



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 544

PRINTER'S NO. 1799

PRIME SPONSOR: Borowski

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25
General Fund	See Fiscal Impact	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY:

Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations Code) to waive the fees associated with the replacement of certain state-issued documents when the individual is a recent victim of domestic violence.

ANALYSIS:

House Bill 544 Printer's Number 1799 amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations Code) to establish Section 6123 (waiver of fee for corrected or duplicate State documents). This section provides that Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and Department Health (DOH) fees related to the replacement of specified documents shall be waived when the victim of domestic violence, or their dependents, meet certain requirements.

The legislation provides that the following documents issued by PennDOT shall have their fee waived:

- Duplicate or corrected certificate of title
- photo identification card
- noncommercial driver's license
- commercial driver's license
- camera card
- learner's permit
- registration card

The legislation also specifies that the DOH shall waive the fee for a certified copy of a birth record.

To be eligible for fee waivers under Section 6123, the individual must not have access to the document and one of the following must apply:

- No more than 90 days prior to applying for the waiver, the individual was granted relief under section 6107(b) (related to hearings) or 6108 (related to relief) of the Protection from Abuse (PFA) Act
- The person was victimized within the previous 120 days, and the abuse is verified.

Qualifying individuals under this section would also receive fee waivers for their dependents.

The legislation states that if an individual provides materially false information, he or she shall be subject to a penalty of \$50 plus the fee associated with the duplicated or replacement document.

This legislation would take effect in 60 days upon enactment.

The Department of Transportation and the Department of Health have 90 days, upon enactment of the legislation, to establish a statement of policy providing for applications made under this section.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Department of Transportation and the Department of Health should be able to implement this legislation at no additional cost to the Commonwealth. According to the Department of Transportation, enactment of this legislation would require the department to update their website and add call center modules, all of which they can absorb within their current budget. The Department of Health has established policies providing fee waivers for individuals experiencing homelessness and for foster and juvenile justice involved individuals.

The fiscal impact to the Commonwealth for waiving the fees for updated or duplicate documents is indeterminable. Any costs associated with the bill would depend on how many qualified individuals and their dependents apply for waivers and the type and number of documents that required replacement.

In 2021, the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania reported that 34,340 individuals were granted a protection from abuse (PFA) order¹. However, this total may overestimate the number of qualified individuals because the waivers only apply to individuals who need to replace a document. On the other hand, this number does not account for individuals who were the subject of recent abuse but do not have a PFA.

The table below contains the amounts that PennDOT charges to duplicate or replace personal documents.

Duplicate Product	Cost
Title	\$58.00
Photo ID	\$37.50
Non-commercial License	\$37.50
Commercial License	\$37.50
Camera Card	\$5.00
Learner's Permit	\$5.00
Registration Card	Free

The Department of Health charges \$20 to replace a birth certificate. Online transactions include an additional \$10 for processing.

It is possible that funding for mandated reporters and for child advocacy centers might decrease slightly due to waived fees for birth certificates. Of the \$20 charged by the Department of Health for replacing a birth certificate, \$10 is retained by the department. \$2.50 is transferred to the Department of Human Services for training of mandated reporters of child abuse and child abuse related costs. The remaining \$7.50 is transferred to the Commission on Crime and Delinquency for grants for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary investigative teams. In 2022/23, the Commission on Crime and Delinquency received \$2.5 million for this program. It is not possible to accurately estimate how much of an impact this legislation would have on these programs.

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House Appropriations Committee (D)

DATE: July 5, 2023

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

¹ <https://www.pacourts.us/news-and-statistics/research-and-statistics/dashboard-table-of-contents/protection-from-abuse>