



## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

# FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 2540

PRINTERS NO. 4079

PRIME SPONSOR: Lawrence

### COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22
General Fund	\$5,000	\$0

**SUMMARY:** House Bill 2540, Printer's Number 4079, amends the Administrative Code of 1929 to establish the COVID-19 State Epidemiology Advisory Council.

**ANALYSIS:** This legislation adds Article I-A establishing the COVID-19 State Epidemiology Advisory Council and requiring the appointment of the following members within seven days:

- The Director of the Bureau of Epidemiology of the Commonwealth or a designee.
- An epidemiologist appointed by the dean of the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine.
- An epidemiologist appointed by the dean of the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University.
- An epidemiologist appointed by the dean of the John and Gertrude Petersen School of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh.
- An epidemiologist appointed by the dean of the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.
- An epidemiologist appointed by the president of Lincoln University.

The Director of the Bureau of Epidemiology shall appoint a chairperson of the council and a vice chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting. The council shall meet at least twice a month, with the first meeting to be convened within 10 days of the effective date. Additional meetings may be called by the chairperson as necessary. The chairperson shall schedule a meeting upon written request of two members of the council. Council members may meet in person, by teleconference or video conference.

The office of the Governor, the Senate, the House of Representatives and the Administrative Offices of Pennsylvania Courts shall provide administrative services to the council as requested.

The COVID-19 State Epidemiology Advisory Council is subject to the Right-to-Know Law except for communications to members from individuals, businesses, nonprofit entities, hospitals, medical organizations, institutions of higher learning, local governments and any other entity regarding issues relating to the COVID-19 public health emergency are exempt from access by a requester under the Right-to-Know Law. Correspondence between a member and a principal or

lobbyist is subject to the Right-to-Know Law. The council is subject to the Sunshine Act and must provide notice of council meetings at least 24 hours prior to a meeting.

The council shall have the following powers:

- To request records as necessary from agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction, independent agencies, the Unified Judicial System and the legislature on any actions taken in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- To receive communications from individuals, businesses, nonprofit entities, hospitals, medical organizations, institutions of higher learning, local governments and any other entity regarding issues relating the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Duties of the council include:

- To make regular recommendations and identify issues of immediate public importance, based on the member's professional knowledge and experience in the field of epidemiology, to the Governor, members of the General Assembly and justices of the Supreme Court, Superior Court and Commonwealth Court, as it relates to the Commonwealth's actions and response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- To develop and submit ongoing policy recommendations based on medical science and professional judgement as it relates to the policies of the Commonwealth in all facets of the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, including but not limited to:
  - public health considerations;
  - preparedness issues;
  - primary, secondary and higher education;
  - operation of private businesses, nonprofits and State and local government services within this Commonwealth; and
  - the impact on certain demographics, based on data including ethnicity and race
- To make a final report, including a demographic report specifically as the data related to race and ethnicity, no later than six months after the order is terminated by executive order, proclamation, or operation of law.

This legislation is effective immediately and expires six months after the order is terminated by executive order, proclamation, operation of law or upon issuance of the final report.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** This legislation provides a \$5,000 appropriation from the General Fund to the Department of Health for payment of reasonable expenses of the COVID-19 State Epidemiology Advisory Council.

**PREPARED BY:** Ann Bertolino  
House Appropriations Committee (R)

**DATE:** July 8, 2020

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