

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 842 (Senator Benson)
Judicial Proceedings

Workgroup to Study the Assessment, Treatment, and Available Resources for
Female Youth in Contact With the Justice System

This bill establishes the Workgroup to Study the Assessment, Treatment, and Available Resources for Female Youth in Contact with the Justice System, to be staffed by the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). Among other tasks, the workgroup must review existing programs, treatment capabilities, and facilities for females committed to the supervision of DJS and how DJS is responding to the increase of female youth participation in violent delinquent acts. By December 1, 2021, the workgroup must submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2021, and terminates June 30, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for workgroup members and staffing costs for DJS are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The workgroup must review:

- the policies and procedures of DJS in responding to the needs of female youth within the justice system;

- the existing programs, treatment capabilities, and placement facilities for females committed to the supervision of DJS;
- the proposed response by DJS to female needs within the next five years;
- statewide data on females younger than age 18 charged with a delinquent act, the percentage of recidivism for these females, and the nature of delinquent charges;
- the female youths' response and level of participation in the assigned programs, treatment, and placement;
- the past, current, and proposed response of DJS to the increase of female youth participating in violent delinquent acts;
- the resources available to DJS to respond to the needs of female youth;
- DJS standards of review and methods of analysis of the needs of female youth; and
- DJS tools for the evaluation and diagnosis of female youth.

The workgroup must elect its chair at the first meeting. Workgroup members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations.

Current Law: Under § 9-238.1 of the Human Services Article, DJS is required to serve children in the juvenile justice system with programming that, among other standards, provides females with a range and quality of services and programs to meet their specific needs, including diversion programs, community detention services and programs, and reentry services and programs. Section 9-215 of the Human Service Article requires the State Advisory Board for Juvenile Services to consult with and advise the Secretary of Juvenile Services on the treatment and programming needs of females in the juvenile justice system.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

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