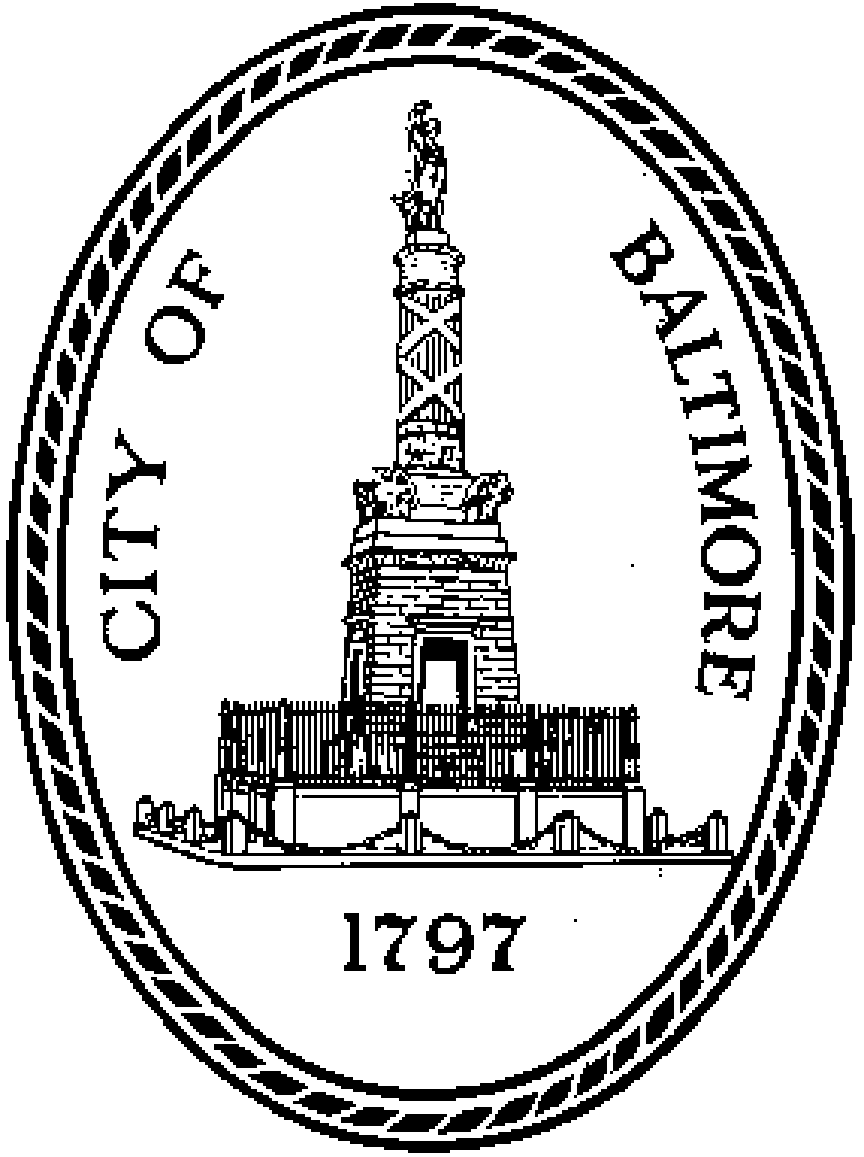
**Bernard C. “Jack” Young**

*Council President*

Baltimore City



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**Subject |** Fines and Fees (IPA) – Interview Template

Interviewees | XXX

Organization | YYYY

Date | ZZZ



Introductions:

We are a team of Masters of Public Policy students from the Goldman School of Public Policy, working with Kimberly Rubens, the Fiscal and Legislative Analyst for the City Council, to better understand the current state of fines and fees in Baltimore. Specifically, we want to measure the burden that fines and fees place on Baltimore residents, as well as better understand the history of fines and fees in the city and the fiscal role they play in Baltimore.

We appreciate the chance to speak with you to understand how your department interacts with fines and fees in Baltimore. We view this interview as a major part of our information gathering efforts, and appreciate your help. We will share any data or other materials we produce as a part of this process with your department.

The purpose of these questions is to figure out the relationship between your department and the structure of fines and fees within the city. These questions are designed to explore different points of contact between departments and the creation, assessment, collection, and adjudication of fines and fees. We estimate that these questions will take between 45 minutes-1 hour.

Note: The multiple parts of question 1 are meant to determine which line of questions are relevant to the specific department. If a department answers yes to any of questions 1A - 1E, then the following questions with that letter should be asked.

**Question 1:** How does your department interact with fines or fees?

1. Does the department in question oversee a service with related fines or fees?

*Question A2:* What fines or fees are related to the service?

*Question A3:* How do you think the use of the service is affected by the fines or fees?

*Question A4:* Do you collect data on service utilization and the related fines or fees? If so, who is the person responsible for maintaining these data? We will require a copy for our work, and thank you in advance for your help.

1. Does the department in question have the ability to modify a fine or fee (set the price)?

*Question B2:* Under what circumstances do you have the ability to change or modify fines or fees?

*Question B3:* What is the protocol for such a change (i.e. what is the process for determining the price)?

*Question B4:* What community or government stakeholders are involved in that discussion?

*Question B5:* Can you walk us through a prominent example of a change in recent years?

1. Is the department in question charged with collecting fines and fees?

*Question C2:* How are collections managed by your department?

*Question C3:* To what degree is the collection of fines and fees subject to your (or some other entity’s) discretion or prioritization?

*Question C4:* Do you collect data on collections broken down by fine, location, and by demographic characteristics? If so, who is the person responsible for maintaining these data (for example, have you established an equity coordinator)? We will require a copy for our work, and thank you in advance for your help.

*Question C5:* How much does it cost to fund the collections process? In particular, do you have a collections staffing model and an estimate of the cost per person assigned to collect data?

*Question C6:* Are there any fines or fees that are not being collected and why?

*Question C7:* Do you have a fee schedule, and if so can you share it with us?

1. Is the department charged with monitoring activities related to fines and fees (budget / criminal justice, etc…)?

*Question D2:* What observations have you made looking at the effects of fines and fees on the budget / on interactions with the criminal justice system?

*Question D3:* Has the role of fines and fees changed over time?

*Question D4:* What data do you have on the revenue collected / outcomes related to fines and fees. If you have data, who is the person responsible for maintaining these data? We will require a copy for our work, and thank you in advance for your help.

1. Are there fines and fees outside of your control that affect your department?

*Question E2:* What level of government do these fines or fees come from (federal, state, county, other city department)?

*Question E3:* What fines and fees specifically are they, and do you have discretion over them?

*Question E4:* What are the impact of these fees and have you seen any efforts to mitigate these impacts?

**Question 2:** Do you as a department regularly assess fees / fines systems, fee schedules, or fee/fines collections? If not, what informal conversations has your department had about these topics?

**Question 3:** What conversations have you had or have you witnessed externally (i.e. in other parts of the government or with citizens or non-profit groups) on issues related to fines and fees?

**Question 4**: Have you observed or been a part of any successful efforts to change some element of the fines and fees structure within your department?

**Question 5:** Is your department partially funded by specific fines or fees?

Question 5A: If yes, does the revenue go into general funds or is it earmarked for specific purposes?

*Question 5B:* If yes, is this revenue earmarked for your department?

*Question 5C:* Has the funding been constant over time?

*Question 5D:* Do you know which fines or fees bring in the most revenue?

**Question 6:** How are the fines and fees that your department oversees perceived by the community?

**Question 7:** What do you view as the purpose of fines and fees, and do you think they accomplish that purpose?