152nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL NOTE

BILL:	**HOUSE BILL NO. 213**
SPONSOR:	**Representative Lynn**
DESCRIPTION:	**AN ACT PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE IV OF THE DELAWARE CONSTITUTION RELATING TO THE FAMILY COURT.**

Assumptions:

1. This Act becomes effective upon the passage of a concurring act of the 153rd General Assembly.

2. This Act increases the number of Associate Judges in the Family Court from 17 to 19.

3. Each additional Associate Judge of the Family Court requires support staff to manage their courtroom effectively. An additional FTE Court Security Officer, FTE Judicial Secretary, FTE Law Clerk, FTE Judicial Case Manager II, and FTE Judicial Case Supervisor would be necessary for each Associate Judge.

4. For purposes of this fiscal projection, it is assumed that the earliest this Act could become effective is during the first session of the 153rd General Assembly (January 2025 – June 2025), during Fiscal Year 2025.

5. The estimated Fiscal Year 2025 personnel costs, including OECs at a rate of 24.84% for the Judicial Officers, and 32.25% for support staff, for 2.0 FTE, Associate Judge – Family Court; 2.0 FTE, Court Security Officer; 2.0 FTE, Judicial Secretary; 2.0 FTE, Law Clerk; 2.0 FTE, Judicial Case Manager II; and 2.0 FTE, Judicial Case Supervisor are estimated at $343,138, and one-time funding of $66,200 for projected technology equipment, furniture, uniforms, and other startup costs associated with the new positions. An additional annual cost of $12,500 is estimated for mileage, contractual services, and supplies and materials expenses associated with the new positions.

6. Until the new Family Court facilities are completed in Kent and Sussex counties, some staff or operations will need to be relocated to find suitable space for these new judicial officers and their staff in the existing courthouses. There will likely be a need for temporary leased space. However, costs for this are unknown and indeterminable at this time.

7. Lastly, all Fiscal Year 2025 personnel costs have been estimated for three months of funding, with the annualization of the remaining nine months incorporated into the subsequent year estimate as it is assumed the passage of a concurring act, nomination, and confirmation process may take several months. Additionally, a 2% inflation cost has been included for projected increases in salary, health insurance, and OECs.

Cost:

	One-Time	**Recurring/Operating**
Fiscal Year 2024:	Not in Effect	Not in Effect
Fiscal Year 2025:	$66,200	$355,638
Fiscal Year 2026:		$1,412,503

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Office of the Controller General