



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 84

PRINTERS NO. 3690

PRIME SPONSOR: Lawrence

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19
General Fund	\$0	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY: House Bill 84, Printer's Number 3690, amends the Vital Statistics Law of 1953 pertaining to the issuance of birth and death certificates by local registrars, and distribution of fees. This legislation is effective in 60 days.

ANALYSIS: HB 84 amends the Vital Statistics Law to permit local registrars to receive and process applications for or issue certified copies of birth certificates in a manner prescribed by the Department of Health (DOH). Under the bill, if a local registrar chooses to participate, they will receive or retain a percentage of the fee for each application processed or birth certificate issued up to a maximum of \$60,000 in any one calendar year.

HB 84 adds language regarding distribution of fees for certified birth certificates as follows:

- 12.5% deposited in a restricted account and appropriated to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the training of mandated reporters of child abuse and child abuse related costs;
- 37.5% deposited in a restricted account and appropriated to the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) for grants for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary investigative teams;
- 25% deposited in a restricted account and appropriated to DOH for the costs associated with issuing certified copies of birth records. Acceptable uses of these funds are limited to the salary, benefits and training costs for DOH employees actively involved in the amendment or issuance of certified copies of birth records and materials directly utilized in conjunction with the amendment and issuance of a certified copy, including computer hardware and software, paper and postage.
- If a local registrar is involved in the application processing or issuance of a certified copy of a birth record, an amount equal to 20% of the fee collected for the certified copy shall be transferred by DOH to the local registrar or, if collected by the local registrar, retained by the local registrar;
- The remainder shall be deposited in the General Fund.

The funds to DHS and PCCD may not be used to supplant federal, state or local funds otherwise available for these activities.

DOH may collaborate with a city board of health, county department of health, the office of a county officer, or counterpart personnel in counties having a home rule charter or optional form of government for the issuance of a certified copy of a birth record. The collaborating office may charge and retain a fee of no more than five dollars for each certified copy of a birth record issued.

HB 84 directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to produce and present a study concerning the process of issuing birth certificates in the Commonwealth within one year of the bill's effective date. The study shall provide an overview of the current process, recommendations for improving the process, and a review and comparison of the processes in other states. The study shall be presented to the Governor, the Senate and House leaders, and the Senate and House Health Committees.

In addition, HB 84 removes the 90-day on the length of time a local registrar can issue a certified copy of a death certificate.

Finally, this legislation repeals Section 2303.1-B of the Administrative Code pertaining to funding from birth certificate fees.

FISCAL IMPACT: Currently, from each \$20 certified birth certificate fee, \$10 is transferred to the General Fund, \$2.50 is transferred to DHS and \$7.50 is transferred to PCCD. HB 84 will decrease the revenue deposited in the General Fund by \$5 for each birth certificate issued by DOH and by \$9 for each birth certificate issued by a local registrar. This legislation does not change the fee revenue transferred to DHS and PCCD. According to DOH, approximately 300,000 certified copies of birth certificates are issued annually and if 50% are issued by local registrars, the revenues deposited in the General Fund would decrease by \$2,100,000, however, \$1,500,000 of this amount would be deposited in a restricted account to support DOH birth certificate activities.

DOH estimates the following potential costs: up to six additional support staff positions should all 167 local registrars and 67 county governments choose to issue certified copies of birth records; \$385,000 for IT system changes; and \$10,000 for access and security upgrades at each local registrar's residence. These costs should be covered by the \$1,500,000 deposited in the restricted account.

PREPARED BY: Ann Bertolino
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 18, 2018

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.