

CHAPTER 207

(Senate Bill 164)

AN ACT concerning

Natural Resources – Recreational Fishing Licenses – Penalties

FOR the purpose of altering the authority of the Secretary of Natural Resources to revoke or suspend certain recreational fishing licenses to apply to licenses issued to fish in certain nontidal and tidal waters; authorizing the Secretary to adopt regulations that list the criteria for the suspension of certain recreational fishing licenses; prohibiting a person from engaging in certain activities during a period of suspension of a license; establishing certain grounds for the immediate suspension of a license; establishing certain timing and hearing requirements before suspension of a license; authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to suspend immediately the license of a nonresident license holder under certain circumstances; repealing certain penalty provisions applicable to recreational fishing in nontidal waters; repealing certain penalty provisions applicable to recreational fishing in tidal waters; and generally relating to penalties for violations of recreational fishing laws.

BY adding to

Article – Natural Resources
Section 4–220
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2005 Replacement Volume and 2008 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Natural Resources
Section 4–602 and 4–745
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2005 Replacement Volume and 2008 Supplement)

BY repealing

Article – Natural Resources
Section 4–626
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2005 Replacement Volume and 2008 Supplement)

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

Article – Natural Resources

4-220.

(A) IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER PENALTY PROVIDED BY THE PROVISIONS OF THIS TITLE, THE SECRETARY MAY REVOKE OR SUSPEND ANY RECREATIONAL LICENSE ISSUED TO ANY PERSON UNDER THIS TITLE.

(B) THE SECRETARY MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS THAT LIST THE CRITERIA FOR A SUSPENSION OF A PERSON'S ENTITLEMENT TO ENGAGE IN AN ACTIVITY OR ACTIVITIES THAT ARE LICENSED OR PERMITTED UNDER THIS TITLE.

(C) (1) DURING A PERIOD OF SUSPENSION IMPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT, THE PERSON WHOSE ENTITLEMENT TO ENGAGE IN AN ACTIVITY OR ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN SUSPENDED MAY NOT ENGAGE IN AN ACTIVITY FOR WHICH THE SUSPENSION WAS IMPOSED.

(2) THE FOLLOWING ARE GROUNDS FOR AN IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION OF A LICENSE ISSUED UNDER THIS TITLE:

(I) ~~MAKING~~ KNOWINGLY MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT IN AN APPLICATION;

(II) THREE CONVICTIONS FOR VIOLATIONS OCCURRING ON SEPARATE DAYS WITHIN ANY 3-YEAR PERIOD OF PROVISIONS UNDER THIS TITLE;

(III) FAILURE TO SUBMIT A REPORT REQUIRED UNDER THIS TITLE OR BY REGULATION; OR

(IV) FAILURE OF A NONRESIDENT OF THE STATE TO APPEAR IN COURT IN ACCORDANCE WITH A CITATION ISSUED BY A NATURAL RESOURCES POLICE OFFICER, OR TO ANY OTHER PROCESS ISSUED BY ANY COURT OF MARYLAND, FOR VIOLATION OF THIS TITLE.

(3) A PENALTY IMPOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION IS IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER PENALTY AUTHORIZED UNDER § 4-1201 OF THIS TITLE REGARDING STRIPED BASS.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL INITIATE ANY PROCEEDING TO SUSPEND A LICENSE UNDER THIS SECTION NOT LATER THAN 6 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME FOR FILING AN APPEAL OF THE THIRD CONVICTION UNDER PARAGRAPH (2)(II) OF THIS SUBSECTION HAS PASSED.

(5) (I) BEFORE THE SUSPENSION OF A LICENSE UNDER THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL HOLD A HEARING ON NOT LESS THAN 10 DAYS' NOTICE TO THE LICENSEE.

(II) ON THE FAILURE OF A NONRESIDENT OF THE STATE TO APPEAR IN A COURT OF THIS STATE AS REQUIRED BY ANY CHARGING DOCUMENT ACCUSING THE PERSON OF COMMITTING ANY OFFENSE UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE ACTION TAKEN BY THE COURT OR THE DEPARTMENT, THE DEPARTMENT MAY SUSPEND IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT A HEARING ANY LICENSE ISSUED TO THE PERSON UNDER THIS TITLE.

4-602.

[(a)] With due regard for distribution, abundance, economic value, and breeding habits of fish in nontidal waters, the Secretary may adopt rules and regulations to extend, restrict, or prohibit catching, possessing, purchasing, transporting, or exporting fish from nontidal waters.

[(b) In addition to any other penalty provided in this title, any person convicted of violating any rule or regulation the Department adopts, shall be fined \$5 for each fish illegally caught. If a person is convicted a second or subsequent time within the same 12-month period for a violation of the rules and regulations the Department adopts, he shall have his angler's license suspended for a period of 12 months from the date of the second or subsequent conviction.]

[4-626.

In addition to any other penalty provided in this title, any person who is convicted of a second violation of any rule or regulation adopted by the Department pursuant to the provision of this subtitle shall have his license suspended if the violation occurs within 12 months of any prior violation of the same rule or regulation.]

4-745.

(a) (1) Except as provided in subsections (c) and (d) of this section and § 4-217 of this title, a person may not fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay or in its tributaries up to tidal boundaries without first obtaining a Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license.

(2) The license may be obtained from the Department or from any authorized agent of the Department. The following annual license fees shall apply:

(i) Resident..... \$15

- (ii) Short-term license valid for 5 consecutive days from date of issue..... \$6
- (iii) Nonresident..... \$15
- (iv) Resident and nonresident blind persons..... No fee
- (v) Complimentary license under subsection (f) of this section..... No fee

(3) Except for a license issued under subsection (d) of this section, every Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license shall be valid for not more than 1 year and shall expire on December 31.

(b) (1) The Department may designate a person engaged in a commercial enterprise to sell the Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license as an agent under the Department's control and supervision.

(2) As compensation, the agent shall retain \$1 for each license issued.

(3) The Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license shall be furnished to an agent upon satisfactory payment or upon consignment and only if the Department is given adequate security to insure ultimate payment by an agent to the Department for the licenses.

(4) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, all fees collected on behalf of the Department pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Department in accordance with its rules and regulations for deposit with the State Treasurer to the credit of the Fisheries Research and Development Fund to be used for the replenishment, protection, and conservation of fish stocks caught by recreational fishermen, for enhancement of recreational fishing opportunities, and for research concerning tidal fishery resources. The Department shall publicly report annually the amounts collected and the expenditures.

(ii) In fiscal year 1999 and in each subsequent fiscal year, the Department, for the purposes set forth in subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph, shall use:

1. \$2 from the sale of each license under subsection (a) of this section;
2. \$20 from the sale of each license under subsection (d)(2) of this section; and

3. \$225 of the special charter boat license under subsection (d)(1) of this section.

(iii) The Department shall use the moneys specified in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph for:

1. Achieving the maximum federal fund apportionments;
 2. Management assessment and sportfishing surveys;
- and
3. Angler outreach and public fishing information.

(5) In the preparation of plans for the expenditure of license receipts, the Secretary annually shall solicit the advice and opinions of the Department's Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission, representative fishing and boating associations, and other interested parties.

(c) A person may fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries without a Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license if the person:

- (1) Is under the age of 16;
- (2) Possesses a valid commercial license;
- (3) Is fishing from private real property as an owner, family member of an owner, or nonpaying guest of an owner;
- (4) Is fishing with a hook and line from a public bridge or public pier that has been designated by the Department as a free fishing area;
- (5) Holds a valid tidal water sport fishing license issued by the State of Virginia, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, or District of Columbia, provided that this exemption shall not take effect until the Secretary has published notice in the Maryland Register of the Secretary's determination that the Virginia, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, or District of Columbia requirements for a tidal water sport fishing license are substantially similar to and reciprocal with the Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license requirements of this section;
- (6) Is fishing pursuant to any special license issued under subsection (d) of this section;
- (7)
 - (i) Is on active duty with the armed forces of the United States;
 - (ii) Is a resident of this State;

(iii) Is on leave from the armed forces; and

(iv) Has, while fishing, a copy of the person's official leave orders;

(8) Fishes on a free fishing day designated by the Secretary; or

(9) Holds a current resident consolidated senior sport fishing license issued under § 4-216 of this title.

(d) (1) The Department may provide by regulation for issuance of a special charter boat license that would be valid for all individuals on a charter boat operated by a licensed fishing guide. The fee shall be:

(i) For 6 fishermen or less \$240.

(ii) For 7 or more fishermen \$290.

(2) (i) The Department may provide by regulation for issuance of an annual special Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license, which when permanently affixed to a boat registered in any state shall authorize any person on the boat to fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay or in its tributaries up to tidal boundaries, except that such a license may not be used on a boat that has been hired to take such persons fishing.

(ii) The annual fee for this special license shall be \$50.

(iii) If a boat owner purchases the special license under this paragraph, the boat owner may fish anywhere in the Chesapeake Bay, whether the boat owner is fishing in the owner's boat, in another person's boat, on land, or elsewhere. The Department shall issue a complimentary Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license to the boat owner who purchases a special license under this paragraph. If a boat to which the special license is affixed has more than one owner, then only the individual applicant who signs the application for the special license shall be entitled to a complimentary Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license under this paragraph.

[(e) (1) In addition to any other penalty provided under this title, the Department may suspend a person's entitlement to engage in a particular activity or activities licensed or permitted under this section.

(2) During a period of suspension imposed by the Department, the person whose license has been suspended may not engage in an activity for which the license suspension is imposed.

(3) The following are grounds for suspension of a license issued under this section:

- (i) Making a false statement in an application;
 - (ii) Three convictions for violations occurring on separate days within any 3-year period of provisions under this title;
 - (iii) Failure to submit a report required under this title or by regulation; or
 - (iv) Failure of a nonresident of the State to appear in court pursuant to a citation issued by a Natural Resources police officer, or to any other process issued by any court of Maryland, for violation of this title.
- (4) A penalty imposed in accordance with this section is in addition to any other penalty authorized under § 4-1201 of this title regarding striped bass.
- (5) The Department shall adopt regulations that provide:
- (i) A schedule of points assigned to various offenses under this title;
 - (ii) A schedule of the maximum number of days that a license may be suspended according to the number of points accumulated; and
 - (iii) For suspension of a license for conviction of an offense under this title.
- (6) The Department shall initiate any proceeding to suspend a license under this section not later than 6 months after the time for filing an appeal of the third conviction under paragraph (3)(ii) of this subsection has passed.
- (7) Before the suspension of a license under this section, the Department shall hold a hearing on not less than 10 days' notice to the licensee, except that on the failure of a nonresident of the State to appear in a court of this State as required by any charging document accusing the person of committing any offense under this subtitle, in addition to any other appropriate action taken by the court or the Department, the Department may suspend immediately and without hearing any license issued to the person under this title.
- (f) **(E)** (1) In this subsection, "former prisoner of war" means a person who, while serving in the active military, naval, or air service of the United States, was forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by an enemy government or its agents, or a hostile force, during a period of armed conflict.

(2) The Department may issue a lifetime complimentary Chesapeake Bay sport fishing license to any Maryland resident who certifies that the resident is a former prisoner of war or a 100% service connected disabled American veteran.

(3) A complimentary license is not transferable and shall be issued on forms the Department designates.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2009.

Approved by the Governor, May 7, 2009.