

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1524 (Delegate J. Long)
Government, Labor, and Elections

Labor and Employment - Paid Leave - Attendance at School Functions

This bill requires an employer with at least 15 employees and governmental units to provide each employee who is a parent with at least 20 hours each year of paid leave to attend a school function at the public or nonpublic elementary or secondary school at which the employee's child is enrolled. An employee may not use more than 2 hours of leave provided under the bill each month, and the bill specifies other terms and conditions of the leave. If the Commissioner of Labor and Industry determines that an employer has violated the bill, the commissioner must issue an order compelling compliance with the bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Expenditures (all funds) may increase, potentially significantly for some State agencies, beginning in FY 2027 for overtime costs related to coverage for employees using paid leave to attend school functions. State revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: Local government expenditures may increase beginning in FY 2027 for overtime costs related to coverage for local government employees using paid leave to attend a school function. Local revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: Meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: Maryland law does not require private-sector employers to provide leave to employees to attend a school function.

Annual and Personal Leave in the State Personnel Management System

Most employees in the State Personnel Management System (SPMS), except temporary employees, earn annual and personal leave, in addition to sick leave. Annual leave accruals are based on the employee's years of service, which range from a maximum of 80 hours of annual leave each year for employees with less than 5 years of service to a maximum of 200 hours of annual leave each year for employees with at least 20 years of service. Annual leave may be used for any reason, upon supervisor approval. State employees in SPMS are generally entitled to six days (seven days during a leap year) of personal leave with pay at the beginning of the first full pay period of the calendar year. If an employee begins employment on or after March 1, the number of personal days is reduced, based on the employee's start date. Personal leave may be used for any purpose, generally, after notice is given to the employee's immediate supervisor.

State Expenditures: The Maryland Department of Labor anticipates needing to create and post on its website a frequently asked questions document for the program and mail letters to employers in violation of the bill to compel compliance, which it can do with existing resources.

State Agencies

In general, expanding the State's leave policy does not directly affect State expenditures for most State agencies, since regular employee salaries are already budgeted and existing annual and personal leave can be used for attending school functions. Additionally, State agencies do not generally hire temporary employees when employees are on leave.

However, in limited circumstances, an affected agency may incur coverage costs for overtime or a loss of productivity. Overall, State expenditures (all funds) may increase, potentially significantly for some State agencies, to provide overtime coverage while employees who are parents use up to 2 hours a month, up to 20 hours annually, of paid leave to attend a school function. Any such costs are most likely to be incurred by agencies with 24/7 facilities, such as hospitals and prisons.

Agencies may need to train human resources employees on the leave for school functions policy, and units with independent personnel systems may need to make configuration changes to those systems, which they can likely do with existing budgeted resources. Implementing a new type of leave creates an administrative burden of creating, testing, monitoring, and implementing new rules and regulations.

Local Expenditures: Similar to the effect described above for the State, local government expenditures may increase to provide employees who are parents with at least 20 hours annually of paid leave to attend a school function to local government employees. The

Maryland Association of Counties anticipates the bill to have a significant effect on county finances and operations. Additionally, the Maryland Municipal League notes that some disruptions to municipal government operations may occur if employees regularly use the leave granted under the bill.

Small Business Effect: Employers with at least 15 employees must provide at least 20 hours of paid leave to employees to use to attend a school function at the public or nonpublic elementary or secondary school at which the employee's child is enrolled. Employees' use of the required leave may be disruptive to the operations and finances of small businesses, which are less able than larger companies to provide coverage for absent employees. However, any disruptions are limited by the restriction that an employee may use only up to 2 hours of this paid leave per month.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); University System of Maryland; Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of Labor; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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