

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1248  
Appropriations

(Delegate Wolek)

Finance

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**Workgroup for an Inclusive State Workplace - Established**

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This bill establishes a Workgroup for an Inclusive State Workplace, staffed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The workgroup must: (1) outline the steps the State needs to take to offer more inclusive employment opportunities for specified individuals challenged by the traditional full-time employment structure; (2) establish guidance for State agencies to create part-time jobs with benefits; (3) set annual goals to expand part-time job opportunities with benefits, as well as other inclusion strategies, for each of the next five years; (4) identify any potential statutory changes required to implement the inclusive employment plan; and (5) identify and quantify the long-term economic benefits to the State from increased labor force participation by those specified individuals. By September 15, 2027, the workgroup must share its inclusive workplace implementation strategy and workplan in a report to the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and terminates on June 30, 2028.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** DBM can staff the workgroup with existing budgeted resources. Any expense reimbursements for workgroup members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill specifies the members of the workgroup, and the Governor must designate the chair of the workgroup. Members of the workgroup may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget.

**Current Law:** A part-time employee is defined as an employee who works an average of 50% or more but less than 100% of the regular workweek. An individual who is a full-time employee in the State Personnel Management System (except a temporary employee) who is qualified for or desires to be a full-time employee may not be required to accept part-time employment as a condition of continued or new State employment. Conversely, an individual who is a part-time employee who is qualified for or desires to be a part-time employee may not be required to accept full-time employment as a condition of continued or new employment. In accordance with regulations, a part-time employee is entitled to receive all employment rights, privileges, and benefits that are normally available to a full-time employee in a similar position with a similar grade and length of service, except benefits must be prorated in proportion to the number of hours employed.

The 2025 Joint Chairman's Report requested that DBM establish a comprehensive feasibility study of job-sharing arrangements in State government, examining technical, administrative, financial, and operational aspects of job-sharing. DBM's report can be found [here](#).

### *Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy*

Chapter 1 of 2025 established the Office of Disability Employment Advancement and Policy (ODEAP) in the Maryland Department of Disabilities. As it relates to the employment, training, and career-readiness of individuals with disabilities, the purpose of ODEAP includes (1) the development and implementation of strategies in the State Disabilities Plan; (2) performing specified duties necessary to support statewide policies and standards; (3) collecting information and data from units of State government; and (4) beginning July 1, 2026, implementing the Maryland as a Model Employer Initiative.

The purpose of the initiative must include:

- promoting the recruitment, hiring, retention, and career advancement of people with disabilities across State government;
- conducting and coordinating outreach to job seekers with disabilities and State government to encourage participation in the initiative;

- developing and delivering trainings to State agencies and units addressing best practices, resources, and relevant federal and State laws pertaining to the employment of people with disabilities;
- assisting State government agencies and units to attract qualified job seekers with disabilities to available positions;
- promoting access to and acquisition of assistive technology for new State employees with disabilities;
- evaluating State employment practices and policies and making recommendations regarding ways to reduce barriers for job seekers and employees with disabilities;
- collecting from each unit of State government, as part of unit plans required to implement the State Disabilities Plan, performance goals related to hiring and retention efforts for employees with disabilities and any data deemed necessary by the Secretary to demonstrate performance outcomes; and
- reporting on the initiative's outcomes.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** SB 880 (Senator Kramer) - Finance.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Budget and Management; Department of Aging; Department of Commerce; Comptroller's Office; Maryland Department of Disabilities; Department of Information Technology; University System of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 1, 2026  
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