

MEMORANDUM

March 6, 2026

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Christine Wellons, Chief Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Bill 11-26, Fire and Rescue Services - Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers – Amendments

PURPOSE: Worksession – Recommendation expected

Expected Attendees

Division Chief Kelley, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS)
George Lacy, Office of Labor Relations
President Hartung, Montgomery County Volunteers Fire Rescue Association (MCVFRA)

Bill 11-26, Fire and Rescue Services – Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers - Amendments, Lead Sponsored by Council President Fani-González at the request of the County Executive and by Co-Sponsor Councilmember Sayles, was introduced on February 10, 2026. A Public Hearing is scheduled for March 10. A worksession of the Public Safety (PS) Committee is scheduled for March 11.

Bill 11-22 would retroactively increase the amount of the length of service benefits to certain local fire and rescue department volunteers, pursuant to terms negotiated between MCVFRA and the Executive.

BACKGROUND

On December 9, 2025, the Executive requested the introduction of legislation to reflect the terms of an agreement between the Executive and the MCVFRA, effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026, [MCVFRA DBA 2023-2026.pdf](#).

The agreement contemplated that Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) benefits would increase for eligible members by 7.5% for FY2024 (which is already reflected in Section 21-21 of the County Code); by 4% for FY2025; and by 4% for FY2026.

BILL SPECIFICS

For eligible volunteers, the bill would increase LOSAP benefits by 4% beginning on July 1, 2024; and by 4% beginning on July 1, 2025.

The bill would thus reflect the terms of Article 25 of the current negotiated agreement between the County Executive and MCVFRA:

Article 25 - LOSAP

1. *Increase in LOSAP Benefits Effectively July 1, 2023 amend County Code Section 21-21(c) to increase the dollar amount of the LOSAP benefit payments by 8% for all members, and an additional 7.5% for certain individuals who meet the requirements under 21-21 (c)(6)(A) and (B).*
2. *Increase for Certain Individuals Currently Receiving LOSAP Benefit Payments Effective July 1, 2024 who meet the requirements under 21-21 (c)(6)(A) and (B) by 4% in years two and three of the agreement.*

SUMMARY OF IMPACT STATEMENTS

Fiscal Impact. The six-year fiscal impact is estimated to be \$110,500.

According to the Office of Management and Budget, “The first increase is retroactive to payments made since July 2024, and the second is retroactive to payments made since July 2025. The estimated cost was derived by applying a four-percent adjustment to the current monthly benefit rates of eligible recipients, followed by an additional four-percent increase, consistent with the provisions of the bill. Of the total \$25,500 impact in FY26, \$8,500 represents one-time costs associated with the retroactive adjustments, while \$17,000 reflects ongoing annual costs. Annual costs of \$17,000 are expected to continue in subsequent fiscal years. This analysis assumes no change in the number of LOSAP participants and no additional administrative costs beyond the one-time adjustment expense. Over the six-year period shown in the fiscal impact summary table, the total impact is \$110,500.”

Racial Equity and Social Justice. “The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 11-26 would have a minimal impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County. Increasing monthly Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) payments to fire and rescue volunteers as proposed in this Bill is not likely to meaningfully impact racial and social inequities and disparities in the County.”

Climate Assessment. “The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 11-26 will have no impact on the County’s contribution to addressing climate change as it is proposing changes to service benefits for some local fire and rescue department volunteers.”

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Public testimony is not available as of the date of the posting of this staff report on March 6, 2026.

ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE’S CONSIDERATION

1. Expedited Effective Date.

The Committee might wish to amend the bill to make it expedited. The expedited bill would take effect on the date that it is signed into law by the Executive. Without an expedited effective date, the bill would take effect on the 91st day after the Executive signs the bill into law.

NEXT STEP: Recommendation on whether to enact Bill 11-26.

<u>This packet contains:</u>	<u>Circle #</u>
Bill 11-26	1
County Executive Memo	5
Fiscal Impact Statement	11
Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement	13
Climate Assessment	16

The Economic Impact Statement will be available at [Racial Equity and Social Justice, Economic, and Climate Impact Statements - Office of Legislative Oversight- Montgomery County, Maryland](#)

Bill No. 11-26
Concerning: Fire and Rescue Services -
Length of Service Awards Program for
Volunteers – Amendments
Revised: 2/10/2026 Draft No. 2
Introduced: February 10, 2026
Expires: December 7, 2026
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: None
Ch. _____, Laws of Mont. Co. _____

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsor: Council President at the request of the County Executive
Co-Sponsor: Councilmember Sayles

AN ACT to:

- (1) increase the amount of length of service benefits to certain local fire and rescue department volunteers; and
- (2) generally amend the law regarding local fire and rescue department volunteers.

By amending:

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 21, Fire and Rescue Services
Sections 21-21

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

Sec. 1. Sections 21-21 are amended as follows:

21-21. Length of service award program for volunteers.

* * *

(c) *Length of service benefits.*

(1) Volunteers Who Qualified Before 1985. Effective January 1, 1985, any volunteer who qualified for a monthly award payment before January 1, 1985, must receive monthly award payments equal to 150 percent of the pre-1985 monthly award payment. Effective July 1, 2023, any volunteer who receives a monthly award payment under this subsection must receive an 8 percent increase in the amount of the monthly award.

(2) Volunteers Who Qualify in 1985 or Later — 25 Years of Service.

(A) Effective January 1, 1985, a volunteer qualifies for a 25-year award payment when the volunteer:

[(ii) (a)] (i) is at least age 55, if the volunteer completed 25 years as an active volunteer before 1996[,] ; or

[(b)] (ii) is any age, if the volunteer completed 25 years as an active volunteer on or after January 1, 2004.

(B) A volunteer who qualifies under this paragraph must receive an award payment of:

(i) \$259.20 per month for life; and

(ii) \$13.01 per month for life each year of service as an active volunteer over 25 years (up to \$130.10 per month). The maximum total benefit is \$389.35 per month.

(3) Volunteers Who Qualify in 1985 or Later — 15 years of Service.

(A) Effective January 1, 1985, a volunteer qualifies for a 15-year award payment when the volunteer:

- (i) has served 15 years as an active volunteer after January 1, 1955; and
- (ii) is at least age 60.

(B) A volunteer who qualifies under this paragraph must receive an award payment of \$10.37 per month for life for each year of service as an active volunteer.

(4) Volunteers Who Qualify in 1985 or Later — 10 Years of Service

(A) Effective January 1, 1985, a volunteer qualifies for a 10-year award payment when the volunteer:

- (i) has served 10 years as an active volunteer; and
- (ii) is at least age 65.

(B) A volunteer who qualifies under this paragraph must receive an award payment of \$10.37 per month for life for each year of service as an active volunteer.

(5) All years of service, including past years of service, must be included.

(6) A volunteer who meets the criteria under paragraph (7) of this subsection must receive;

(A) a 7.5 percent increase to his or her LOSAP benefit payment effective July 1, 2023[, for a maximum LOSAP monthly benefit payment of no more than \$466.16 if the volunteer:];

(B) effective July 1, 2024, a 4 percent increase to their LOSAP benefit payment based on LOSAP point totals on December 31, 2023; and

(C) effective July 1, 2025, a 4 percent increase to their LOSAP benefit payment based on LOSAP point totals on December 31, 2024.

[(A)] (7) A volunteer must receive the benefit increases under paragraph (6) of this Section if the volunteer:

(A) received LOSAP benefit payments [as of December 31, 2022] in a prior year; and

(B) qualified for the higher nominal fee, as described in Article 12 of the fire and rescue volunteers collective bargaining agreement, for calendar year 2022, 2023, or 2024, respectively, by:

(i) being on the Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS) certified list;

(ii) receiving 30 LOSAP points for department or station responses; and

(iii) receiving 20 LOSAP points for sleep-in or stand-by service.

* * *

Sec. 2. Expedited Effective Date or Effective Date. The Council declares that this legislation is necessary for the immediate protection of the public interest. This Act takes effect on the date on which it becomes law.



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

December 9, 2025

TO: Natali Fani-González , President
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive 

SUBJECT: Bill XX-26 Fire and Rescue Service – Personnel - Amendments

I am recommending the enclosed legislation that would amend County Code Chapter 21, Section 21-21, Fire and Rescue Service – Personnel.

This bill implements two four percent Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) payment increases for certain volunteer fire and rescue members in accordance with the currently effective 2023-2026 Memorandum of Agreement between the County and the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCVFRA). The first increase is retroactive to monthly LOSAP payments made since July 2024, and the second increase is retroactive to payments made since July 2025. Both increases are ongoing and apply to eligible volunteers currently receiving LOSAP benefits.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Michael Kelley, Division Chief, Volunteer Services at michael.kelley@montgomerycountymd.gov

Enclosures: Proposed Bill XX-26
Legislative Request Report – Bill XX-26
FIS – Bill XX-26

cc: Tommy Heyboer, Chief of Staff to the Council President, Montgomery County Council
Craig Howard, Executive Director, Montgomery County Council
Richard S. Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer
Fariba Kassiri, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Tricia Swanson, Director of Strategic Partnerships
Jennifer Harling, Chief Labor Relations Officer, Office of Labor Relations
Traci L. Anderson, Director, Office of Human Resources
Corey Smedley, Chief, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service
Jennifer Bryant, Director, Office of Management and Budget

Bill No. _____
Concerning: Fire and Rescue Services -
Personnel – Amendments
Revised: __ Draft No. _____
Introduced: _____
Expires: _____
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: None
Ch. _____, Laws of Mont. Co. _____

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: Council President at the request of the County Executive

AN ACT to:

- (1) amend the code to reflect a directly negotiated agreement.

By amending:

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 21, Fire and Rescue Services
Section 21-21

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

Sec. 1. Section 21-21 is amended as follows:

Sec. 21-21. Length of service award program for volunteers.

* * *

(c) Length of service benefits.

(1) Volunteers Who Qualified Before 1985. Effective January 1, 1985, any volunteer who qualified for a monthly award payment before January 1, 1985, must receive monthly award payments equal to 150 percent of the pre-1985 monthly award payment. Effective July 1, 2023, any volunteer who receives a monthly award payment under this subsection must receive an 8 percent increase in the amount of the monthly award.

(2) Volunteers Who Qualify in 1985 or Later — 25 Years of Service.

(A) Effective January 1, 1985, a volunteer qualifies for a 25-year award payment when the volunteer:

[(ii)] (i) [(a)] is at least age 55, if the volunteer completed 25 years as an active volunteer before 1996, or

[(b)] (ii) is any age, if the volunteer completed 25 years as an active volunteer on or after January 1, 2004.

(B) A volunteer who qualifies under this paragraph must receive an award payment of:

(i) \$259.20 per month for life; and

(ii) \$13.01 per month for life each year of service as an active volunteer over 25 years (up to \$130.10 per month). The maximum total benefit is \$389.35 per month.

(3) Volunteers Who Qualify in 1985 or Later — 15 years of Service.

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(i) has served 15 years as an active volunteer after January 1, 1955; and

(ii) is at least age 60.

(B) A volunteer who qualifies under this paragraph must receive an award payment of \$10.37 per month for life for each year of service as an active volunteer.

(4) Volunteers Who Qualify in 1985 or Later — 10 Years of Service

(A) Effective January 1, 1985, a volunteer qualifies for a 10-year award payment when the volunteer:

(i) has served 10 years as an active volunteer; and

(ii) is at least age 65.

(B) A volunteer who qualifies under this paragraph must receive an award payment of \$10.37 per month for life for each year of service as an active volunteer.

(5) All years of service, including past years of service, must be included.

(6) A volunteer must receive a 7.5 percent increase to his or her LOSAP benefit payment effective July 1, 2023, [for a maximum LOSAP monthly benefit payment of no more than \$466.16] and effective July 1, 2024, must receive a 4 percent increase in year two of the agreement based on LOSAP totals on December 31, 2023, and a 4 percent increase in year three of the agreement based on LOSAP totals on December 31, 2024, if the volunteer:

(A) received LOSAP benefit payments [as of December 31, 2022]; and

(B) qualified for the higher nominal fee, as described in Article 12 of the fire and rescue volunteers collective bargaining agreement, for calendar [year] years 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively, by:

(i) being on the Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS) certified list;

(ii) receiving 30 LOSAP points for department or station responses; and

(iii) receiving 20 LOSAP points for sleep-in or stand-by service.

* * *

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56 **Sec. 2. Expedited Effective Date or Effective Date.**

57 The Council declares that this legislation is necessary for the immediate
58 protection of the public interest. This Act takes effect on the date on which it becomes
59 law.

60 *Approved:*

61

Natali Fani-González, President, County Council	Date
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62 *Approved:*

63

Marc Elrich, County Executive	Date
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64 *This is a correct copy of Council action.*

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Sara R. Tenenbaum, Clerk of the Council	Date
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APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

By: *Elizabeth Haynos*
Assistant County Attorney

Date: 11/7/2025

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Expedited Bill XX-26

Fire and Rescue Services – Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers

DESCRIPTION:	This Bill would amend the County Code to increase the amount of the length of service awards program (LOSAP) benefits to certain local fire and rescue department volunteers.
PROBLEM:	Changes to LOSAP require legislation to take effect.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:	Provide the changes necessary in the Code to allow a certain provision in the negotiated settlement between the County and Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association to take effect.
COORDINATION:	Office of Labor Relations Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans
FISCAL IMPACT:	Office of Management and Budget
ECONOMIC IMPACT:	Office of Legislative Oversight
EVALUATION:	N/A
EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE:	N/A
SOURCE OF INFORMATION:	Jennifer Harling, Office of Labor Relations
APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES:	N/A
PENALTIES:	N/A



Fiscal Impact Statement

Office of Management and Budget

Bill XX-26 Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers

Bill Summary

This bill provides for two four percent increases to Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) payments for certain volunteer fire and rescue members. The first increase is retroactive to monthly LOSAP payments made since July 2024, and the second increase is retroactive to payments made since July 2025. Both increases are ongoing and apply to eligible volunteers currently receiving LOSAP benefits.

Fiscal Impact Summary

The bill is estimated to have a cost of \$25,500 in FY26, including \$8,500 in one-time costs and \$17,000 in ongoing costs. Annual expenditures of \$17,000 are projected to continue each year thereafter.

Fiscal Year	26	27	28	29	30	31	Total
Personnel Costs	\$25,500	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$110,500
Operating Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$25,500	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000	\$110,500
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Impact	(\$25,500)	(\$17,000)	(\$17,000)	(\$17,000)	(\$17,000)	(\$17,000)	(\$110,500)
FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Increases to monthly LOSAP benefit payments for eligible volunteer fire and rescue members. The first increase is retroactive to payments made since July 2024, and the second is retroactive to payments made since July 2025. The estimated cost was derived by applying a four-percent adjustment to the current monthly benefit rates of eligible recipients, followed by an additional four-percent increase, consistent with the provisions of the bill.

Of the total \$25,500 impact in FY26, \$8,500 represents one-time costs associated with the retroactive adjustments, while \$17,000 reflects ongoing annual costs. Annual costs of \$17,000 are expected to continue in subsequent fiscal years. This analysis assumes no change in the number of LOSAP participants and no additional administrative costs beyond the one-time adjustment expense. Over the six-year period shown in the fiscal impact summary table, the total impact is \$110,500.

Staff Impact

The bill is not expected to impact staff time or duties.

The actuarial analysis supporting this bill is based on the same valuation used for the FY23 LOSAP amendments. That analysis assumed the full package of benefit adjustments negotiated at that time, including the 8 percent increase, the 7.5 percent increase, and the additional 4 percent increases in FY25 and FY26. The original FY23 actuarial report included the cost impact associated with each of these components, therefore the impact of the changes in this bill is a subset of the total in the actuarial report. The actual annual costs will depend on the number of volunteers who meet the benefit thresholds in each year, but the projected impacts in the attached actuarial analysis are consistent with the limited scope of amendments in Expedited Bill XX-26.

Actuarial Analysis

MONTGOMERY COUNTY Length of Service Award Program for Volunteers 20-Year Projection of Benefit Payments Based on an Actuarial Valuation Date and Census Data as of December 31, 2020						
Year Beginning January 1	Reflects Increases Effective in 2021			In 2022	In 2023	Change ¹
	Annuity Benefits	Death Benefits	Total Benefits	Total Benefits	Total Benefits	Total Benefits
2021	\$ 1,557,897	\$ 78,959	\$ 1,636,857			
2022	1,598,765	81,997	1,680,762			
2023	1,631,363	85,092	1,716,455	\$ 1,720,938	\$ 1,791,863	\$ 70,925
2024	1,664,914	88,355	1,753,269	1,762,201	1,910,089	147,888
2025	1,702,908	91,384	1,794,292	1,803,182	1,961,965	158,783
2026	1,742,118	94,462	1,836,579	1,845,426	2,011,255	165,829
2027	1,772,742	97,470	1,870,211	1,879,006	2,046,855	167,849
2028	1,791,945	100,320	1,892,265	1,900,992	2,070,010	169,018
2029	1,796,674	102,975	1,899,648	1,908,286	2,077,283	168,997
2030	1,810,965	105,521	1,916,486	1,925,036	2,094,798	169,762
2031	1,817,896	107,602	1,925,498	1,933,948	2,103,885	169,937
2032	1,810,321	109,372	1,919,693	1,928,026	2,096,893	168,867
2033	1,822,790	110,899	1,933,689	1,941,898	2,111,276	169,378
2034	1,824,157	112,201	1,936,357	1,944,433	2,113,425	168,992
2035	1,836,922	113,305	1,950,228	1,958,160	2,127,664	169,504
2036	1,828,014	114,226	1,942,239	1,950,014	2,118,266	168,252
2037	1,813,728	114,986	1,928,714	1,936,317	2,102,860	166,543
2038	1,789,169	115,616	1,904,785	1,912,199	2,076,219	164,020
2039	1,774,683	116,147	1,890,830	1,898,050	2,060,286	162,236
2040	1,754,188	116,593	1,870,781	1,877,793	2,037,738	159,945
2023-2040 Change	\$ 31,985,496	\$ 1,896,524	\$ 33,882,020	\$ 34,025,905	\$ 36,912,630	\$ 2,886,725

Projection includes benefits for participants of the Program as of December 31, 2020 only. Projected benefits for future members are not included.
¹ The change in total projected benefits includes the proposed 2023 changes (8.0% increase, 7.5% increase effective July 1, 2023, and two additional 4.0% increases effective July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025, for certain eligible participants) and is the difference between the projected benefits including the proposed changes effective in 2023 and the projected benefits including the changes effective in 2022.



Montgomery County Length of Service Award Program for Volunteers



Information Technology Impact	The bill is not expected to impact the County Information Technology (IT) or Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.
Other Information	
<i>Later actions that may impact revenue or expenditures if future spending is projected</i>	The bill does not authorize future spending.
<i>Contributors</i>	Michael Kelley, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Dominic Del Pozzo, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Vivian Ikoro, Office of Management and Budget



Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

BILL 11-26: FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES - LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEERS - AMENDMENTS

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 11-26 would have a minimal impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County. Increasing monthly Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) payments to fire and rescue volunteers as proposed in this Bill is not likely to meaningfully impact racial and social inequities and disparities in the County.

PURPOSE OF RESJ IMPACT STATEMENTS

RESJ impact statements (RESJIS) evaluate the anticipated impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice in the County. RESJ is a **process** that focuses on centering the needs, leadership, and power of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) and communities with low incomes. RESJ is also a **goal** of eliminating racial and social inequities. Applying a RESJ lens is essential to achieve RESJ.¹ This involves seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social inequities that cause racial and social disparities.²

PURPOSE OF BILL 11-26

As described by Council staff, the Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) is a County program that:

“provides a monthly pension for members of a Local Fire and Rescue Department [LFRD] who have provided volunteer fire and rescue service for a certain number of years. It is similar to the defined benefit pension for career fire and rescue employees, although the amount of the pension is significantly lower. The County pays for these benefits in budget appropriations instead of establishing a trust fund.”³

Any changes to LOSAP are negotiated between the County and the authorized representative of LFRDs, which is the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCVFRA).

The purpose of Bill 11-26 is to implement provisions from a 2023-2026 Memorandum of Agreement between the County and MCVFRA. If enacted, Bill 11-26 would provide two four percent LOSAP payment increases for certain volunteer fire and rescue members. The first increase would apply retroactively to monthly LOSAP payments made since July 2024, and the second would apply retroactively to payments made since July 2025.⁴ The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimates the proposed increase in LOSAP payments would increase County expenditures by a total of \$110,500 over the next six years.⁵

The Council introduced Bill 11-26 on behalf of the County Executive on February 10, 2026.

This RESJIS builds on the one for Expedited Bill 21-23, which OLO published in April 2023.⁶ It also builds on the one for Expedited Bill 41-23, which OLO published in November 2023.⁷ Please refer to the RESJIS for Bill 21-23 for background on fire personnel and racial equity.

RESJ Impact Statement

Bill 11-26

ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

To consider the anticipated impact of Bill 11-26 on RESJ in the County, OLO recommends the consideration of two related questions:

- Who would primarily benefit or be burdened by this bill?
- What racial and social inequities could passage of this bill weaken or strengthen?

Eligible fire and rescue volunteers would benefit from increases to their monthly LOSAP payments. Data in Table A (Appendix) shows the County's fire and rescue volunteers are predominantly White. Black, Latinx, and to a lesser extent, Asian community members are underrepresented among fire and rescue volunteers.

As noted in the RESJIS for Bill 41-23, increased benefits through LOSAP could attract more people to volunteer firefighting roles in the County. However, absent changes to recruitment strategy and organizational culture, this incentive alone is not likely to attract and retain sufficient BIPOC volunteers to improve disproportionalities in racial and ethnic representation among fire and rescue volunteers.⁸ Further, in general, the small amount of resources devoted to this Bill is not likely to meaningfully impact racial inequities and disparities in the County.

Therefore, OLO anticipates Bill 11-26 would have a minimal impact on RESJ in the County.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The County's RESJ Act requires OLO to consider whether to recommend amendments to bills that could reduce racial and social inequities and advance RESJ.⁹ OLO anticipates Bill 11-26 would have a minimal impact on RESJ in the County. As such, OLO does not offer recommended amendments. However, should the Council seek to improve the RESJ impact of this Bill, OLO offers one policy option for Council consideration:

- **Review findings and recommendations from comprehensive equity assessment with Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) and BIPOC community stakeholders.** In September 2022, the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) published a comprehensive equity assessment for MCFRS. NAPA was tasked with evaluating the following areas in MCFRS through the lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):¹⁰
 - Internal practices (recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, evaluations);
 - Member perceptions of organizational commitment to DEI;
 - Knowledge of community characteristics;
 - Citizen complaints and outcomes;
 - Emergency and non-emergency calls for service; and
 - Trust and knowledge of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint process.

The Council could discuss findings and recommendations from the report with MCFRS staff and BIPOC community stakeholders to identify policy solutions and investments for diversifying the MCFRS workforce, including volunteers, and addressing other RESJ concerns arising from the assessment. For instance, the report recognized that reactivating and investing in MCFRS's high school cadet program, including making it a paid program, could be a promising strategy for increasing diversity in MCFRS.

RESJ Impact Statement

Bill 11-26

CAVEATS

Two caveats to this RESJIS should be noted. First, predicting the impact of bills on RESJ is challenging due to data limitations, uncertainty, and other factors. Second, this RESJIS is intended to inform the Council's decision-making process rather than determine it. Thus, any conclusion made in this statement does not represent OLO's endorsement of, or objection to, the bill under consideration.

APPENDIX

Table A: County Fire and Rescue Volunteers by Race and Ethnicity, 2022¹¹

Race or ethnicity	% MCFRS Volunteers	% County Population
Asian	12.4	15.4
Black	6.4	18.6
Native American	0.2	0.6
Pacific Islander	0.3	0.0
White	70.8	42.1
Latinx	8.3	21.0

Source: ["Building Organizational Capacity for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Fire and Rescue Service,"](#) National Academy of Public Administration, pg. 56 and [Table DP05](#), 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau.

¹ Definition of racial equity and social justice adopted from M. Gamblin et al., ["Applying Racial Equity to U.S. Federal Nutrition Programs,"](#) Bread for the World and [Racial Equity Tools](#).

² Ibid.

³ [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 21-23](#), Montgomery County Council, Introduced November 14, 2023, pg. 2.

⁴ [Introduction Staff Report for Bill 11-26](#), Montgomery County Council, Introduced February 10, 2026.

⁵ Fiscal Impact Statement for Bill 11-26, [Introduction Staff Report for Bill 11-26](#), pg. (11).

⁶ [RESJIS for Expedited Bill 21-23](#), Office of Legislative Oversight, April 25, 2023.

⁷ [RESJIS for Expedited Bill 41-23](#), Office of Legislative Oversight, March 2, 2026.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ [Bill 27-19, Administration – Human Rights – Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice – Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee – Established, Montgomery County Council.](#)

¹⁰ ["Building Organizational Capacity for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Fire and Rescue Service,"](#) NAPA, September 2022.

¹¹ Racial groups included in this table are non-Latinx.

Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

BILL 11-26: FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEERS - AMENDMENTS

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Bill 11-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as it is proposing changes to service benefits for some local fire and rescue department volunteers.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 11-26

The Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) is a County program that:

“provides a monthly pension for members of a Local Fire and Rescue Department [LFRD] who have provided volunteer fire and rescue service for a certain number of years. It is similar to the defined benefit pension for career fire and rescue employees, although the amount of the pension is significantly lower. The County pays for these benefits in budget appropriations instead of establishing a trust fund.”¹

Any changes to LOSAP are negotiated between the County and the authorized representative of LFRDs, which is the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCVFRA).

The purpose of Bill 11-26 is to implement provisions from a 2023-2026 Memorandum of Agreement between the County and MCVFRA. The provisions would provide **two** 4% LOSAP payment increases for certain volunteer fire and rescue members. The first increase would apply retroactively to monthly LOSAP payments made since July 2024, and the second would apply retroactively to payments made since July 2025.² The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimate the proposed increase to LOSAP payments would increase County expenditures by a total of \$110,500 over the next six years.

The Council introduced Bill 11-26 on behalf of the County Executive on February 10, 2026.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

As the Bill proposes changes to service benefits for some local fire and rescue department volunteers, OLO anticipates Bill 11-26 will have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions and community climate resilience.

RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Climate Assessment Act requires OLO to offer recommendations, such as amendments or other measures to mitigate any anticipated negative climate impacts.³ OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Bill 11-26 is likely to have no impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, including the reduction and/or sequestration of greenhouse gas emissions and community climate resilience.

CAVEATS

OLO notes two caveats to this climate assessment. First, predicting the impacts of legislation upon climate change is a challenging analytical endeavor due to data limitations, uncertainty, and the broad, global nature of climate change. Second, the analysis performed here is intended to inform the legislative process, not determine whether the Council should enact legislation. Thus, any conclusion made in this statement does not represent OLO's endorsement of, or objection to, the bill under consideration.

PURPOSE OF CLIMATE ASSESSMENTS

The purpose of the Climate Assessments is to evaluate the anticipated impact of legislation on the County's contribution to addressing climate change. These climate assessments will provide the Council with a more thorough understanding of the potential climate impacts and implications of proposed legislation, at the County level. The scope of the Climate Assessments is limited to the County's contribution to addressing climate change, specifically upon the County's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and how actions suggested by legislation could help increase the County's community climate resilience.

While co-benefits such as health and cost savings may be discussed, the focus is on how proposed County bills may impact GHG emissions and community climate resilience.

CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

¹ Christine Wellons to County Council, [Memorandum: Expedited Bill 41-23, Fire and Rescue Services – Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers – Amendments](#), November 9, 2023.

² Montgomery County Council, [Introduction Staff Report for Bill 11-26, Fire and Rescue Services - Length of Service Awards Program for Volunteers – Amendments](#), February 10, 2026.

³ Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022