a year, accrue more than 64 hours at any time, or use earned sick and safe leave during the first 106 calendar days the employee works for the employer. An employer is not required to carry over unused earned sick and safe leave if the leave is awarded at the beginning of each year.

The Act does not apply to specified circumstances, such as employees who regularly work less than 12 hours a week, specified independent contractors, and individuals younger than age 18.

An employer must allow an employee to use earned sick and safe leave:

- to care for or treat the employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;

- to obtain preventive medical care (including cancer screening) for the employee or employee's family member;
- to care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or condition;
- for maternity or paternity leave; and
- for specified circumstances due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against the employee or the employee's family member.

State Expenditures: In general, expanding the State's leave policy does not directly affect State expenditures for most State agencies, since regular employee salaries are already budgeted and existing leave can be used for cancer screenings. Additionally, State agencies do not generally hire temporary employees when employees are on leave. For example, the University of Maryland, College Park Campus anticipates a minimal operational and fiscal impact based on prior experience when their employees were granted four hours of administrative leave for COVID-19 vaccinations.

However, in limited circumstances, an affected agency may incur coverage costs for overtime or a loss of productivity. Overall, State expenditures (all funds) may increase, potentially significantly for some State agencies, to provide overtime coverage while employees use four hours of paid cancer screening leave. Any such costs are most likely to be incurred by agencies with 24/7 facilities, such as hospitals and prisons. The Department of Budget and Management estimates that providing four hours of cancer screening leave costs the State between \$1.1 million and \$2.2 million annually, depending on usage rates, predominantly for overtime costs. The actual impact may be reduced if the Secretary of Budget and Management establishes conditions for requesting cancer screening leave in regulations. An employee must obtain approval from the employee's appointing authority before taking cancer screening leave, so appointing authorities may have the ability to deny or restrict leave requests as needed for operational necessity, mitigating some overtime costs.

Agencies may need to train human resources employees on the cancer screening leave policy, and units with independent personnel systems may need to make configuration changes to those systems, which they can likely do with existing budgeted resources. Implementing a new type of leave creates an administrative burden of creating, testing, monitoring, and implementing new rules and regulations.

Local Expenditures: Similar to the effect described above for the State, local government expenditures may increase to provide up to four hours of paid cancer screening leave to local government employees. For example, Anne Arundel County estimates overtime costs may increase to provide coverage while employees utilize cancer screening leave and notes that there may be one-time administrative or information technology costs associated with establishing cancer screening leave in their human resource systems. The

Maryland Association of Counties anticipates the bill may have a material impact on local government expenditures and operations due to establishing a new type of leave for local government employees.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 914 and SB 523 of 2025 and HB 949 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Frederick, Montgomery, and Somerset counties; Maryland Association of Counties; cities of Hagerstown and Laurel; Maryland Municipal League; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); University System of Maryland; Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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