

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1185

(Prince George's County Delegation and Montgomery
County Delegation)

Environment and Transportation

Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Personnel Management - Appeals
of Disciplinary Suspensions**
PG/MC 104-26

This bill authorizes a Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) employee to appeal a suspension for disciplinary action to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). OAH must dispose of a case or conduct a hearing and issue a final decision in an appeal for the suspension of a WSSC employee.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: OAH advises that it can implement the bill using existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: WSSC can implement the bill with existing resources. WSSC revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: WSSC is among the largest water and wastewater utilities in the country, providing water and sewer services to 1.9 million residents in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. It has more than 475,000 customer accounts, serves an area of nearly 1,000 square miles, and has a network of 5,900 miles of drinking water pipeline and over 5,600 miles of sewer main lines.

WSSC has over 1,800 employees. The commission's total fiscal 2026 operating budget is \$1.1 billion, which includes approximately \$200 million in salaries and wages.

Suspension of Employees

WSSC may suspend an employee, for disciplinary purposes, up to 30 days. Each suspension must be without pay. An employee may not be suspended for disciplinary purposes for more than 30 days in a calendar year. Based on existing caseload data, WSSC has averaged approximately 16 annual employee suspensions in the last three fiscal years.

Permanent Removal of Employees

A WSSC employee may not be permanently removed except for cause and after an opportunity to be heard. A WSSC employee may not be permanently removed from the merit system because of religious or political opinions or affiliations. An employee who is permanently removed may appeal to OAH. Based on existing caseload data, the number of appeals to OAH tends to be limited. In both 2024 and 2025, OAH has handled only one case each year. Prior to that, OAH last handled a case in 2021.

Office of Administrative Hearings

OAH has been delegated authority by the Department of Budget and Management to conduct State Personnel Management System hearings. OAH must dispose of a case or conduct a hearing and issue a final decision in any appeal for the removal of an employee of WSSC.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Office of Administrative Hearings; Montgomery and Prince George's counties; Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission; Department of Legislative Services

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