

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB1162

Patron: Walker

Bill Title: State correctional facilities; required education or vocational training; earned sentence credits classification levels.

Bill Summary: Requires a prisoner in a state correctional facility, as a part of his reentry plan developed and implemented by the Department of Corrections, to complete a high school equivalency test or vocational, technical, or other certification prior to such prisoner's release. The bill also provides that the annual review of a prisoner's classification level for earned sentence credits shall include such prisoner's quantifiable or measurable progress, as available, in any programs, job assignments, and educational curricula in which he is participating, such as test scores achieved or completion of a high school equivalency test or other trade or vocational certification.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No

Items Impacted: None

Explanation: See below

Fiscal Summary:

To comply with testing and certification mandates, the Department of Corrections (DOC) states it would require additional staffing and IT infrastructure. Existing space limitations within facilities would also contribute to the cost of implementation. The fiscal impact of this bill is indeterminate.

Fiscal Analysis:

This bill modifies reentry planning requirements by mandating that each incarcerated individual completes a high school equivalency test or a vocational, technical, or trade certification prior to release, as applicable. As a result, the bill would increase demand for adult basic education, testing services, vocational instruction and credentialing capacity across correctional facilities. Per DOC, implementation would be constrained by physical capacity within the Department's facilities, many of which lack sufficient classrooms, testing areas and vocational training spaces to support higher participation. This bill would also expand the need for broadband connectivity and instructional technology that DOC's current IT infrastructure cannot support. Additionally, if program participation increases, DOC anticipates a corresponding need for more staff, resulting in higher implementation costs. Currently, the fiscal impact of this proposal cannot be reliably estimated. However, the DOC expects compliance will require additional resources due to current facility capacity, personnel and IT infrastructure constraints.

Other: None