

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact

2025 General Assembly Session | 1/22/25

In accordance with the provisions of 30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of legislation impacting local governments.

HB1602: Military leaves of absence for employees of the Commonwealth or political subdivisions; law-enforcement officers. (Joshua E. Thomas)

Bill Summary: Military leaves of absence for employees of the Commonwealth or political subdivisions; law-enforcement officers. Provides that any person who is employed by the Commonwealth or a political subdivision of the Commonwealth as a law-enforcement officer shall receive paid leaves of absence for up to 388 work hours for which a leave of absence is required, during which such person is engaged in federally funded military duty, to include training duty, or is called forth by the Governor for military duty.

Local Fiscal Impact: Net Additional Expenditure: X Net Reduction of Revenues:

Summary Analysis:

Number of Localities Responding: 3 Cities, 6 Counties, 3 Towns, 0 Other

Localities estimated a negative fiscal impact as recurring operating and personnel expenses and some non-recurring expenses, and few localities indicated no impact.

Locality	Expenditure Narrative by Responding Localities
Albemarle County	The County has as many as ten (10) employees who would likely take military leave in a given year. At an average pay rate of \$35 per hour, the County's expenditures would increase approximately \$170,000 ($\$350 \times 388 = \$135,800 + 25\%$ (payroll taxes and benefits)).
Chesterfield County	From FY2020-2024, the five-year average of military leave pay for the Chesterfield County Police Department was \$120,600, and \$54,600 for the Sheriff's office. The county's current military leave policy for non-firefighters is 168 hours, the inclusion of law enforcement in the extended leave policy would be a 131% increase in leave hours allowed, which would result in a net increase of \$230,000 annually, assuming military leave tendencies remain the same among law enforcement. Additionally, there may be additional downstream effects related to personnel management, however, those cost are not captured in this analysis.
City of Norfolk	The City of Norfolk currently offers military leave up to 21 days per federal fiscal year for eligible employees, which includes public safety officers. This legislation would roughly double the city's existing military paid leave maximum for public safety officers by increasing the cap to 388 work hours.
City of Richmond	The legislation does create a fiscal impact for the City of Richmond. The value of the fiscal impact is due to Police and Fire personnel operating on different schedules. Police and Fire personnel working 40 hours a week would get 48.5 days while those working 56 hours as a regular schedule would get 34.7 days. Most Fire personnel work 56 hours as a regular schedule and this inequity would likely create negotiations for increased days (14 days) for Fire, and that is a fiscal impact for the city. The current cost for this legislation is roughly \$9,000 for one person. When multiplied by the applicable employees the impact has the potential to reach close to \$1 million.
City of Winchester	we generally have 3 employees a year on military leave at an increase of \$5,000 each
Fauquier County	Estimate is made from actual fiscal impact from 2024.
Mecklenburg County	We currently have no officers who would qualify for this benefit; therefore, the present cost to the locality is zero. However, if we had a law enforcement officer who did qualify, the cost per officer annually (federal fiscal year, which would be multiple county fiscal years) for an officer who used all 388 hours would range between \$9,000 (entry level officer) and \$11,000 (based on the current locality average officer salary).
Pulaski County	Minimum liability based on assumptions at 366 hours and the median salary and the eligible staff for the leave.
Smyth County	We have 8 deputies who are associated with the military and would be affected by this bill. While we currently put the employee on unpaid military time, that does not cost the County. However, should this bill go through, not only would we be paying for the officer who is on military duty, but we would also pay for his/her replacement. If this were to be controlled similar to jury duty (our employee gets paid but they in turn provide the County their jury duty check), the costs would be minimized.
Town of Chincoteague	

Locality	Expenditure Narrative by Responding Localities
Town of Christiansburg	There would be additional overtime costs for other officers to cover shifts from employees using expanded military leave. We currently allow 168 hours of paid military leave for approx. 4 employees within the Police Department. The average officer salary is \$70,700, so the overtime rate for 220 hours for 4 employees would be \$44,880 annually.
Town of Victoria	The Town of Victoria has a police department comprised of 5 personnel. The increase in expenditures would not only be for the employee that was deployed but also for overtime to continue to provide coverage in their absence.