

Chapter 809

(Senate Bill 744)

AN ACT concerning

Harford County – Alcoholic Beverages – Hearing Notice

FOR the purpose of altering certain notice requirements before the Board of License Commissioners for Harford County may hold public hearings on proposed regulatory changes or license applications; providing that the Board may publish a decision on certain license applications either in certain newspapers or on its website; and generally relating to alcoholic beverages licenses in Harford County.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis
Section 4–202(a), (d), and (e), 4–208, 22–102, and 22–1501(b)(4)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2024 Replacement Volume)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis
Section 22–209 and 22–1505
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2024 Replacement Volume)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis

4–202.

(a) A local licensing board is authorized to issue licenses in its jurisdiction.

(d) A local licensing board by regulation may:

(1) restrict, in accordance with a definite standard, the number of licenses that the local licensing board considers sufficient for a neighborhood;

(2) regulate the use of mechanical music boxes and other sound-making devices;

(3) divide a municipality or county into districts; and

(4) establish areas in which a license may not be issued.

(e) An applicant for a license or a license holder who is aggrieved by a regulation adopted under this section may seek judicial review as provided in Subtitle 9 of this title.

4–208.

(a) Before a local licensing board may approve an application for a license, the local licensing board shall publish notice of the application two times in 2 successive weeks:

(1) in two newspapers of general circulation in the jurisdiction; or

(2) if only one newspaper of general circulation exists in the jurisdiction, in that newspaper.

(b) The notice shall state:

(1) the name of the applicant;

(2) the type of license for which the application is made;

(3) the location described in the application; and

(4) the date, time, and place set by the local licensing board for a hearing on the application.

22–102.

This title applies only in Harford County.

22–209.

(a) The Board may adopt regulations to carry out this article.

(b) (1) The Board shall hold public hearings on all proposed alterations of its regulations.

(2) [The hearings shall be advertised at] **AT** least 2 consecutive weeks before the scheduled public hearings, **THE BOARD SHALL:**

(i) **ADVERTISE THE PUBLIC HEARINGS** in at least one newspaper of general circulation published in the county; [and] **OR**

(ii) [on the website of the Board] **POST NOTICE OF THE PUBLIC HEARINGS ONLINE.**

22–1501.

(b) The following sections of Title 4, Subtitle 2 (“Issuance or Denial of Local Licenses”) of Division I of this article apply in the county:

(4) § 4–208 (“Notice of license application required”), subject to § 22–1505 of this subtitle;

22–1505.

(a) Before holding a hearing for an application for a license, the Board shall [publish notice of the application two times in 2 successive weeks]:

(1) **PUBLISH NOTICE OF THE APPLICATION TWO TIMES IN 2 SUCCESSIVE WEEKS** in one newspaper of general circulation published in the county; [and] **OR**

(2) **[on the Board’s website] POST NOTICE OF THE APPLICATION HEARING ONLINE AT LEAST 14 DAYS BEFORE THE APPLICATION HEARING DATE.**

(b) (1) For a hearing for an application for a new license or an upgrade to an existing license, the Board shall post a notice in a conspicuous location on the exterior of the location described in the application.

(2) The notice shall be on a sign that measures at least 12 by 18 inches and include:

- (i) the class of license for which application is made;
- (ii) the name of the applicant; and
- (iii) the date, time, and location for the application hearing.

(3) The notice shall remain posted for 20 days before the hearing.

(c) (1) The Board shall publish its decision on an application for a new license, an upgrade of an existing license, or a change of location of an existing license:

- (i) in one newspaper of general circulation published in the county; [and] **OR**
- (ii) on the Board’s website.

(2) The decision shall state the name of the license holder, the type of license, and the location of the premises.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor, May 20, 2025.