

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 328 (Prince George's County Delegation and Montgomery County Delegation)

Government, Labor, and Elections

Bicounty Commissions - Public Ethics - Financial Disclosure Statements
PG/MC 105-26

This bill requires an applicant for appointment as a bicounty commissioner (commissioner) in Prince George’s County to submit a paper copy of their financial disclosure statement to the Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability. Further, the bill requires the chief administrative officer of Prince George’s County to submit each financial disclosure statement of a commissioner or applicant to the Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability, which must retain the statements for the commissioner’s entire term of office or return them to any applicant who is not appointed. On notification by the Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability that an applicant was not appointed, the State Ethics Commission (SEC) must promptly delete the financial disclosure statement electronically filed by the applicant. Finally, the Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability must require that any person examining or copying a financial disclosure statement record their name, home address, and the name of the individual whose statement was examined or copied.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill applies only to bicounty commissions.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: “Commissioner” means a commissioner of a bicounty commission.

Each commissioner and applicant must (1) electronically file a financial disclosure statement with SEC, as specified, and (2) submit a paper copy of the electronically filed statement to the chief administrative officer of the county from which the commissioner is appointed, as specified. The chief administrative officer of a county must then transmit each statement received from a commissioner or applicant to the executive director of the appropriate bicounty commission.

Retention of a Financial Disclosure Statement

The executive director of the appropriate bicounty commission and chief administrative officer of each county must (1) retain a financial disclosure statement of a commissioner for the commissioner’s entire term of office and (2) within 15 days of an appointment becoming final, return all copies of the financial disclosure statement to an applicant who is not appointed.

The chief administrative officer of each county involved must notify SEC if an applicant is not appointed, and upon notification, SEC must promptly delete the statement electronically filed by the applicant.

Public Inspection of a Financial Disclosure Statement

SEC, the executive director of each bicounty commission, and the chief administrative officer of each county: (1) must maintain the financial disclosure statements of commissioners and applicants; (2) must make those statements available to the public for examination and copying during normal office hours; and (3) may charge a reasonable fee and adopt reasonable administrative procedures for the examination and copying of a statement.

Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability

The Prince George’s County Office of Ethics and Accountability is responsible for increasing accountability and oversight by identifying fraud, abuse, and illegal acts. It supports the Board of Ethics of Prince George’s County in exercising its authorities granted to it under the Prince George’s County Code of Ethics to promote the public’s trust of county government and ensure the impartiality of employees and county elected officials in the execution of their duties.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Ethics Commission; Montgomery and Prince George's counties; Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission; Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission; Department of Legislative Services

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caw/mcr

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