



September 23, 2025

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

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Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CB-068-2025 Code of Ethics

CB-068-2025 (*proposed by: Councilmember Fisher*)

Assigned to the Government Operations and Fiscal Policy (GOFP)

AN ACT CONCERNING CODE OF ETHICS for the purpose of amending the Prince George's County Code of Ethics to prohibit former Council Members of Prince George's County from assisting or representing another party for compensation in a matter that is the subject of legislative action from the Prince George's County Government for three calendar years from the date the official leaves County office; prohibiting a former Council Member's compensated representation in certain matters in which they participated as a Council Member; and generally relating to the Prince George's County Code of Ethics.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: No foreseen expenditures.

Revenues: No foreseen revenues.

Indirect Impact:

Potentially favorable.

Legislative Summary:

CB-068-2025¹ was presented on September 9th, 2025, and referred to the Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee. (GOFP) This proposed legislation would revise the Prince George's County Code of Ethics by requiring former County Council members to abstain from participation in any lawsuits, compensation, or any judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding against The Prince George's County Government. Former Council Members (who have ended their term) may not litigate or participate in assistance or representation of another party for compensation in a matter that is the subject of legislative action for three calendar years from the date the official leaves County office.

Current Law/Background:

This legislation adds and revises language to the County Code of Ethics, Subtitle 2, Sec. 2-293 of the County Code. It seeks to strengthen the limitations on former council members by lengthening the amount of time an official could participate in assistance or representation of matters that were compensatory and related to legislation; it also eliminates conflict of interest on matters that a former council member substantially participated in or voted on during their term in office.

Resource Personnel:

Josh Hamlin, Legislative Officer

Discussion/Policy Analysis:

The Code of Ethics for Prince George's County provides for participation prohibitions by both current and former employees and council members. Subtitle 2, Division 17, Sec. 2-293 (a) (2) (B) limits former council members to "assist or represent" other parties for compensation in a judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding that they "substantially participated" in or voted on when in office. The definitions for this section, however, do not define "substantially participated" so it is unclear to what extent participation would be deemed substantial. Other jurisdictions include similar language to the County's prohibitions: Montgomery County (Maryland) prohibits former employees, which include council members, in work or assistance with other parties in cases,

¹ [Prince George's County Council - Reference No. CB-068-2025](#)

contracts, and specific matters if there was significant participation.² According to their code, “significant participation” is *making a decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, rendering of advice, investigation, or similar action taken as an officer or employee. Significant participation ordinarily does not include program or legislative oversight, or budget preparation, review, or adoption.*³ The County Council may want to consider including a definition of “substantially participated” in its own code to ensure ambiguity is minimized.

The amendment to Sec. 2-293 (a) (2) (C) from one to three calendar years is justifiable in that judicial and quasi-judicial proceedings can often last for years; this proposed change in the Code reduces the circumstances that there may be a conflict of interest, given a former official may have an unfair advantage in a legislative matter, given their former representation with the Council.

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Enactment of CB-068-2025 is not expected to have a direct fiscal impact on the County. Although the Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) did not respond for a fiscal impact statement, little additional work or expenditures by the County is foreseen through this legislation.

- *Indirect Impact*

Enactment of CB-068-2025 could have a favorable indirect impact on the County by increasing the accountability and ethical behavior for former council members. By eliminating the ability for a former legislator from assisting in judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings with the County, this eliminates the possible connection of parties utilizing a former legislative official for their possible inside knowledge to gain favor in a legal case; it also eliminates the motivation for former officials in seeking such employment for compensation once they leave office. These factors could possibly modify one’s reason in running for office, as well as alter their behavior while in office.

- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget*

No.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The proposed Bill shall be effective forty-five (45) calendar days after it becomes law.

If you require additional information, or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please reach out to me via phone or email.

² Montgomery County Code, Sec. 19A-13

³ Montgomery County Code, Sec. 19A-13 (c)