

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Resolution No. 57-2020

Introduced: April 6, 2020
Auditor: Michelle R. Harrod

Fiscal Impact:

Fiscal impact of this legislation includes the Council's portion of the video-conference platform.

According to the Department of Technology and Communication Services (DTCS), the annual cost to the County is approximately \$30,000. This includes 150 licenses at \$200 each. During the current State of Emergency, the County has been able to expand video-conference usage at no additional cost. However, moving forward if the Council maintains additional licenses, costs will increase by \$200 per additional license.

There are no additional hardware or software costs needed to support receiving testimony via telephone, or a web-based or video-conference platform as proposed in this legislation, according to DTCS.

Purpose:

Council Resolution 57-2020 further defines the **Conduct of public hearings** under *Rule 1.012 of Rules of Procedure for County Council of Howard County, Maryland*.

If passed, this legislation would add the following guidelines for public hearings during a state of emergency declared by the President of the United States, Governor, or County Executive in which public gatherings are declared to be a public health risk:

- Oral testimony may be allowed by telephone, or a web-based or video-conference platform;
- Testimony is limited to:
 - Two minutes per participant;
 - Three minutes for the sole representative of an entity; or
 - An amount of time as determined by the Council Chair;
- Participants must sign-up online by 7:00 p.m. the day before the hearing and provide contact information; and
- Participants must provide a telephone number to be used to notify the participants when and how to testify.

Other Comments:

None.