

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 898

(Senators Beidle and West)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation

Vehicle Laws - Rental Vehicles - Driver's License Verification and Records

This bill prohibits a person from renting a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer to any person unless the lessor (or agent) has verified that the license of the individual who will drive the rented vehicle is not expired. Inspection of a license and maintenance of related records for the purposes of renting a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer may be done through electronic or digital means. When a lessor allows a person to obtain a rented vehicle without making direct contact, the person's license is considered to have been inspected and verified (as required under current law and by the bill) if the lessor requires the person who will operate the rented vehicle to enter into a membership or master program agreement.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local governmental operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Vehicle Law governs rental and replacement vehicles. A replacement vehicle is a type of rental vehicle that is loaned out to or rented temporarily by a person while the person's own vehicle is not in use because of a breakdown, repair, service, or damage. Generally, a violation of the Maryland Vehicle Law is a misdemeanor that carries a fine of up to \$500.

A person may not rent a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer to any other person unless the individual who will operate the rented vehicle either (1) holds a driver's license issued by the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to drive or tow the class of vehicle being rented or (2) is a nonresident who has and keeps an appropriate driver's license from his or her state or country of origin and is at least the same age required of a resident to drive or tow the class of vehicle being rented. The lessor of the rented vehicle (or agent) must inspect a renter's license to ensure it is valid and appropriate for the vehicle being rented. Each person who rents a motor vehicle to another person must keep specified records of the transaction, including the renter's name, address, and driver's license number. MVA or any police officer may inspect these records.

In order to drive a motor vehicle on a highway in Maryland, an individual must be licensed by the State, exempt from the State's driver's license requirements, or otherwise authorized to do so. A State resident must generally be licensed by MVA and obtain a learner's instructional permit, provisional license, or driver's license. If an individual otherwise qualifies, MVA may issue (1) a learner's instructional permit to an individual who is at least 15 years, 9 months old; (2) a provisional license to an individual who is at least 16 years, 6 months old; or (3) a driver's license to an individual who is at least 18 years old.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: HB 1013 (Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of State Police; Maryland Insurance Administration; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2020
mr/ljm Third Reader - March 16, 2020

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