

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 805 (Delegate Wells, *et al.*)
 Appropriations

**Department of Human Services - Office of African American Affairs -
 Establishment**

This bill establishes the Office of African American Affairs in the Department of Human Service (DHS). The office must be located in the Banneker-Douglass Museum. Among other responsibilities, the office must coordinate with representatives of other designated entities to develop a strategic plan on an annual basis in response to critical issues faced by African Americans. By January 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the office must report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the activities of the office, including the strategic plan, as specified. The Governor must include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$250,000 for the salaries of the executive director and executive associate.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 annually to reflect the mandated appropriation; funding in FY 2024 is discretionary. General fund expenditures increase minimally beyond the mandated appropriation amount to reflect anticipated additional costs beginning in FY 2028. Revenues are not affected. **This bill establishes a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2025.**

(in dollars)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	252,000
Net Effect	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$250,000)	(\$252,000)

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill also requires the office to:

- study the status of African Americans in the State;
- provide training, education, and outreach services;
- recommend methods of overcoming all forms of discrimination, including systemic and structural discrimination;
- develop innovative policy and provide ways to improve existing policy that is dedicated to improving conditions and removing barriers for African Americans in the State; and
- provide informed advice to the Executive and Legislative Branches of State government on prominent issues faced by African Americans in the State.

The Governor must appoint an executive director of the office, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The executive director must hire an executive associate.

Current Law: There is no specific program focused on African American affairs within DHS. DHS manages human services programs through a State-supervised and locally administered system. Among other things, DHS is responsible for the Child Support Administration, the Family Investment Administration, and the Social Services Administration, which assist people in economic need, provide preventive services, and protect vulnerable children and adults.

The Commission on African American History and Culture, which is housed within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, is responsible for (1) initiating, directing, and coordinating projects that further the understanding of African American history and culture; (2) leveraging federal, State, and/or private funds to plan and implement projects or educational activities that advance understanding of African American history and culture; (3) operating the Banneker-Douglas Museum in Annapolis to house and display materials of African American historic and cultural significance; (4) locating, preserving, and disseminating information about buildings and sites significant to African American history and culture; and (5) publishing an annual report.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures increase by \$250,000 annually beginning in fiscal 2024 to fund the office at the level of the mandated appropriation; funding in fiscal 2024 is discretionary. Based on information provided by DHS, it is anticipated that the mandated funding amount is sufficient to support costs associated with the office and the two positions required by the bill through fiscal 2027. When accounting for standard annual salary increases and annual increases in ongoing operating expenses, beginning in fiscal 2028, minimal additional funding is likely required beyond that mandated by the bill.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Morgan State University; Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Human Services; Department of Legislative Services

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