

THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

September 16, 2025
Legislative Session Day

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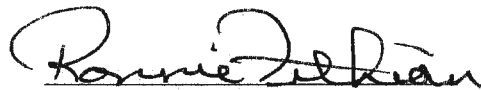
CODE HOME RULE
BILL NO. 8-2025

INTRODUCED BY: Ronald H. Fithian, President of the Board of County Commissioners for Kent County, Maryland.

AN ACT to repeal and reenact with amendments Chapter 3 Administration of Government, of the Code of Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland. The purpose of this amendment to this chapter is to establish a Compensation Review Commission to undertake a comprehensive study of the rate of the current compensation for the County Commissioners and make recommendations regarding the amount of compensation in accordance with State and local laws.

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KENT COUNTY, MD

THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND


Ronald H. Fithian, President

INTRODUCED, read the first time, September 16, 2025, ordered posted and public hearing scheduled on September 30, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the County Commissioners Hearing Room, R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr., Kent County Government Center, 400 High Street, Chestertown, Maryland.

By order of:


Sondra M. Blackiston, Clerk

PUBLIC HEARING

HAVING been posted and notice of the time and place of the hearing and copies made available to the public and the press, a public hearing was held on September 30, 2025. Reported favorably [with] [without] amendments; read the second time and ordered to be considered on October 7, 2025, a legislative session day.

BILL NO. 8-2025 Administration of Government

CAPITALS & BOLD INDICATES MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

Strike through indicates matter deleted from existing law.

A BILL ENTITLED CHR 8-2025 ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT

SECTION 1.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND that Chapter 3, Administration of Government, Article I General Provisions, §3-2 Terms and Compensation is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2.

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND that a new §3-2 Terms, Compensation, and Compensation Review Commission is hereby enacted in lieu thereof to read as follows:

§3-2. Terms, Compensation, and Compensation Review Commission

- A. Term. Three County Commissioners of Kent County shall be elected at the general election to be held on a Tuesday after the first Monday of November in 1946 and every fourth year thereafter for a term of four years. They shall have all of the powers and perform all of the duties that are now or hereafter may be imposed on them by law.
- B. Compensation. Commissioners taking office on or after December 2, 2014 shall receive a salary of \$20,000 per annum and shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in performance of their duties as County Commissioners. They shall not be compensated for serving on the Board of License Commissioners or serving as ex-officio members of any other County boards or committees.
- C. Establishment of Compensation Review Commission.
 - (1) As set forth in Annotated Code of Maryland, Local Government Article, Division 3, Counties, Title 10, Express Powers Act, § 10-302, there is hereby established a Kent County Compensation Review Commission to study the rate of current compensation and allowances for the County Commissioners and to make recommendations regarding the amount of compensation and allowances for the County Commissioners.
 - (2) Within fifteen (15) days after the beginning of the fourth year of any term, the Compensation Review Commission, by resolution, shall submit to the County Commissioners its recommendation for the compensation and allowances for the County Commissioners in the following term. The Commission may recommend an increase or decrease in the compensation and allowances for the County Commissioners.
 - (3) On receiving the resolution, the County Commissioners may reduce or reject the Commission's recommendation, but may not increase any item.
 - (4) Any change in the compensation and allowances of the County Commissioners shall be enacted by ordinance effective before the election for the next succeeding board of County Commissioners and take effect only for the members of the next succeeding board of County Commissioners and their successors, until such time as a further change may be enacted.

D. Appointment of Members

- (1) The Compensation Review Commission shall consist of five (5) citizens appointed by the County Commissioners, including a Chair, who shall be selected by the County Commissioners.
- (2) All members of the Commission shall have been residents of Kent County for at least three (3) years prior to appointment; shall possess an outstanding reputation for civic pride, integrity, responsibility and business or professional ability; and shall have no financial interest, direct or indirect, in the compensation and allowances of a County Commissioner.
- (3) Members may not include any officer, official, candidate (as defined in the Ethics Ordinance) for a paid elected office in any jurisdiction within the County, or employee of the County or any of his or her immediate family members. For the purposes of this Section, "immediate family member" means parent, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, child, or dependent relative of an officer, official, or employee of the County, whether or not living in the same household.
- (4) Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

E. Membership

- (1) Members shall serve terms of four (4) years and are eligible for re-appointment for consecutive or subsequent terms by the County Commissioners.
- (2) Members shall continue to serve until resignation or the appointment of their successors.
- (3) The County Commissioners may designate one (1) alternate member to sit on the Commission in the absence of any member of the Commission.
- (4) In the event of a vacancy on the Commission, the County Commissioners shall appoint a person to serve the unexpired portion of the term of the vacated position.

F. Resignation and Removal.

- (1) Any member of the Commission may resign at any time by providing written notice to the County Commissioners.
- (2) A member of the Commission may be removed: when the member no longer meets any of the criteria set forth in subsection D of §3-2; when the member violates the Kent County Code of Ethics; for repeated violations of the Open Meetings Act; for failure to complete the Maryland Open Meetings Act online training; upon the recommendation of a majority vote of the Commission, when, in its discretion, the best interest of the Commission or the community would not be served by the member's continued membership; or for other just cause.
- (3) Complaints against members shall be referred to the County Commissioners to determine the means of investigating the complaint.

G. Meetings.

- (1) The Commission may promulgate rules consistent with this Section for the conduct of its meetings and the discharge of its responsibilities.

- (2) The Commission shall meet as often as necessary to accomplish the objectives of the Commission.
- (3) The Commission shall commence its work of producing its recommendation every four (4) years at the discretion of the Chair.
- (4) Notice of all meetings of the Commission shall be in accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act.
- (5) All meetings are open to the public, except that the Commission may meet in closed session or adjourn an open session to meet in a closed session in accordance with §3-305 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.
- (6) Commission members are expected to attend all meetings in person. A Commission member who is unable to attend a meeting shall notify the Commission administrator and the Chair of the intended absence. All Commission meeting minutes shall record attendance and reported absences. A member's record of attendance shall be considered by the County Commissioners with respect to re-appointment of a Commission member. Failure of a Commission member to attend at least 75% of the meetings in any 12-month period is equivalent to resignation from the Commission without further action being necessary to effectuate the resignation. The Chair shall notify the County Commissioners and County Administrator that the ex-member has resigned through absenteeism so that a replacement may be appointed.

H. Ethics, Rules, Record Keeping, and Support.

(1) Ethics.

- (a) Members of the Commission are subject to and shall fully comply with the Kent County Public Ethics Law, Chapter 29 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland, as amended from time to time.
- (b) No member of the Commission shall cast a vote on any matter as to which he or she has a conflict of interest.
- (c) In any instance where the determination of a conflict of interest is uncertain, the Commission may request a determination of conflict of interest from the Kent County Ethics Commission, which shall not be unreasonably delayed.

(2) Rules.

- (a) A quorum shall exist when at least three (3) voting members are present at a meeting.
- (b) Notwithstanding any rules of procedure and conduct for meetings adopted by the Commission, all meetings shall be conducted in accordance with *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*, unless they are inconsistent with the approved Rules or this Section.
- (c) Each member of the Commission shall have only one (1) vote. The Chair is entitled to vote on any item unless precluded by operation of the Kent County Code of Ethics.
- (d) A tie vote on a motion means that the motion fails.

(3) Record Keeping.

- (a) The custodian of all records, of any form, including, without limitation, paper, media, and electronic, of the Commission shall be the County Attorney of Kent County.
- (b) Retention. The Commission shall formulate a retention schedule for its records that is consistent with State and County Law.

- (c) Production. Records and other information shall be produced as permitted and required by the Maryland Public Information Act.
- (d) Support. The County Commissioners shall provide such staff support to the Compensation Review Commission as may be necessary to accomplish its purpose. The Commission shall be provided meeting facilities and pre-approved expense reimbursement as the County Commissioners or the County Administrator may deem necessary to accomplish the Commission's purposes.

SECTION 3. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the County Commissioners of Kent County that this

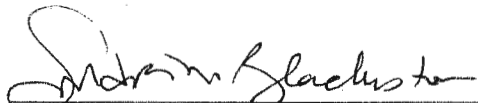
Act shall take effect on the 21st day of November, 2025.

Read Third Time October 7, 2025

PASSED this 7th day of October, 2025.

Failed of Passage _____

By order of:

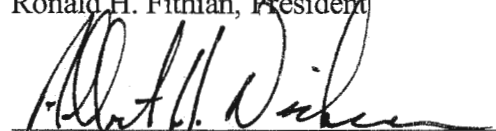

Sondra M. Blackiston, Clerk

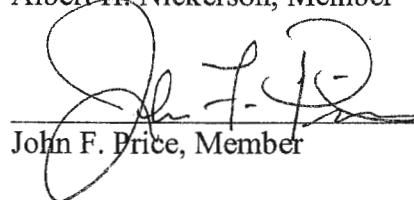
THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

(SEAL)




Ronald H. Fithian, President


Albert H. Nickerson, Member


John F. Price, Member

ORDERED a fair summary thereof or the entire bill shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the County, not less than three times at weekly intervals within a four-week period.

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