



**Committee:** GO  
**Committee Review:** Completed  
**Staff:** Livhu Ndou, Legislative Attorney  
**Purpose:** Final action – vote expected  
**Keywords:** #SpecialProjectsManager  
#OfficeoftheCountyExecutive  
#OfficeoftheChiefAdministrativeOfficer

AGENDA ITEMS#4F&5C  
March 21, 2023  
**Action**

## SUBJECT

Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager

Executive Regulation 24-22, Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer

Lead Sponsor: Council President Glass at the request of the County Executive

## INVITED ATTENDEES

Richard Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer  
Fariba Kassiri, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

## COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- To take action on Bill 4-23 – roll call vote expected
- GO Committee recommends approval of Bill 4-23 with amendment
- To take action on ER 24-22 – roll call vote expected
- GO Committee recommends approval of ER 24-22

## DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

Expedited Bill 4-23 would create a second non-merit Special Projects Manager position in the Office of the County Executive. ER No. 24-22 would amend the position description for the non-merit position of Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

## SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- The Office of the County Executive currently has 1 Special Projects Manager. Bill 4-23 will increase that number to 2.
- The Special Projects Manager is a senior-level position responsible for planning, developing, coordinating, and implementing projects within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. The County Executive has stated that one major initiative for this new position would be to help bridge the digital divide by coordinating efforts to extend the physical infrastructure needed for better access to high-speed broadband.
- Under ER No. 24-22, the Special Projects Manager will no longer report to an Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (ACAO).

- The GO Committee recommends approval of the regulation and recommends approval of the bill with an amendment.

**This report contains:**

Staff report	Pages 1-6
Expedited Bill 4-23	© 1
Proposed Resolution to Adopt Executive Regulation 24-22	© 3
Executive Regulation 24-22	© 4
Legislative Request Report	© 12
Fiscal Impact Statement	© 13
Economic Impact Statement	© 15
Racial Equity & Social Justice Impact Statement	© 18
Climate Assessment	© 23
County Executive Memorandum	© 27
Testimony	© 29

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## MEMORANDUM

March 16, 2023

TO: County Council

FROM: Livhu Ndou, Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager  
Executive Regulation 24-22, Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer

PURPOSE: Action

<p><b>COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:</b> The Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee (3-0) recommends approval with amendment</p>
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### INVITED ATTENDEES:

- Richard Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer
- Fariba Kassiri, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

### INTRODUCTION

Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager and Executive Regulation 24-22, Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer were introduced on January 31, 2023. The lead sponsor is Council President Glass at the request of the County Executive. Expedited Bill 4-23 would create a second non-merit Special Projects Manager position in the Office of the County Executive. Executive Regulation No. 24-22 would amend the position description for the non-merit position of Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

### PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held on February 14, 2023. Richard Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer, testified in support of the bill on behalf of the County Executive.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, ER No. 24-22 was advertised in the December Montgomery County Register with a comment deadline of December 15, 2022. No comments were received.

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<sup>1</sup> That testimony is attached to this packet.

## **SUMMARY OF IMPACT STATEMENTS**

### ***Fiscal Impact Statement***

EB 4-23 was transmitted with a Fiscal Impact Statement completed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The fiscal impact analysis assumes an annual salary of \$175,000 for the position plus benefits. Annualized costs are \$214,000 annually beginning in FY24.

### ***Economic Impact Statement***

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) submitted an Economic Impact Statement on January 23, 2023. OLO anticipates that EB 4-23 would have an insignificant impact on economic conditions in the County because while residents and private organizations may benefit from improved digital equity, establishing the position does not in itself achieve this outcome.

### ***Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement***

OLO submitted a racial equity and social justice impact statement on February 27, 2023. OLO anticipates that EB 4-23 will have a minimal impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County because while more funding for targeted programs and services and more RESJ focus in the responsibilities of the new staff person could have a positive impact, just allocating a dedicated staff person will likely not be enough to affect the digital divide by race and ethnicity.

### ***Climate Impact Statement***

OLO submitted an Economic Impact Statement on February 15, 2023. OLO anticipates that EB 4-23 could have a minimal positive impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as appointing a new position with a focus on increasing digital equity could have a small positive impact on community resilience. This is because increasing access to emergency communications can help individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from extreme weather events.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Background***

Under § 2-26 of the County Code, the County Executive has 13 non-merit positions:

- 5 Directors of the Regional Services Centers;
- 1 Director of the Office of Community Partnerships;
- 1 Director of Strategic Partnerships;
- 4 Assistant Chief Administrative Officers (ACAO);
- 1 Special Projects Manager; and
- 1 Chief Labor Relations Officer.

The Directors of the Regional Services Centers, Director of the Office of Community Partnerships, and 4 ACAOs were added in 2007.<sup>2</sup> The Special Projects Manager was added in 2008.<sup>3</sup> The Chief Labor Relations Officer was added in 2019.<sup>4</sup> And the Director of Strategic Partnerships was added in 2020.<sup>5</sup>

Section 2-26 of the County Code does not include what each position does; job descriptions can be found in subsequent regulations. Executive Regulation 24-22 provides the position description for the Special Projects Manager. According to that description, the Special Projects Manager plans, develops, coordinates, and implements special projects within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Key responsibilities of the position include:

“...providing oversight and leadership for the County’s efforts on key new initiatives and special projects and the improvement of customer services within the Department. The incumbent will also serve as a project manager and/or task force leader to study issues and implement actions in a variety of programmatic and management areas across the County government.”

The position description found in the regulation does not specify what projects a Special Projects Manager will work on. According to the County Executive’s transmittal memorandum and submitted testimony, one major initiative the new Special Projects Manager will focus on is

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<sup>2</sup> Bill 6-07 can be found here:

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/downloadFilePage?595\\_1\\_9644\\_Bill\\_6-07E\\_Signed\\_20070516.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/downloadFilePage?595_1_9644_Bill_6-07E_Signed_20070516.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Bill 4-08, which added a Special Projects Manager, can be found here:

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/downloadFilePage?633\\_1\\_9539\\_Bill\\_4-08E\\_Signed\\_20080415.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/downloadFilePage?633_1_9539_Bill_4-08E_Signed_20080415.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> In 2019, three positions were created: a Chief Labor Relations Officer, a Chief Digital Officer, and a Chief Equity Officer. These were added under Bill 3-19

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2599\\_1\\_89\\_Bill\\_3-19E\\_Signed\\_20190326.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2599_1_89_Bill_3-19E_Signed_20190326.pdf).

The Chief Digital Officer was moved to the Department of Technology Service under Bill 30-20

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2669\\_1\\_10871\\_Bill\\_30-20E\\_Signed\\_20200807.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2669_1_10871_Bill_30-20E_Signed_20200807.pdf).

The Chief Equity Officer was removed when the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice was created in Bill 27-19

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2623\\_1\\_10216\\_Bill\\_27-19\\_Signed\\_20191202.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2623_1_10216_Bill_27-19_Signed_20191202.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Bill 22-20, which created the Director of Strategic Partnerships position, can be found here:

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2661\\_1\\_14449\\_Bill\\_22-20E\\_Signed\\_20210525.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2661_1_14449_Bill_22-20E_Signed_20210525.pdf). In that same bill, the position of Director of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission was removed from the list of non-merit County Executive positions, and § 2-60 was amended to require the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to designate an individual to serve as Director of the Commission.

helping residents “leap” the digital divide. This will be done by coordinating efforts to extend the physical infrastructure needed to access high speed broadband to every corner of the County; ensuring every resident has the tools they need to leap the digital divide, including access to affordable high-speed broadband, a home computer, and digital literacy training; strategically seeking and deploying grants; establishing a network of digital navigators; and creating a comprehensive online digital literacy resource portal. This position will also work with County employers, educational institutions, and Worksource Montgomery to align the County’s efforts on equity, digital literacy, and career training.<sup>6</sup> Of note, neither current County Code, EB 4-23, or ER No. 24-22 specify what projects the Special Projects Manager(s) will focus on.

### ***Current Digital Equity Work***

The Department of Technology & Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) provides technology services and solutions to both the County government and residents.<sup>7</sup> Much of the work outlined in the transmittal memorandum is currently housed under TEBS. This includes Montgomery Connect, the County’s digital equity and inclusion program. Montgomery Connects, as part of the Office of Broadband Programs, provides access to computer devices, technology training, affordable home broadband services and subsidies, and public WiFi access points. Some of Montgomery Connect’s efforts to help residents include:

- Hosting digital equity programs in low-income areas
- Partnering with organizations engaging with underserved communities
- Distributing laptops to households through the Computer for You program, which has provided up to 50,000 new loaner laptop computers to low-income residents for educational purposes
- Helping residents enroll in the federal government’s Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) monthly broadband subsidy benefit program
- Partnering with federal, state, and private internet service providers to find and construct the fiber needed to provide greater access to high-speed broadband in the County’s Agricultural Reserve
- Working with OATS of AARP on Senior Planet Montgomery, a joint initiative that offers online and in-person classes to adults ages 60 and over to learn online skills
- Constructing and bringing free high-speed internet over fiber to individual affordable housing communities through MoCoNet

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<sup>6</sup> The current Special Projects Manager focuses on business and economic development-related projects, particularly in the biohealth industry.

<sup>7</sup> The Economic Development (ECON) Committee held a worksession on February 16, 2023, to review FY23-28 CIP Amendments: Digital Equity - Montgomery Connects. The staff report for that worksession, which provides additional information on the work done by TEBS in the digital equity arena, can be found here:

[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2023/20230216/20230216\\_ECON3.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2023/20230216/20230216_ECON3.pdf)

## ***Funding***

Testimony included a discussion of the funding available to the County and its residents for digital equity issues. A summary of the available funding is provided below:

- Digital Equity Act (2021) (federal) – \$2.75 billion for grant programs that promote digital equity and inclusion <https://www.digitalequityact.org/>
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (2021) (federal) – \$65 billion to help close the digital divide, issued through National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) grant programs <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/08/02/updated-fact-sheet-bipartisan-infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/>
- Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) – federal and state program that provides eligible households a discount of up to \$45/month for home or cell phone internet bills
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) (federal) – allows use of ARPA funds for programs and services to expand internet access and digital literacy
- Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program (federal) – provides \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption programs

## ***Executive Regulation 24-22***

ER No. 24-22 amends the position description for the non-merit position of Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. The only change the regulation makes to the current position description for a Special Projects Manager is this position will no longer report to an Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (ACAO).<sup>8</sup> According to the County Executive's Office, the Special Projects Manager(s) will report to the CAO.

## **GO COMMITTEE**

The GO Committee held a worksession on March 9, 2023. Councilmember Stewart proposed an amendment to sunset the new position after three years. The amendment would read as follows:

**Sec. 3. Sunset Date. This Act must expire, and must have no further force or effect, after {insert date 3 years from effective date}.**

The Go Committee recommended approval of EB 4-23 with this amendment. The Committee also recommended approval of ER 24-22.

### **This packet contains:**

Expedited Bill 4-23	© 1
Proposed Resolution to Adopt Executive Regulation 24-22	© 3
Executive Regulation 24-22	© 4
Legislative Request Report	© 12
Fiscal Impact Statement	© 13

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<sup>8</sup> The transmittal memorandum does not provide a reason for this change.

Economic Impact Statement	© 15
Racial Equity & Social Justice Impact Statement	© 18
Climate Assessment	© 23
County Executive Memorandum	© 27
Testimony	© 29



Expedited Bill No. 4-23  
Concerning: Administration – Non-Merit  
Positions – Special Projects Manager  
Revised: 1/12/2023 Draft No. 1  
Introduced: January 31, 2023  
Expires: December 7, 2026  
Enacted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunset Date: None  
Ch. \_\_\_\_\_, Laws of Mont. Co. \_\_\_\_\_

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Lead Sponsor: Council President Glass at the Request of the County Executive

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**AN EXPEDITED ACT** to:

- (1) increase the number of Special Projects Managers in the Office of the County Executive; and
- (2) generally amend the law governing personnel in Montgomery County.

By amending

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 2, Administration  
Section 2-26

<b>Boldface</b>	<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:*

1           **Sec. 1. Section 2-26 is amended, as follows:**

2   **2-26. Non-merit positions.**

3           The following positions in the Office of the County Executive are non-merit  
4 positions:

5           (a)    5 Directors of the Regional Services Centers;

6           (b)    Director, Office of Community Partnerships;

7           (c)    Director of Strategic Partnerships;

8           (d)    4 Assistant Chief Administrative Officers;

9           (e)    2 Special Projects [Manager] Managers; and

10          (f)    Chief Labor Relations Officer.

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

14          **Sec. 3. Sunset Date.** This Act must expire, and must have no further force or  
15 effect, after {insert date 3 years from effective date}.

Resolution No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: January 31, 2023  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Lead Sponsor: Council President Glass on behalf of the County Executive

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**SUBJECT:** Approval of Executive Regulation 24-22 – Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer

**Background**

1. On January 6, 2023, the County Council received Executive Regulation 24-22 – Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer.
2. ER 24-22 was advertised in the December 2022 issue of the Montgomery County Register. The County Executive received no comments regarding the regulation.
3. The Government Operations & Fiscal Policy (GO) Committee held a worksession on March 9, 2023. The GO Committee recommended approval of Executive Regulation 24-22.
4. The Council must review the regulation under Method (1) of Section 2A-15 of the County Code.
5. Under Method (1), the Council must approve the regulation before it takes effect.

**Action**

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following regulation:*

Executive Regulation 24-22 – Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Judy Rupp  
Clerk of the Council



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

## Montgomery County Regulation on

### PERSONNEL REGULATIONS

Issued by: County Executive

Regulation No. 24-22

Authority: Montgomery County Code (2014) Sections 1A-104(b)(2), 2-26(e), and 2A-15(f)

Supersedes: Executive Regulation 22-08

Council Review: Method (1) under Code Section 2A-15

Register Vol. 39 No. 12

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment Deadline: December 15, 2022

**Summary:** This regulation amends the position description for the non-merit position of Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

**Staff contact:** Adrienne Craver  
(240) 777-2511

**Address:** Office of the Chief Administrative Officer  
Executive Office Building  
101 Monroe Street, Third Floor  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

**Background:** Under County Code Section 1A-104(b)(2), a person holding a position in the Executive Branch designated by law as a non-merit position must be professionally qualified under a position description established by regulation under method (1). Montgomery County Code Section 2-26(e) designates this position as a non-merit position.

### **COMCOR 01A.104.19 Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer**

#### **01A.104.19.01 Definition of Class:**

This is senior level technical and administrative work which involves planning, developing, coordinating and implementing special projects within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. As this is a non-merit position within Montgomery County Government, the employee will be appointed by the County Executive and



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

confirmed by the County Council. Key responsibilities of the position include providing oversight and leadership for the County's efforts on key new initiatives and special projects and the improvement of customer services within the Department. The incumbent will also serve as a project manager and/or task force leader to study issues and implement actions in a variety of programmatic and management areas across the County government.

The work requires mastery of a comprehensive professional or administrative field and expert application of advanced level management principles to conduct strategic, visionary, long range planning; to establish and implement innovative concepts; to determine and advise on such matters as methods and processes, the allocation of major resources, or the resolution of unprecedented problems involving adjustments in work effort, service levels, or resource requirements. The employee has complete responsibility and accountability for the achievement of established objectives and works with little or no technical guidance. The work outcome has a significant impact on the general population of the County.

The work is primarily sedentary, performed primarily in office settings, and subject to usual everyday risks.

## **01A.104.19.02 Examples of duties:**

Plans, leads and oversees the development of policy on a variety of projects and provides analyses on numerous diverse and complex issues/problems.

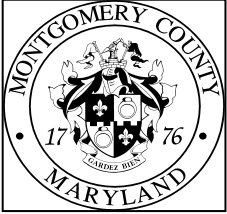
Organizes and/or leads committees to develop recommendations in a variety of diverse areas and provides advice on budget, program proposals and other matters.

Works with executive level managers and appointed officials of other State and local government agencies on selected, sensitive local and regional issues.

Coordinates special projects and customer service initiatives that involve multiple public/private entities and assists in the implementation of these projects.

Performs special ad hoc assignments, researches issues, oversees studies, and provides analyses on issues and develops management recommendations.

Serves as project manager, committee chair, or task force leader to implement special projects.



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

Performs related duties as required.

## **01A.104.19.03 Recommended qualifications:**

Experience: Seven years of progressively responsible management and administrative experience involving program operations, evaluations, analysis or similar activities, four years of which are in a supervisory or executive capacity.

Education: Possession of a Master's Degree from an accredited college or university in business, business administration, or public administration or in an equivalent field.

Equivalency: An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted.

## **01A.104.19.04 Knowledge, skills, and abilities:**

Knowledge of management practices and principles

Knowledge of local government functions and organizations.

Knowledge of Capital Improvements budgeting and programming, Operating budgeting and programming and related fiscal matters.

Skill in planning, developing, implementing and administering a broad range of public services across divisional and departmental lines.

Skill in negotiating agreements, a collective position, etc., in support of the execution of the program objective.

Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing, in a clear and concise manner.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other governmental agencies, private organizations and the general public.

Ability to develop, present and defend program measurements related to the program.

Ability to attend meetings and perform work assignments at locations outside the office.



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

## 01A.104.19.05 Medical protocol:

Medical History Review.

Approved:

Handwritten signature of Marc Elrich in black ink.

Marc Elrich, County Executive

January 6, 2023

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY  
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

Handwritten signature of Edward B. Lattner in blue ink.

Edward B. Lattner

December 1, 2022

Date



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

## Montgomery County Regulation on

### **POSITION DESCRIPTION: SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER, OFFICE OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Issued by: County Executive

Regulation No. 24-22

Authority: Montgomery County Code (2014) Sections 1A-104(b)(2), 2-26(e), and 2A-15(f)

Supersedes: Executive Regulation 22-08

Council Review: Method (1) under Code Section 2A-15

Register Vol. 39 No. 12

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment Deadline: December 15, 2022

Summary:	This regulation amends the position description for the non-merit position of Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.
Staff contact:	Adrienne Craver (240) 777-2511
Address:	Office of the Chief Administrative Officer Executive Office Building 101 Monroe Street, Third Floor Rockville, Maryland 20850
Background:	Under County Code Section 1A-104(b)(2), a person holding a position in the Executive Branch designated by law as a non-merit position must be professionally qualified under a position description established by regulation under method (1). Montgomery County Code Section 2-26(e) designates this position as a non-merit position.

### **COMCOR 01A.104.19 Special Projects Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer**

#### **01A.104.19.01 Definition of Class:**

This is senior level technical and administrative work which involves planning, developing, coordinating and implementing special projects within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. As this is a non-merit





# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

position within Montgomery County Government, the employee will be appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. [The incumbent of this position reports to an Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (ACAO).] Key responsibilities of the position include providing oversight and leadership for the County's efforts on key new initiatives and special projects and the improvement of customer services within the Department. The incumbent will also serve as a project manager and/or task force leader to study issues and implement actions in a variety of programmatic and management areas across the County government.

The work requires mastery of a comprehensive professional or administrative field and expert application of advanced level management principles to conduct strategic, visionary, long range planning; to establish and implement innovative concepts; to determine and advise [the ACAO] on such matters as methods and processes, the allocation of major resources, or the resolution of unprecedented problems involving adjustments in work effort, service levels, or resource requirements. The employee has complete responsibility and accountability for the achievement of established objectives and works with little or no technical guidance. The work outcome has a significant impact on the general population of the County.

The work is primarily sedentary, performed primarily in office settings, and subject to usual everyday risks.

## **01A.104.19.02 Examples of duties:**

Plans, leads and oversees the development of policy on a variety of projects and provides analyses on numerous diverse and complex issues/problems.

Organizes and/or leads committees to develop recommendations in a variety of diverse areas and provides advice on budget, program proposals and other matters [to the ACAO].

Works with executive level managers and appointed officials of other State and local government agencies on selected, sensitive local and regional issues.

Coordinates special projects and customer service initiatives that involve multiple public/private entities and assists in the implementation of these projects.

Performs special ad hoc assignments, researches issues, oversees studies, and provides analyses on issues and develops management recommendations.

Serves as project manager, committee chair, or task force leader to implement special projects.



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

Performs related duties as required.

## **01A.104.19.03 Recommended qualifications:**

**Experience:** Seven years of progressively responsible management and administrative experience involving program operations, evaluations, analysis or similar activities, four years of which are in a supervisory or executive capacity.

**Education:** Possession of a Master's Degree from an accredited college or university in business, business administration, or public administration or in an equivalent field.

**Equivalency:** An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted.

## **01A.104.19.04 Knowledge, skills, and abilities:**

Knowledge of management practices and principles

Knowledge of local government functions and organizations.

Knowledge of Capital Improvements budgeting and programming, Operating budgeting and programming and related fiscal matters.

Skill in planning, developing, implementing and administering a broad range of public services across divisional and departmental lines.

Skill in negotiating agreements, a collective position, etc., in support of the execution of the program objective.

Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing, in a clear and concise manner.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other governmental agencies, private organizations and the general public.

Ability to develop, present and defend program measurements related to the program.



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

<b>Subject</b> Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer	<b>Number</b> 24-22
<b>Originating Department</b> Office of Human Resources	<b>Effective Date</b>

Ability to attend meetings and perform work assignments at locations outside the office.

## 01A.104.19.05 Medical protocol:

Medical History Review.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Elrich".

Marc Elrich, County Executive

January 6, 2023

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY  
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edward B. Lattner".

Edward B. Lattner

December 1, 2022

Date

## LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill XX-23

*Special Projects Manager*

<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	This bill revises §2-26 to create a second non-merit Special Projects Manager in the Office of the County Executive.
<b>PROBLEM:</b>	The issue of digital equity needs high level oversight and coordination to ensure that Montgomery County addresses the barriers to digital equity such as access to affordable, high-speed broadband, access to a home computer or tablet and digital literacy.
<b>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:</b>	The creation of the second Special Projects Manager focusing on digital equity will elevate the focus on digital equity issues and provide a central point of the coordination and oversight of digital equity initiatives.
<b>COORDINATION:</b>	Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
<b>FISCAL IMPACT:</b>	Office of Management and Budget
<b>ECONOMIC IMPACT:</b>	Office of Legislative Oversight
<b>EVALUATION:</b>	Subject to the general oversight of the County Executive and the County Council. The Office of the County Attorney will evaluate for form and legality.
<b>EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE:</b>	Unknown
<b>SOURCES OF INFORMATION:</b>	Ken Hartman, Director of Strategic Partnerships
<b>APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES:</b>	N/A
<b>PENALTIES:</b>	N/A

# Fiscal Impact Statement

Office of Management and Budget

## Bill XX-23

## Administration - Non-Merit Positions - Amendment

### Bill Summary

This bill increases the number of non-merit Special Project Managers in the Office of the County Executive (CEX) from 1 to 2. As with other non-merit positions in the County Executive's Office, this position will be filled upon nomination by the County Executive and confirmation by the County Council.

### Fiscal Impact Summary

FY23 costs of \$107,000 reflect half-year costs. Annualized costs are \$214,000 annually beginning in FY24.

Fiscal Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
Personnel Costs	\$107,196	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$1,179,151
Operating Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$107,196	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$214,391	\$1,179,151
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Impact	(\$107,196)	(\$214,391)	(\$214,391)	(\$214,391)	(\$214,391)	(\$214,391)	(\$1,179,151)
FTE	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	

### Fiscal Impact Analysis

The fiscal impact analysis assumes an annual salary of \$175,000 for the position plus benefits. For FY23, half-year costs are assumed with annualization in the out-years. To the extent that the assumed salary for this position deviates from those assumptions, the fiscal impact will adjust accordingly.

### Staff Impact

The bill will have a minimal effect on staff time.

### Actuarial Analysis

The bill is not expected to impact retiree pension or group insurance costs.

### Information Technology Impact

The bill is not expected to impact the County Information Technology (IT) or Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

### Other Information

*Later actions that may impact revenue or expenditures if future spending is projected*

The bill does not authorize future spending.

*Ranges of revenue or expenditures that are uncertain or difficult to project*

Future compensation increases could increase the cost of this position, however, it is difficult to estimate compensation increases for non-merit positions at this time.

### Contributors

Abdul Rauf, OMB Analyst



# Fiscal Impact Statement

Office of Management and Budget

## Executive Regulation 24-22

## Position Description: Special Projects Manager, Office of Chief Administrative Officer

### Regulation Summary

Executive Regulation 24-22 updates the position description for the non-merit Special Projects Manager position in the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

### Fiscal Impact Summary

Currently, there is no fiscal impact due to this regulation.

Fiscal Year	0	0	0	0	0	0	Total
Personnel Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Impact	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

### Fiscal Impact Analysis

There is no fiscal impact as this regulation is only a position description change. If an FTE is added to the department at a future date, then there could be additional costs, which would be reflected in any subsequent Fiscal Impact Statement.

### Staff Impact

Apart from the specific changes to this position description, the regulation is not expected to impact staff time or duties.

### Actuarial Analysis

The regulation is not expected to impact retiree pension or group insurance costs.

### Information Technology Impact

The regulation is not expected to impact the County Information Technology (IT) or Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

### Other Information

*Later actions that may impact revenue or expenditures if future spending is projected*

The regulation does not authorize future spending.

### Contributors

Abdul Rauf, OMB Analyst



# Economic Impact Statement

Montgomery County, Maryland

## Expedited Bill 4-23

## Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager

### SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Expedited Bill 4-23 would have an insignificant impact on economic conditions in the County in terms of the Council’s priority indicators.

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 4-23

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance defines digital equity as “a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.”<sup>1</sup>

The goal of Expedited Bill 4-23 is to enhance the County’s focus on digital equity issues and establish a central point for the coordination and oversight of digital equity initiatives. The Bill seeks to achieve this goal by establishing a second, non-merit Special Projects Manager in the Office of the County Executive. According to the County Executive, a major initiative for the Special Projects Manager would be to improve digital equity by:

- coordinating efforts to extend the physical infrastructure needed to access high speed broadband in the County;
- expanding access to affordable high-speed broadband, home computers, and digital literacy training;
- seeking and deploying grants;
- establishing a network of digital navigators;
- creating a comprehensive online digital literacy resource portal; and
- managing relationships with County Government and local partners, such as educational institutions, employers, and Worksource Montgomery, to align County efforts on equity, digital literacy, and career training.

Bill 4-23, Administration - Non-Merit Positions - Special Projects Manager, was introduced by the Council on behalf of the County Executive on January 31, 2023.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Digitalinclusion.org, “[Definitions](#).”

<sup>2</sup> [Bill 4-23](#); and Elrich to Glass, [Memorandum](#).

## INFORMATION SOURCES, METHODOLOGIES, AND ASSUMPTIONS

Per Section 2-81B of the Montgomery County Code, the purpose of this Economic Impact Statement is to assess the impacts of Expedited Bill 4-23 on County-based private organizations and residents in terms of the Council's priority economic indicators and whether the Bill would likely result in a net positive or negative impact on overall economic conditions in the County.<sup>3</sup> While certain residents and private organizations would economically benefit from improved digital equity,<sup>4</sup> establishing a non-merit Special Projects Manager in the Office of the County Executive focused on digital equity in itself would not achieve this outcome. For this reason, OLO anticipates that the Bill would have insignificant impacts on private organizations, residents, and overall economic conditions in the County in terms of the indicators prioritized by the Council.

## VARIABLES

Not applicable

## IMPACTS

WORKFORCE ▪ TAXATION POLICY ▪ PROPERTY VALUES ▪ INCOMES ▪ OPERATING COSTS ▪ PRIVATE SECTOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT ▪ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ▪ COMPETITIVENESS

Not applicable

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

Not applicable

## WORKS CITED

Digitalinclusion.org. "[Definitions](#)." National Digital Inclusion Alliance.

Elrich, Marc to Evan Glass. [Memorandum](#). January 6, 2023.

Montgomery County Code. [Sec. 2-81B, Economic Impact Statements](#).

Montgomery County Council. [Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager](#).  
Introduced on January 31, 2023.

Ochillo, Francella. [The Economic Consequences and Generational Impact of the Digital Divide](#). Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. May 2022.

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<sup>3</sup> Montgomery County Code, [Sec. 2-81B](#).

<sup>4</sup> Ochillo, [The Economic Consequences and Generational Impact of the Digital Divide](#).



## CAVEATS

Two caveats to the economic analysis performed here should be noted. First, predicting the economic impacts of legislation is a challenging analytical endeavor due to data limitations, the multitude of causes of economic outcomes, economic shocks, uncertainty, and other factors. 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.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Stephen Roblin (OLO) prepared this report.

# Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Impact Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

## EXPEDITED ADMINISTRATION - NON-MERIT POSITIONS - SPECIAL BILL 4-23: PROJECTS MANAGER

### SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates Expedited Bill 4-23 will have a minimal impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County. Allocating a dedicated staff person for coordinating digital equity efforts in the County would likely not be enough to affect the digital divide by race and ethnicity. This Bill could have a positive impact on RESJ if there were more funding for targeted programs and services, and more RESJ focus in the responsibilities of the new staff person.

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### PURPOSE OF RESJ IMPACT STATEMENTS

The purpose of RESJ impact statements (RESJIS) is to evaluate the anticipated impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice in the County. Racial equity and social justice refer to a **process** that focuses on centering the needs, leadership, and power of communities of color and low-income communities with a **goal** of eliminating racial and social inequities.<sup>1</sup> Achieving racial equity and social justice usually requires seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social harms that have caused racial and social inequities.<sup>2</sup>

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### PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 4-23

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) defines digital equity as “a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.”<sup>3</sup>

The goal of Bill 4-23 is to enhance the County’s focus on digital equity issues and establish a central point for the coordination and oversight of digital equity initiatives. The Bill seeks to achieve this goal by establishing a second, non-merit Special Projects Manager in the Office of the County Executive. According to the County Executive, a major initiative for the Special Projects Manager would be to improve digital equity by:

- coordinating efforts to extend the physical infrastructure needed to access high-speed broadband in the County;
- expanding access to affordable high-speed broadband, home computers, and digital literacy training;
- seeking and deploying grants;
- establishing a network of digital navigators;
- creating a comprehensive online digital literacy resource portal; and
- managing relationships with County Government and local partners, such as educational institutions, employers, and Worksource Montgomery, to align County efforts on equity, digital literacy, and career training.<sup>4</sup>

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Expedited Bill 4-23

Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration - Non-Merit Positions - Special Projects Manager, was introduced by the Council on behalf of the County Executive on January 31, 2023.

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### THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND RACIAL EQUITY

NDIA defines the digital divide as follows:

The digital divide is the gap between those who have affordable access, skills, and support to effectively engage online and those who do not. As technology constantly evolves, the digital divide prevents equal participation and opportunity in all parts of life, disproportionately affecting people of color, Indigenous peoples, households with low incomes, people with disabilities, people in rural areas, and older adults.<sup>5</sup>

The digital divide is multifaceted and is driven by broader inequities across several realms. A 2020 article from researchers at the University of South Carolina described some of these inequities:

- **Built environment:** Lack of broadband Internet availability region-wise; limited access to free public Internet in community buildings such as libraries; absence of structural support/housing insecurity
- **Social and community context:** Shared or cultural expectations regarding use of digital devices, telehealth, and telemonitoring; mistrust of technology and/or medical community
- **Education:** Literacy; varying degrees of digital literacy; inconsistent or unavailable education regarding changes in technology
- **Economic stability:** Inability to purchase devices or upgrades; affordable devices may not have capability to work with proposed programs; inconsistent access to devices due to economic instability
- **Health and healthcare access:** Choices of technology/programs heavily tied to reimbursement; healthcare systems likely to pursue advanced technology that may outpace patient capability; patient comorbidities may affect ability to effectively use technology<sup>6</sup>

Structural racial inequities in areas such as these makes the digital divide pronounced among Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color (BIPOC). For instance:

- A 2020 study of national data by researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles found that, among households with school-age children, “Black and Hispanic households are significantly more likely (1.3 to 1.4 times) to experience limited access to technology as compared to non-Hispanic Whites.”<sup>7</sup>
- A 2021 study from the Pew Research Center found that “Black and Hispanic adults in the United States remain less likely than White adults to say they own a traditional computer or have high-speed internet at home.”<sup>8</sup>
- A 2021 study of 562 older adults published in the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities found that, “[o]lder African Americans were one-fifth as likely to own a computer than were European Americans.”<sup>9</sup>
- A 2021 study of 152 rural southern counties by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies found that Black residents lacked home Internet access at nearly double the rate of White residents in the same region.<sup>10</sup>

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Expedited Bill 4-23

Just as the digital divide is rooted in multiple inequities, its consequences also span multiple realms, including health care, education, and employment.<sup>11</sup> For instance, a June 2022 Racial Equity Impact Assessment from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice described how BIPOC students are disproportionately impacted by the homework gap – where limited access to technology at home affects students’ ability to adequately complete schoolwork.<sup>12</sup>

### ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

To consider the anticipated impact of Bill 4-23 on RESJ in the County, OLO recommends the consideration of two related questions:

- Who are the primary beneficiaries of this bill?
- What racial and social inequities could passage of this bill weaken or strengthen?

**For the first question**, to understand who is affected by the digital divide, OLO considered the share of households in the County who have access to technology by race and ethnicity.

Census data summarized in Table 1 suggests, across racial and ethnic groups, relatively high shares of households in the County have access to a computer and broadband Internet. However, it is important to note that in this data, smartphones and tablets are included as computers and cell phone companies as broadband service providers. Thus, this data may underestimate the extent of the digital divide in the County by race and ethnicity since the functionality of smartphones and tablets is more limited than laptops and desktops and cell phone service is a less reliable source of Internet than high-speed broadband.

**Table 1: Share of Households with a Computer and Households with Broadband by Race and Ethnicity, Montgomery County<sup>13</sup>**

Race and ethnicity	Share of Households with a Computer	Share of Households with Broadband
Asian	99.2	97.8
Black	97.0	94.6
White	98.8	96.1
Latinx	98.2	95.5

Source: Table S0201, 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year Estimates, Census Bureau.

Looking particularly at the availability of a laptop or desktop and high-speed broadband provides a more nuanced understanding of the County’s digital divide by race and ethnicity. An analysis of Census microdata summarized in Table 2 suggests that lower shares of Latinx households have access to a laptop or desktop at home compared to other households. The data also suggests that, compared to White and Asian households, lower shares of Black and Latinx households have access to high-speed broadband.

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Expedited Bill 4-23

**Table 2: Share of Households with a Laptop or Desktop and Households with High-Speed Broadband by Race and Ethnicity, Montgomery County<sup>14</sup>**

Race and ethnicity	Share of Households with a Laptop or Desktop	Share of Households with High-Speed Broadband
Asian	97.0	91.5
Black	91.3	84.4
White	94.9	91.0
Latinx	84.2	82.9

Source: OLO Analysis of 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), Census Bureau.

**For the second question**, OLO considered how the Bill could impact the digital divide in the County by race and ethnicity. Black and Latinx residents could disproportionately benefit from coordinated digital equity efforts. However, it is not clear from the Bill's staff report if/how the new staffer will target efforts by race and ethnicity. Further, absent more funding for targeted programs and services, the addition of a staff person alone is unlikely to materially change the digital divide in the County by race and ethnicity.

Taken together, OLO anticipates Bill 4-23 will have a minimal impact on RESJ in the County. Allocating a dedicated staff person for coordinating digital equity efforts in the County would likely not be enough to affect the digital divide by race and ethnicity. This Bill could have a positive impact on RESJ if there were more funding for targeted programs and services, and more RESJ focus in the responsibilities of the new staff person.

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## RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Racial Equity and Social Justice Act requires OLO to consider whether recommended amendments to bills aimed at narrowing racial and social inequities are warranted in developing RESJ impact statements.<sup>15</sup> OLO anticipates Expedited Bill 4-23 will have a minimal impact on RESJ in the County. As such, OLO does not offer recommended amendments.

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## CAVEATS

Two caveats to this racial equity and social justice impact statement should be noted. First, predicting the impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice is a challenging analytical endeavor due to data limitations, uncertainty, and other factors. Second, this RESJ impact statement is intended to inform the legislative process rather than 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.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Janmarie Peña, Performance Management and Data Analyst, drafted this RESJ impact statement.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition of racial equity and social justice adopted from "Applying a Racial Equity Lens into Federal Nutrition Programs" by Marlysa Gamblin, et.al. Bread for the World, and from Racial Equity Tools. <https://www.raciaequitytools.org/glossary>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Expedited Bill 4-23

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<sup>3</sup> “Definitions,” National Digital Inclusion Alliance. <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/definitions/>

<sup>4</sup> Introduction Staff Report for Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager, Montgomery County Council, Introduced January 31, 2023.

[https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2779\\_1\\_23736\\_Bill\\_4-2023\\_Introduction\\_20230131.pdf](https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccllms/DownloadFilePage?FileName=2779_1_23736_Bill_4-2023_Introduction_20230131.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> “Definitions,” National Digital Inclusion Alliance.

<sup>6</sup> Anita Ramsetty and Christin Adams, “Impact of the Digital Divide in the Age of COVID-19,” Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association, April 2020. <https://academic.oup.com/jamia/article/27/7/1147/5826352>

<sup>7</sup> Paul M. Ong, “Covid-19 and the Digital Divide in Virtual Learning,” Center for Neighborhood Knowledge, University of California, Los Angeles, Fall 2020. [https://knowledge.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Digital-Divide-Phase2\\_brief\\_release\\_v01.pdf](https://knowledge.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Digital-Divide-Phase2_brief_release_v01.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Sara Atske and Andrew Perrin, “Home Broadband Adoption, Computer Ownership Vary by Race, Ethnicity in the U.S.,” Pew Research Center, July 16, 2021. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/07/16/home-broadband-adoption-computer-ownership-vary-by-race-ethnicity-in-the-u-s/>

<sup>9</sup> Ruth M. Tappen, et al, “Digital Health Information Disparities in Older Adults: a Mixed Methods Study,” Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, January 2021. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7790471/>

<sup>10</sup> Dominique Harrison, “Affordability & Availability: Expanding Broadband in the Black Rural South,” Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, October 6, 2021. <https://jointcenter.org/affordability-availability-expanding-broadband-in-the-black-rural-south/>

<sup>11</sup> Bhaskar Chakravorti, “How to Close the Digital Divide in the U.S.,” Harvard Business Review, July 20, 2021. <https://hbr.org/2021/07/how-to-close-the-digital-divide-in-the-u-s>

<sup>12</sup> Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #22-94, Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, June 27, 2022. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-94.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Latinx is an ethnicity rather than a race; therefore, Latinx people are included in multiple racial groups throughout this impact statement unless where otherwise noted. Estimates for Native American and Pacific Islander constituents not available for all data points presented in impact statement.

<sup>14</sup> Estimates calculated from ACS PUMS data are less precise than pre-tabulated data because PUMS data is a subsample of the full ACS sample.

<sup>15</sup> Bill 27-19, Administration – Human Rights – Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice – Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee – Established, Montgomery County Council

# Climate Assessment

Office of Legislative Oversight

## **Expedited Bill 4-23: Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager**

### **SUMMARY**

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Expedited Bill 4-23 could have a minimal positive impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change as appointing a new position with a focus on increasing digital equity could have a small positive impact on community resilience.

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### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF EXPEDITED BILL 4-23**

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance defines digital equity as “a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.”<sup>1</sup>

The goal of Expedited Bill 4-23 is to enhance the County's focus on digital equity issues and establish a central point for the coordination and oversight of digital equity initiatives.<sup>2</sup> The Bill seeks to achieve this goal by establishing a second, non-merit Special Projects Manager in the Office of the County Executive.<sup>3</sup> According to the County Executive, a major initiative for the Special Projects Manager would be to help constituents “leap the digital divide” by:

- coordinating efforts to extend the physical infrastructure needed to access high speed broadband in the County;
- expanding access to affordable high-speed broadband, home computers, and digital literacy training;
- seeking and deploying grants;
- establishing a network of digital navigators;
- creating a comprehensive online digital literacy resource portal; and
- managing relationships with County Government and local partners, such as educational institutions, employers, and Worksource Montgomery, to align County efforts on equity, digital literacy, and career training.<sup>4</sup>

Expedited Bill 4-23, Administration - Non-Merit Positions - Special Projects Manager, was introduced by the Council on behalf of the County Executive on January 31, 2023.

## METHODOLOGIES, ASSUMPTIONS, AND UNCERTAINTIES

**Methodology.** A literature review on linkages between community resilience and digital equity, and a review of local data on digital equity was conducted for this assessment.

**Assumptions.** The assessment assumes that the creation of this Special Projects Manager position will lead to increased digital equity in Montgomery County.

**Uncertainties.** Some uncertainties that could affect the impact of this bill on community resilience are: (1) The specific projects that will be undertaken are unknown, as well as resources dedicated to future projects; (2) the extent that this position will focus on digital equity, since it is not the only responsibility outlined on the job announcement; and (3) the extent to which digital equity will be increased by this position.

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## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND DIGITAL EQUITY

Climate change has contributed to more frequent and severe extreme weather events.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is growing increasingly crucial to rapidly share emergency information with as many constituents as possible. Official emergency communications can aid a community in preparing for, responding to, and recovering quickly from disruptions, such as extreme weather events.<sup>6</sup> With the growing shift of government officials, including the internet in emergency communications infrastructure, it is vital to access the internet to increase community resilience.<sup>7</sup>

Montgomery County currently has programs, such as “Montgomery Connects” which focus on digital equity and inclusion.<sup>8</sup> However, there are still households, primarily low-income, without internet and computer access in the County. According to 2021 U.S. Census data, about 94% of County households have an internet subscription, while about 11% of low-income County households (less than \$50,000 annual income) do not have an internet subscription.<sup>9</sup> Achieving digital equity in the County, where everyone has a minimum of a stable internet connection, devices to use the internet, and digital literacy, can lead to a small but positive increase in community resilience.

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## ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

Expedited Bill 4-23 could have a minimal positive impact on the County’s contribution to addressing climate change, as establishing a position with a focus on digital equity could have a small, positive impact on community resilience. While it is uncertain how much time and resources will be given to the position’s initiative on digital equity, OLO assumes there will be at least a small, positive impact on the resilience of the County. Increasing constituents’ access to emergency information can help individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover more quickly from extreme weather events.



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## RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

The Climate Assessment Act requires OLO to offer recommendations, such as amendments or other measures to mitigate any anticipated negative climate impacts.<sup>10</sup> OLO does not offer recommendations or amendments as Bill 4-23 could have a minimal positive impact on the County's contribution to addressing climate change, as it could have a small positive impact on community resilience.

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## 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.

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## 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 improve the County's adaptive capacity to climate change, and therefore, increase community 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 resilience.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

OLO staffer Kaitlyn Simmons drafted this assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> [Definitions, National Digital Inclusion Alliance, Accessed 2/9/23](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Legislative Request Report](#).

<sup>3</sup> [Bill 4-23](#).

<sup>4</sup> Elrich to Glass, [Memorandum](#).

<sup>5</sup> [Climate Change Indicators: Weather and Climate, Environmental Protection Agency, Accessed 2/11/23](#).

<sup>6</sup> [Building Community Capacity and Fostering Disaster Resilience, Gil-Rivas, Virginia and Kilmer, Ryan P., 3/18/16](#)

<sup>7</sup> [National Emergency Communications Plan, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency \(CISA\), 9/2019](#)

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<sup>8</sup> [Montgomery Connects, Department of Technology & Enterprise Business Solutions \(TEBS\) and Office of Broadband Programs, Accessed 2/10/23](#)

<sup>9</sup> [2021 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, Accessed 2/11/23](#)

<sup>10</sup> Bill 3-22, Legislative Branch – Climate Assessments – Required, Montgomery County Council, Effective date October 24, 2022



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

MEMORANDUM

January 6, 2023

TO: Evan Glass, President  
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive *Marc Elrich*

SUBJECT: Expedited Bill XX-23: Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Amendment and  
ER 24-22: Special Projects Manager

I am transmitting for Council introduction the attached legislation, which would create a second non-merit Special Projects Manager in the Office of the County Executive. The Special Projects Manager is a senior level position responsible for planning, developing, coordinating, and implementing projects within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. As a non-merit position, the employee will be appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.

The position will provide oversight and leadership for the County's efforts on key new initiatives and special projects as well as improving customer services within the County. One major initiative for which I would like this position to be responsible is to focus our shared goal to successfully help residents leap the digital divide. The scope and complexity of these projects across multiple organizations requires elevated leadership, oversight, and coordination, which this position will provide.

The Special Projects Manager will coordinate efforts to extend the physical infrastructure needed to access high speed broadband to every corner of the County; ensuring every resident has the tools they need to leap the digital divide, including access to affordable high-speed broadband, a home computer, and digital literacy training; strategically seek and deploy grants; establish a network of digital navigators; and create a comprehensive online digital literacy resource portal.

Additionally, the Special Projects Manager will manage relationships with County Government, local educational institutions, County employers, and Worksource Montgomery to better align our efforts on equity, digital literacy, and career training.

Expedited Bill XX-23: Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Amendment and ER 18-22:  
Special Projects Manager

January 6, 2023

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Montgomery County Code § 1A-104(b)(2) requires this position be supported by a position description established by executive regulation under method (1). Executive Regulations No. 24-22 (Special Project Manager) has been advertised in the December Montgomery County Register with a comment deadline of December 15, 2022, and no comments were received. A fiscal impact statement for the regulation is also attached.

I am attaching a Legislative Request Report and Fiscal Impact Statement with this proposed legislation. I appreciate the Council's introduction of this legislation, and my staff is ready to assist in any way needed.

ME/ac

**Testimony on Behalf of the County Executive Marc Elrich  
on Bill 4-23, Administration – Non-Merit Positions – Special Projects Manager**

February 14, 2023

My name is Rich Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer for Montgomery County Government. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of County Executive Elrich in support of Bill 4-23 to create a second non-merit Special Projects Manager position in the County Executive Office.

Across the Nation, counties and cities are elevating their focus on digital equity and inclusion. In 2021, Congress passed a bipartisan infrastructure law that included major new investments for states via the Digital Equity Act. As this powerful \$2.75 billion legislation is implemented, state and local leaders are preparing for a “once-in-a-generation opportunity.”

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is expected to release state formula funding in Fall 2023. A total of \$1.44 billion over 5 years is available for State Digital Equity Capacity Grants. Another \$1.25 billion over 5 years will be available for Digital Equity Competitive Grants. NTIA has not announced a specific timeline for these grants - that the County would be eligible for, in addition to funding passing through the State Digital Equity Capacity Grants.

The Moore Administration is preparing to take advantage of this opportunity that is key to removing barriers that keep people out of the job market, quality healthcare, and a great education. The State will draft a Digital Equity Plan with measurable goals and objectives that will be tied to the Maryland’s economic and workforce development goals and outcomes. Governor Moore has said he wants Maryland to be the most connected in the nation – and Montgomery County is the largest County in the State. In the past two years, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County have launched expanded digital equity initiatives.

The new Special Projects Manager position will be Montgomery County’s primary representative for coordination with internal and external stakeholders, focused on digital equity and broadband connectivity issues, to expand public access for County residents.

This position is needed in the Office of the County Executive to:

- Develop a comprehensive strategy with metrics for expanding equitable and affordable Internet access, including public/private partnerships.
- Partner with all stakeholders, including Federal, State and County government officials, anchor institutions, philanthropic organizations, Montgomery County Public Schools, and private enterprises.
- Work with the County administration and County Council to implement policies, programs, and regulations necessary to achieve our Digital Equity goals.

There are many reasons to establish this position, and not wait until July 1, not the least of which is the opportunity to partner with the Biden and Moore Administrations at this critical juncture on this critical effort.

I look forward to your support for establishing a position to lead our campaign to advance digital equity and close the digital divide in Montgomery County.