

Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

EXPEDITED BILL 6-26: FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES - EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM - USE OF REVENUES

SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Expedited Bill 6-26 will have a minimal impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County. Codifying the County's existing practice of distributing emergency medical services transport revenues to the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association is not likely to meaningfully benefit or burden community members by race or ethnicity nor impact racial and social inequities 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 EXPEDITED BILL 6-26

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) provide emergency medical, fire and rescue services across the County. MCFRS provides these services through a combined career and volunteer system that operates out of 37 fire stations.³ Nineteen of these stations are local fire and rescue departments (LFRD) staffed by volunteer firefighters.⁴

To provide ambulance transports – or emergency medical services transports (EMST) – MCFRS bills health insurance providers. EMST revenues are used to provide equipment, enhancement, and training for MCFRS and LFRDs. County law requires that 15 percent of net EMST revenues be allocated annually to support LFRDs.⁵ Historically, the County has distributed these funds to the representative for the LFRDs, the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCVFRA).^{6,7}

In 2025, the County's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found distributing EMST funds to the MCVFRA was inconsistent with County Code.⁸ The purpose of Bill 6-26 is to update County Code to respond to the OIG's finding. If enacted, Bill 6-26 would explicitly allow the distribution of EMST funds to the LFRD representative. The funds could continue to be used for the following purposes already established in County law:⁹

- Apparatus for LFRDs;
- Facilities for LFRDs;
- Training for volunteers;
- Gear and equipment for volunteers;
- Administrative staff;
- Volunteer recruitment and retention; and
- Volunteer stand-by support.

The Council introduced Expedited Bill 6-26 on February 3, 2026.

RESJ Impact Statement

Expedited Bill 6-26

In April 2024, OLO published a RESJIS for Bill 9-24, Group G Pension – Social Security Integration.¹⁰ Please read this RESJIS for background on fire personnel and racial equity.

ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

To consider the anticipated impact of Bill 6-26 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?

OLO anticipates Bill 6-26 will have a minimal impact on RESJ in the County. Bill 6-26 would codify the County's existing practice of distributing EMST revenues to the MCVFRA. This is not likely to meaningfully benefit or burden community members by race or ethnicity nor impact racial and social inequities 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.¹¹ OLO anticipates Expedited Bill 6-26 will have a minimal impact on RESJ in the County. As such, OLO does not offer recommended amendments.

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.

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

² Ibid.

³ ["Fire and Rescue Service,"](#) Operating Budget, Montgomery County Government.

⁴ [Home](#), Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Rescue Association.

⁵ [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 6-26](#), Montgomery County Council, Introduced February 3, 2026, pgs. 1-2.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ ["Councilmembers Luedtke, Katz, and Mink Introduce Bill to Support Volunteer Firefighters,"](#) Press Release, Montgomery County Council, February 3, 2026.

⁸ [Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 6-26](#), pg. 2.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ [RESJIS for Bill 9-24](#), Office of Legislative Oversight, April 26, 2024.

¹¹ [Bill 27-19, Administration – Human Rights – Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice – Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee – Established, Montgomery County Council](#).