

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 915
Appropriations

(Delegate Hill, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Workgroup on Aging Out of Foster Care

This bill establishes the Workgroup on Aging Out of Foster Care, to be staffed by the State Citizens Review Board for Children (SCRBC). The Department of Human Services (DHS) must award a one-time stipend of \$2,000 to specified members of the workgroup. The workgroup must (1) identify the types and effectiveness of resources currently available for youth who have aged out of foster care to achieve self-sufficiency, as specified; (2) determine the effectiveness of currently available resources, and identify challenges with current services and programs offered before a youth ages out of the foster care system and seek to assist youth to successfully transition into adulthood and self-sufficiency; (3) determine the types of resources that youth who have aged out of foster care are most likely to utilize when seeking continuing support, such as adults, peers, financial assistance organizations, and community groups; (4) identify the circumstances under which youth in foster care were removed from the youth's home county during any period of foster care; and (5) identify programs that have successfully improved outcomes for youth who have aged out of foster care, such as a hotline or anonymous support line. Members of the workgroup are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State Travel Regulations. By June 1, 2027, the workgroup must submit a report of its findings to the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026, and terminates June 30, 2027.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: SCRBC can staff the workgroup using existing budgeted resources. General fund expenditures increase by \$30,000 in fiscal 2027 only for DHS to award stipends. Any expense reimbursements for other workgroup members are assumed to be absorbable within existing budgeted resources. No impact on revenues.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: DHS, through its Social Services Administration, has the primary responsibility for child welfare services throughout the State, which are provided primarily by the local departments of social services.

DHS is required to establish a program of out-of-home placement for minor children (1) who are placed in the custody of a local department, for a period of up to 180 days, by a parent or legal guardian under a voluntary placement agreement; (2) who are abused, abandoned, neglected, or dependent, if a juvenile court has determined that continued residence in the child's home is contrary to the child's welfare and has committed the child to the custody or guardianship of a local department; or (3) who, with the approval of DHS, are placed in an out-of-home placement by a local department under a voluntary placement agreement regarding a child with a developmental disability or a mental illness, as specified.

An out-of-home placement may include family foster care, group and residential care, kinship care, and treatment foster care. "Foster care" means continuous 24-hour care and supportive services provided for a minor child placed by a child placement agency in an approved family home.

State Citizens Review Board for Children

SCRBC is generally tasked with (1) providing a training program for members of the local review boards and local citizens review panels; (2) reviewing and coordinating the activities of the local boards; (3) adopting policies and procedures that relate to reports and any other information that is required for any public or private agency or institution; (4) making recommendations to the Secretary of Human Services and the General Assembly regarding the response of the State to child abuse and neglect and out-of-home care policies, procedures, and practices; and (5) reporting to the Secretary of Human Services and the General Assembly on the first day of each year on the status of children in out-of-home placement in the State.

Additionally, SCRBC must, by examining the policies, procedures, and practices of State and local agencies and by reviewing specific cases (where appropriate), evaluate the extent to which State and local agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities in accordance with the State plan, federal child protection standards, and any other criteria that SCRBC considers important to ensure the protection of children. SCRBC must facilitate public outreach and comment and make systemic findings and recommendations publicly available, as specified.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Services; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 16, 2026
jg/jkb Third Reader - April 2, 2026
Revised - Amendment(s) - April 2, 2026

Analysis by: Amanda L. Douglas

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510