

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 4409
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 28, 2024

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Establishes "Mass Violence Care Fund"; appropriates \$10 million.

Type of Impact: State expenditure increase from the General Fund.

Agencies Affected: Department of Law and Public Safety; Department of the Treasury; Department of Health.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	
State Expenditure Increase	Up to \$10 million.

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates the provisions of this bill would increase State expenditures up to \$10 million. The bill appropriates a total of \$10 million to provide a sustainable source of funds, through the Mass Violence Care Fund, to provide coverage for physical and behavioral health care expenses related to a mass violence event that are not paid for by insurance or any other source.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes the "Mass Violence Care Fund" and appropriates \$10 million.

Under the provisions of this bill, a Mass Violence Care Fund is established in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The fund is to be administered by the Victims of Crime Compensation Office (VCCO) and be used solely to provide a sustainable source of funds to provide coverage for physical and behavioral health care expenses related to a mass violence event that are not paid for by insurance or any other source.

The bill appropriates from the General Fund to the Department of Law and Public Safety \$10 million for the provision of that amount to the Mass Violence Care Fund. The moneys in the fund are to be invested and reinvested by the Director of the Division of Investment in the Department of the Treasury. All costs of administering the fund, including expenses incurred by the VCCO in administering the fund, are to be paid from the fund.

Under the bill, the VCCO is to make distributions from the fund in accordance with the following criteria and any rules or regulations adopted by the VCCO establishing eligibility

criteria: 1) only gains, interest, dividends, and other revenue earned on the moneys in the fund and any amounts gifted to the fund may be expended; 2) payments from the fund may be made only for an eligible victim's eligible expense; 3) payments from the fund to a victim for an eligible expense may not be made sooner than three years after the applicable mass violence event; and 4) payments may not be made to satisfy a financial commitment for services or expenses that would otherwise have been paid from another public or private source, including but not limited to Medicaid or private insurance.

Under the bill, the VCCO is to adopt rules and regulations establishing eligibility criteria for victims, mass violence events, and healthcare and other expenses and the VCCO is not to make any distributions from the fund prior to the adoption of the rules and regulations.

Further, the bill requires the Office of the Attorney General to establish a Mass Violence Care Fund Working Group. The purpose of the working group is to identify specific options and eligibility criteria to help ensure that individuals adversely affected by a mass violence event are provided some financial relief from physical and behavioral health care costs not paid for by insurance or some other source.

The bill requires the working group to consider and determine: 1) gaps in payments for physical and behavioral health care services for victims of mass violence events; 2) methods of investing the moneys in the Mass Violence Care Fund to ensure sustainable annual financial returns; 3) options for determining eligibility for distribution from the fund, including parameters for: a) who is considered a victim of a mass violence event; b) which healthcare costs are considered eligible expenses; and c) what constitutes a mass violence event; and 4) any other items the working group determines are necessary to carry out the purposes of the fund.

Under the bill, the working group is to issue a report containing its recommendations for eligibility requirements and rules and any recommendations for legislation to the VCCO no later than nine months after the bill's effective date.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates the provisions of this bill would increase State expenditures up to \$10 million. The bill appropriates a total of \$10 million to provide a sustainable source of funds, through the Mass Violence Care Fund, to provide coverage for physical and behavioral health care expenses related to a mass violence event that are not paid for by insurance or any other source.

The bill requires the Office of the Attorney General to establish a working group to issue a report containing its recommendations for eligibility requirements and rules and any recommendations for legislation to the VCCO within nine months after the bill's effective date. Depending on the office's resource allocation policies, the added initial workload may or may not augment the administrative expenditures of the office.

Section: Law and Public Safety

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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).