

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 79TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 3, 2005

TO: Honorable Ray Allen, Chair, House Committee on County Affairs

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Deputy Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1928 by Moreno, Joe E. (Relating to the reimbursement of medical expenses incurred by county jailers and detention officers exposed to certain contagious diseases.), **As Introduced**

No fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would amend Section 607.001, Government Code, to add detention officers and county jailers to persons defined as a "public safety employee" for the purpose of reimbursement from the employing governmental entity for reasonable medical expenses incurred in treatment for the prevention of certain contagious diseases if exposure to the disease occurs during the course of the employment.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2005 and would apply to an exposure to a contagious disease that occurs on or after that date.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed the term "detention officer" does not apply to officers employed by the state's corrections systems (typically defined as corrections officers) and applies only to a detention facility in which a local government entity employs the officers.

Local Government Impact

A municipal jail or a county would incur costs related to medical expenses for prevention treatment for exposure of detention officers and county jailers to contagious diseases to which those officers and jailers may be exposed in the line of duty. The cost would vary by local government entity depending on the number of officers or jailers employed, whether an exposure occurs, and if an exposure occurs, how many officers are exposed.

According to Harris County (population 3.4 million), the provisions of the bill would add 500 county jailers and 214 juvenile probation detention officers to those persons the county would be required to provide preventative treatment or medical treatment if the disease is contracted. While the county has no applicable historical data, it estimates that prevention costs may range from \$20 to \$1,000 per individual per occurrence. Assuming a "semi-worst case scenario," the county estimates total costs for one exposure would be \$714,000.

Source Agencies: 694 Youth Commission, 696 Department of Criminal Justice

LBB Staff: JOB, DLBa