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| FROM | NAME & TITLE | Robert Cename, Chief <i>JCC for BK</i> | CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO |  |
| | AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS | Bureau of the Budget and Management Research Room 432, City Hall | | |
| | SUBJECT | City Council Bill #19-0410 The Baltimore City Trauma-Responsive Care Act. | | |

DATE:

TO

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
Room 400, City Hall

August 30, 2019

The Department of Finance is in receipt of Council Bill #19-0410. This legislation establishes the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force and its members; sets forth certain duties of the Task Force; requires certain agencies to designate certain individuals to undergo formal training in trauma-informed care and to perform certain other duties related to ensuring that certain agencies are delivering services in a manner consistent with best practices in trauma-informed care; requiring certain agencies to submit periodic progress reports to the Task Force; requiring the Task Force to submit an annual report to the Mayor and City Council regarding the re-orientation of certain city services to focus on trauma-informed care; reconstituting the current Office of Children, Youth, and Families to be the Office of Children and Family Success; making a primary duty of the Office of Children and Family Success to lead a citywide initiative to prioritize the trauma-responsive and trauma-informed delivery of services; defining certain terms; correcting and conforming related provisions; and generally relating to providing trauma-informed services to the citizens of Baltimore.

Background

Trauma is defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as the result of “an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being”.¹ In Maryland, more than four in 10 children have experienced a traumatic event and children in Baltimore are more likely to have experienced a traumatic event than children in other parts of the state.² Recognizing the importance of addressing trauma, there has been increased activity to provide trauma-informed care to Baltimore residents.

Following the civil unrest in 2015, the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) began providing trauma and mental health resources to residents and providing trauma-informed care trainings for city workers. BCHD has provided training with the support of SAMHSA to BCHD employees working in STD clinics, in the Needle Exchange program, at senior centers, and in-home visiting programs for pregnant women and children. These efforts are currently funded by General Funds and federal and state grants.

In 2016, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) began the work of transforming public schools in West Baltimore into trauma-sensitive schools with a \$2.3 million federal grant, which means that students have

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Trauma and Violence*.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/trauma-violence>.

² Meredith Cohn, The Baltimore Sun. *More than 40 percent of Maryland children experience traumatic events*.

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/health/bs-hs-adverse-childhood-experiences-20171018-story.html>.

access to full-time mental health clinicians, learn mindfulness and breathing exercises, and can go to “peace corners” to calm down.³ As the federal funding expires this year, funds are being used to train all staff, including teachers, administrators, and food workers, how to recognize and support traumatized students.

Additional supports are provided by Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland and are expanding to all schools with the placement of a full-time social worker in every school and the creation of “calming spaces” and “wholeness” sites for students in schools not designated as trauma-sensitive centers. In addition, as part of the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education interim report released in January 2019, behavioral health and trauma-informed services and training for staff in all schools are explicitly cited as policy recommendations to meet the needs of students across the state.⁴ These services and trainings may become a required mandate for BCPS as final recommendations are adopted by the General Assembly, which would ensure that all students have access to these services.

Fiscal Analysis

Council Bill 19-0410, as proposed, requires 12 agencies to designate two staff to participate in at least one formal training each year and attend work sessions and informal trainings. Additionally, the bill tasks these staff with advising the agency in trauma-responsiveness and trauma-responsive care, assessing training and technical assistance needs, and making recommendations to align agency policies and practices with a trauma-intensive approach. Based on conversations with the BCHD, the Department of Finance anticipates that the minimum training requirements of the bill could be absorbed by professional staff. The legislation requires that designated staff are trained by BCHD, which currently has the capacity to provide this training at no additional cost.

However, a requirement for more staff, specifically frontline staff, to be trained would have a fiscal impact for agencies with shift-based staffing structures. An example of this is in Fire with Emergency Medical Services and Fire Suppression and Emergency Rescue staff, where positions would have to be filled while employees attend trainings. There are 1,432 employees for these services and these employees receive on average \$45 per hour in overtime pay. Required attendance at an eight-hour training could cost as much as \$515,520. It is likely that other agencies, such as Department of Public Works and Department of Transportation, have similar staffing structures that would make training of frontline staff an expensive and unbudgeted cost.

Conclusion

The Department of Finance supports City Council 19-0410, as proposed. Recognizing the importance of trauma-informed and trauma-responsive services for residents, especially children and youth, the Department of Finance support the efforts to move the city in this direction. However, should the bill change to require more training for more staff, requests for additional funding for training will be required to go through the annual budget process.

cc: Henry Raymond
Matthew Stegman

³ David McFadden, Associated Press. *Baltimore schools’ mission: Help students cope with trauma*. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/education/bs-md-baltimore-trauma-sensitive-schools-20190731-7t5vkiketfg7pc473ysl7wsc4g-story.html>.

⁴ General Assembly of Maryland Department of Legislative Services. *Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education*. <http://dls.maryland.gov/policy-areas/commission-on-innovation-and-excellence-in-education#!>