

Department of Planning and Budget
2017 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB 1853

House of Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Gilbert

3. Committee: Passed both houses

4. Title: Firearms training for victims of domestic violence

5. Summary:

The proposed legislation would require the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to reimburse any law-enforcement agency, institution of higher education, private or public institution or organization, or firearms training school for a firearms safety or training course or class provided to victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, stalking, and family abuse. To qualify for the reimbursement, the entity providing the training would have to meet the following conditions:

- Provide the training at no cost to the victim;
- Be approved by DCJS; and
- Utilize instructors certified by the National Rifle Association or by DCJS.

Any reimbursement for such firearms safety or training course or class would be from the Virginia Firearms Safety and Training for Sexual and Domestic Violence Victims Fund (“the Fund”), which the proposed legislation would establish. The legislation directs the Criminal Justice Services Board to establish the process for seeking reimbursement and authorizes it to impose limits on the amount of reimbursement that any entity may request. The bill limits the maximum amount that can be reimbursed in any single fiscal year to the total of the amount remaining in the fund at the end of the previous fiscal year plus any amount appropriated for the current fiscal year as provided in the general appropriation act.

In addition to approving firearms safety and training courses or classes and certifying firearms instructors, the legislation directs DCJS to disseminate a list of approved courses or classes. Furthermore, the legislation would require district and circuit courts, upon the issuance of a protective order, to provide the petitioner a list of the approved courses or classes.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: None.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Final. See Item 8 below.

8. Fiscal Implications:

To implement the legislation, DCJS would need to develop firearms training standards for victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, stalking, or family abuse. There would be a one-time cost of approximately \$25,000 to do the research and contract for the standards to be written, which the agency could absorb. The agency would also have to review approved firearms courses of the entities authorized by the legislation to offer such courses for reimbursement. This would be an ongoing activity, but, until it is known how many entities would apply to offer the training, it is not known if additional staff, and thus additional cost, would be needed to review these courses.

It is not feasible to project the amount of reimbursement that would be requested under the terms of the legislation, although the General Assembly provided a general fund appropriation of \$10,000 in the amendments to the budget bill for deposit into the Fund. Because the legislation does not provide a dedicated source of revenue for the Fund, other than specific appropriations and any gifts, donations, etc., it also is not possible to project whether this will be a sufficient balance in the Fund to meet the requests for reimbursement.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:

Department of Criminal Justice Services
Circuit and district courts
Magistrate offices
Local law enforcement agencies
Commonwealth's attorneys

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: None.

11. Other Comments: None.

Date: 3/14/2017