

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2017 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader - Revised**

House Bill 306  
Economic Matters

(Montgomery County Delegation)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Montgomery County - Alcoholic Beverages - Tasting at Dispensaries**  
**MC 19-17**

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This emergency bill authorizes the Montgomery County Department of Liquor Control (DLC) dispensaries to hold on-premises tastings of beer, wine, and liquor. A dispensary may sell beer, wine, and liquor for tasting purposes from its own inventory and, once a bottle is opened, it must be marked that it may be used for tasting purposes only. For each individual participating in a tasting, a dispensary may serve:

- 0.5-ounce samples of liquor with no more than 1.5 total ounces sampled each day;
- 1-ounce samples of wine with no more than 4 total ounces sampled each day; and
- 3-ounce samples of beer with no more than 12 total ounces sampled each day.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Montgomery County revenues increase minimally from the sale of samples by dispensaries. Expenditures are not materially affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** In Montgomery County, DLC is authorized to sell any kind of alcoholic beverage, and the county may sell alcoholic beverages through the use of a county liquor

dispensary. Furthermore, in Montgomery County, no person, firm, or corporation may keep for sale any alcoholic beverage not purchased from DLC. Unless otherwise specified by law, no retailer may sell or deliver any alcoholic beverage in Montgomery County for resale except to a county liquor dispensary.

**Background:** In general, most Maryland jurisdictions authorize the sale of alcoholic beverages through a three-tier system in which retail alcoholic beverages licensees purchase alcoholic beverages from licensed Maryland wholesalers who purchase alcoholic beverages from licensed manufacturers and import companies. In Montgomery County, DLC operates a dispensary system that acts as the wholesaler for retail alcoholic beverages licensees in the county. Furthermore, there is only one Class A beer, wine, and liquor license issued in Montgomery County; people who want to purchase liquor for off-premises consumption must generally buy from a county-operated liquor store.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Montgomery County; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 1, 2017  
kb/tso Third Reader - March 16, 2017  
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