



DOAA

Georgia Department
of Audits & Accounts

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

November 15, 2024

Honorable Karen Lupton
State Representative
611-C Coverdell Legislative Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note
House Bill (LC 57 0141)

Dear Representative Lupton:

The bill would modify the definition of a forensic medical examination (FME) to include an examination for evidence of strangulation. The definition is within statute governing payments for forensic medical examinations by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The bill has no effective date.

CJCC estimates that any additional costs that may result from the bill could be funded with existing resources of the Crime Victims Compensation Program. Costs would be limited by two factors: 1) the bill does not change the limit that FMEs are reimbursable only in cases of rape and sodomy, and 2) the bill does not change the \$1,000 reimbursable limit for FMEs.

Strangulation exams may already be performed and reimbursed as part of an FME. The program reimburses for medical facility fees, professional fees, and colposcopy/digital imaging, billing components that would cover a strangulation exam. Because strangulation exams are not specifically included in current law, it is possible that providers may not be performing or submitting them for reimbursement.

According to CJCC, there were 3,736 FMEs in FY 2024 reimbursed at an average amount of \$854. If there was a suspicion of strangulation in every case and the additional reimbursement reached the \$1,000 cap, the additional cost to the program under the bill would have been approximately \$543,000. Because not all FMEs include a suspicion of strangulation and strangulation exams could be present in some existing bills, the actual cost increase would have been lower.

Respectfully,

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

Richard Dunn, Director
Office of Planning and Budget

GSG/RD/mt