

Council Bill 70-2025 Fiscal Analysis

Introduced: November 3, 2025

Fiscal Manager: Irene Wang

Legislative Intent: The purpose of this legislation is to approve a two-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between Howard County and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 3085, Council 3, AFL-CIO. The agreement is effective from **July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027**, and includes provisions that conflict with Title 1 “Human Resources” of the Howard County Code and the Employee Manual. The bill also authorizes compensation adjustments and premium pay provisions that extend into future fiscal years, requiring Council approval.

ANALYSIS

Fiscal Impact:

The estimated fiscal impact for FY 2026 is \$390,000. According to the response provided by the Administration, the estimate was calculated by subtracting the FY 2026 base salary with no Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) from the estimated FY 2026 base salary that includes a 3% mid-year COLA. To this difference, the Administration added fringe benefits of 7.65% for FICA and 13.4% for retirement contributions. Step increases were not included in this estimate. We have an outstanding question to confirm that the mid-year COLA is included in the FY 2026 budget.

The estimated fiscal impact for FY 2027 is \$1.1 million. This estimate was calculated in a similar manner as noted above with the addition of a 2% mid-year COLA in FY 2027. Fringe benefits are applied at the same rates as in FY 2026. Step increases were not included in this estimate.

Other Notes:

The agreement includes a provision for a \$500 retention bonus for Local 3085 members if members of AFSCME Local 1810 or 3888 receive pay increases due to a compensation study during the term of the agreement. If the bonus is triggered, approximately 331 Local 3085 bargaining unit employees would receive the bonus at a cost of \$165,500. This cost is not included in the Administration’s fiscal impact estimates.

Approximately 190 employees from Locals 3085 and 3888 are expected to qualify for new or expanded premium pay provisions. These include, but are not limited to, interpreter pay, certified trainer stipends, and emissions technician premiums. Participation is subject to caps or approval requirements. For example, interpreter pay is limited to 10 employees per department, CDL trainer pay is limited to 5 unit members, and the emissions technician premium is capped at 6 employees. These premium pay costs are not included in the Administration’s fiscal impact estimates (See Attachment A). According to the response provided by the Administration, these costs will be absorbed within the approved FY 2026 departmental budgets and included in the proposed FY 2027 budgets.

The estimated cost of the joint pension study referenced in Section 21.1(g) of the agreement is \$25,000. This cost is not included in the fiscal impact estimates and will be absorbed within the approved FY 2026 budget.

Attachment A: Proposed Premium Pay in the Local 3085 Agreement

Section	Title	Provision
7.4	Meal Reimbursement	Up to \$20 with receipt
8.14	Certified Trainers	+ CDL trainer (\$1,500, max 5/unit)
8.18	Emission Technician Premium	\$1,000 annually (max 6)
8.22	Interpreter Pay	\$1,000 annually (max 10 per dept)