



Legislative Fiscal Office
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Bill Title: Relating to funding for services in domestic relations cases; declaring an emergency.

Government Unit(s) Affected: Counties, Judicial Department

Summary of Fiscal Impact

Costs related to the measure are anticipated to be minimal - see explanatory analysis.

Measure Description

The measure authorizes a county to increase fees to issue marriage licenses and registrations of domestic partnerships from \$10 to \$35 above the base statutory fee of \$25, for payment of mediation and conciliation services. Counties may also periodically increase the fee based on changes in the Consumer Price Index to account for standard inflation. The measure also creates a financial reporting requirement between counties, judges, and the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) to show the balance and expenditures from the county's accounts used for mediation and conciliation services.

Fiscal Analysis

The measure expands authority for county government to impose a fee up to \$35 above the base fee for use of mediation and conciliation services which the county will be required to report on the expenditures and accounts related to their mediation and conciliation services.

According to recent Oregon Health Authority data, there were 25,646 actual licenses and registrations in 2022. Using this data as a proxy, there is estimated to be about 51,292 licenses and registrations in a biennium. Under current law, county government may charge up to \$10 above the base fee, for a maximum \$35 per license/registration. This measure would allow county governments to charge up to \$35 above the base fee, for a maximum of \$60 per license/registration. If all counties increased fees to the maximum limit allowed by the measure, it would result in an additional \$1.3 million of revenue per biennium, for medication and conciliation services, across all 36 counties in Oregon. However, the revenue per county will be dependent on the amount of the fee and the number of licenses and registrations that occur.

Although the measure does not have a fiscal impact on the state government, it is important to note that for the 2025-27 biennium, OJD's current service level budget includes \$8.8 million General Fund for payments to counties to provide mediation and conciliation programs in circuit courts, and \$8.7 million General Fund to fund county law libraries. Counties are authorized by statute to use a portion of law library funding to support mediation and conciliation programs in circuit courts. The fee increase per license/registration will result in additional local funding for these mediation and conciliation services.

Relevant Dates

The measure declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.

The measure prescribes a first report due date of the quarterly reports by counties to be by October 31, 2025 and the first annual report due to the State Court Administrator by July 31, 2026.