

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 1185 (Prince George's County Delegation and Montgomery  
County Delegation)

Environment and Transportation

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**Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Personnel Management -  
Disciplinary Actions**  
**PG/MC 104-26**

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This bill requires the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), before taking disciplinary action against an employee, to (1) investigate the alleged misconduct; (2) meet with the employee; (3) consider mitigating circumstances; (4) determine the appropriate disciplinary action; and (5) give the employee a written notice, as specified.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) advises that it can implement the bill using existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** WSSC can handle the bill's requirements with existing resources. WSSC revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The bill authorizes WSSC employees to appeal a suspension for disciplinary reasons to OAH. WSSC has up to 30 days after learning about the misconduct to take disciplinary action against an employee. WSSC may suspend an employee without pay up to five workdays following the close of the employee's next shift after the commission acquires knowledge of the misconduct for which the suspension is imposed.

Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and employee leave days do not count toward the five-workday period.

The bill requires OAH to dispose of a case or conduct a hearing and issue a final decision in an appeal for the suspension of a WSSC employee.

**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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 12, 2026  
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