

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 617

(Chair, Ways and Means Committee)(By Request -
Departmental - Comptroller)

Ways and Means

Budget and Taxation

Comptroller - Recording and Monitoring Telephone Calls - Clarification

This bill clarifies which incoming calls the Comptroller may record or monitor by specifying that only calls to the Comptroller’s call centers may be recorded or monitored. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not materially affect the operations or finances of the Comptroller’s Office.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 128 of 2014 authorizes the Comptroller to monitor and record incoming telephone calls to employees of the Comptroller’s call centers, to telephones within the offices of the Comptroller, for training, quality control, and employee safety purposes. Monitored or recorded telephone calls must contain a notice to the telephone caller that “your call may be recorded or monitored for training and quality control purposes.” The Comptroller may only record or monitor incoming calls to the automated call distribution system and is prohibited from recording or monitoring calls to or from direct individual lines in the Office of the Comptroller.

Chapter 128 prohibits information derived from an incoming telephone call to employees of the Comptroller's call centers from being used in any criminal or civil proceeding against any Maryland taxpayer unless the caller has made a personal and imminent threat against an employee or property of the State. Recorded telephone calls may not be retained by the Comptroller's Office for longer than 60 days, except (1) if the call is to be used solely as a positive example to follow in the training of employees using the Comptroller's call centers or (2) if the caller has made a personal and imminent threat against an employee or property of the State.

Background: The Comptroller's Office advises that current law references a specific type of call distribution software that is common in call centers. However, since Chapter 128 was first enacted, call center technology has evolved significantly, adding tools such as interactive voice response and ordered management systems.

The bill removes outdated references to automated call distribution systems and clarifies that the provision only applies to calls to the Comptroller's call centers. This change keeps the original intent of the law while allowing for future changes.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Comptroller's Office; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 4, 2025
km/hlb Third Reader - February 28, 2025

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