

HOUSE BILL 88

A1, E1
HB 277/18 – ECM & W&M

9lr0418

By: **Delegates Charkoudian, Acevero, Boyce, Bridges, Crutchfield, Dumais, Hettleman, Kelly, Kerr, Korman, R. Lewis, Lierman, Love, Moon, Mosby, Stewart, Washington, Wells, and Wilkins**

Introduced and read first time: January 17, 2019

Assigned to: Economic Matters and Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Alcohol Offenses – Civil Offenses**
3 **(Decriminalization of Petty Nonviolent Offenses Act)**

4 FOR the purpose of making it a civil rather than a criminal offense to consume an alcoholic
5 beverage in public under certain circumstances or to possess an alcoholic beverage
6 in an open container under certain circumstances; requiring certain offenders to be
7 issued a citation under certain circumstances; providing a certain maximum fine;
8 making certain conforming changes; and generally relating to alcohol offenses.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article – Alcoholic Beverages
11 Section 6–321 and 6–322
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2016 Volume and 2018 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
15 Article – Criminal Law
16 Section 10–119
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

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

21 **Article – Alcoholic Beverages**

22 6–321.

23 (a) In this section, “public property” includes property that is:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (1) a structure, road, parking area, or grounds; and
- 2 (2) located on land owned, leased, or operated by:
- 3 (i) the State;
- 4 (ii) a county;
- 5 (iii) a municipality;
- 6 (iv) the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission;
- 7 (v) the Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission;
- 8 (vi) the Montgomery County Revenue Authority; or
- 9 (vii) the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

10 (b) (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, an
11 individual may not consume an alcoholic beverage:

- 12 (i) on public property;
- 13 (ii) on the mall, adjacent parking area, or other outside area of a
14 shopping center;
- 15 (iii) on an adjacent parking area or other outside area of any other
16 retail establishment; and
- 17 (iv) in a parked vehicle located in an area described under item (i),
18 (ii), or (iii) of this paragraph.

19 (2) An individual may consume an alcoholic beverage on:

- 20 (i) public property if authorized by the governmental entity that has
21 authority over the property; or
- 22 (ii) private property described under paragraph (1)(ii) through (iv) of
23 this subsection if authorized by the owner of the property.

24 (3) If the owner or operator of a motor home or chartered bus has consented
25 to the consumption of the alcoholic beverages, paragraph (1) of this subsection does not
26 apply to passengers:

- 27 (i) in the living quarters of a motor home equipped with a toilet and
28 central heating; or

1 (ii) of a chartered bus in transit.

2 (c) (1) A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION IS A CODE VIOLATION AND A CIVIL
3 OFFENSE.

4 (2) A person who violates this section [is guilty of a misdemeanor and on
5 conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$100]:

6 (I) SHALL BE ISSUED A CITATION UNDER § 10-119 OF THE
7 CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE; AND

8 (II) IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$100.
9 6-322.

10 (a) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, an individual
11 may not possess an alcoholic beverage in an open container while:

12 (i) on the mall, adjacent parking area, or other outside area of a
13 shopping center;

14 (ii) on an adjacent parking area or other outside area of any other
15 retail establishment; or

16 (iii) in a parked vehicle located in an area described under item (i) or
17 (ii) of this paragraph.

18 (2) An individual may possess an alcoholic beverage in an open container
19 on private property described under paragraph (1) of this subsection if the individual is
20 authorized by the owner of the establishment.

21 (b) (1) A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION IS A CODE VIOLATION AND A CIVIL
22 OFFENSE.

23 (2) A person who violates this section [is guilty of a misdemeanor and on
24 conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$100]:

25 (I) SHALL BE ISSUED A CITATION UNDER § 10-119 OF THE
26 CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE; AND

27 (II) IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$100.

28 Article – Criminal Law

1 10–119.

2 (a) (1) A person [who violates §§ 10–113 through 10–115 or § 10–118 of this
3 part] shall be issued a citation under this section **IF THE PERSON VIOLATES:**

4 (I) **§§ 10–113 THROUGH 10–115 OR § 10–118 OF THIS PART; OR**

5 (II) **§ 6–321 OR § 6–322 OF THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**
6 **ARTICLE.**

7 (2) A minor who violates § 10–116 or § 10–117(a) of this part shall be issued
8 a citation under this section.

9 (b) (1) A citation for a violation of §§ 10–113 through 10–115 or a violation of
10 § 10–118 of this part **OR § 6–321 OR § 6–322 OF THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARTICLE**
11 may be issued by:

12 (i) a police officer authorized to make arrests;

13 (ii) in State forestry reservations, State parks, historic monuments,
14 and recreation areas, a forest or park warden under § 5–206(a) or (b) of the Natural
15 Resources Article; and

16 (iii) subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, in Anne
17 Arundel County, Frederick County, Harford County, Kent County, Montgomery County,
18 Prince George’s County, and Talbot County, and only in the inspector’s jurisdiction, an
19 alcoholic beverages inspector who investigates license violations under the Alcoholic
20 Beverages Article.

21 (2) In Anne Arundel County, Frederick County, Harford County, Kent
22 County, Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and Talbot County, the inspector
23 shall successfully complete an appropriate program of training in the proper use of arrest
24 authority and pertinent police procedures as required by the board of license
25 commissioners.

26 (3) In Anne Arundel County, Harford County, Kent County, Montgomery
27 County, Prince George’s County, and Talbot County, the inspector may not carry a firearm
28 in the performance of the inspector’s duties.

29 (c) A person authorized under this section to issue a citation shall issue it if the
30 person has probable cause to believe that the person charged is committing or has
31 committed a Code violation.

32 (d) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, the form of citation issued
33 to an adult shall be as prescribed by the District Court and shall be uniform throughout
34 the State.

- 1 (2) The citation issued to an adult shall contain:
- 2 (i) the name and address of the person charged;
- 3 (ii) the statute allegedly violated;
- 4 (iii) the location, date, and time that the violation occurred;
- 5 (iv) the fine that may be imposed;
- 6 (v) a notice stating that prepayment of the fine is not allowed;
- 7 (vi) a notice that the District Court shall promptly send the person
8 charged a summons to appear for trial;
- 9 (vii) the signature of the person issuing the citation; and
- 10 (viii) a space for the person charged to sign the citation.

- 11 (3) The form of citation issued to a minor shall:
- 12 (i) be prescribed by the State Court Administrator;
- 13 (ii) be uniform throughout the State; and
- 14 (iii) contain the information listed in § 3–8A–33(b) of the Courts
15 Article.

16 (e) (1) Except for a citation subject to the jurisdiction of a circuit court, the
17 issuing jurisdiction shall forward a copy of the citation and a request for trial to the District
18 Court in the district having venue.

19 (2) (i) The District Court shall promptly schedule the case for trial and
20 summon the defendant to appear.

21 (ii) Willful failure of the defendant to respond to the summons is
22 contempt of court.

23 (f) (1) For purposes of this section, a violation of §§ 10–113 through 10–115 or
24 a violation of § 10–118 of this part **OR § 6–321 OR § 6–322 OF THE ALCOHOLIC**
25 **BEVERAGES ARTICLE** is a Code violation and is a civil offense.

26 (2) A person charged who is under the age of 18 years shall be subject to
27 the procedures and dispositions provided in Title 3, Subtitle 8A of the Courts Article.

28 (3) A person charged who is at least 18 years old shall be subject to the

1 provisions of this section.

2 (4) Adjudication of a Code violation is not a criminal conviction for any
3 purpose, and it does not impose any of the civil disabilities ordinarily imposed by a criminal
4 conviction.

5 (g) In any proceeding for a Code violation:

6 (1) the State has the burden to prove the guilt of the defendant to the same
7 extent as is required by law in the trial of criminal causes, and in any such proceeding, the
8 court shall apply the evidentiary standards as prescribed by law or rule for the trial of
9 criminal causes;

10 (2) the court shall ensure that the defendant has received a copy of the
11 charges against the defendant and that the defendant understands those charges;

12 (3) the defendant is entitled to cross-examine all witnesses who appear
13 against the defendant, to produce evidence or witnesses on behalf of the defendant, or to
14 testify on the defendant's own behalf, if the defendant chooses to do so;

15 (4) the defendant is entitled to be represented by counsel of the defendant's
16 choice and at the expense of the defendant;

17 (5) the defendant may enter a plea of guilty or not guilty, and the verdict
18 of the court in the case shall be:

19 (i) guilty of a Code violation; or

20 (ii) not guilty of a Code violation; and

21 (6) before rendering judgment, the court may place the defendant on
22 probation in the same manner and to the same extent as is allowed by law in the trial of a
23 criminal case.

24 (h) (1) **THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A PERSON WHO COMMITS**
25 **A CODE VIOLATION UNDER § 6-321 OR § 6-322 OF THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**
26 **ARTICLE.**

27 (2) Except as provided in paragraph [(2)] (3) of this subsection, if the
28 District Court finds that a person has committed a Code violation, the court shall require
29 the person to pay:

30 (i) a fine not exceeding \$500; or

31 (ii) if the violation is a subsequent violation, a fine not exceeding
32 \$1,000.

1 ~~[(2)]~~ **(3)** If the District Court finds that a person has committed a Code
2 violation under § 10–117 of this subtitle, the court shall require the person to pay:

3 (i) a fine not exceeding \$2,500; or

4 (ii) if the violation is a subsequent violation, a fine not exceeding
5 \$5,000.

6 ~~[(3)]~~ **(4)** The Chief Judge of the District Court may not establish a
7 schedule for the prepayment of fines for a Code violation under this part.

8 (i) When a defendant has been found guilty of a Code violation and a fine has
9 been imposed by the court:

10 (1) the court may direct that the payment of the fine be suspended or
11 deferred under conditions that the court may establish; and

12 (2) if the defendant willfully fails to pay the fine imposed by the court, that
13 willful failure may be treated as a criminal contempt of court, for which the defendant may
14 be punished by the court as provided by law.

15 (j) (1) The defendant is liable for the costs of the proceedings in the District
16 Court and for payment to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund.

17 (2) The court costs in a Code violation case in which costs are imposed are
18 \$5.

19 (k) (1) In this subsection, “driver’s license” means a license or permit to drive
20 a motor vehicle that is issued under the laws of this State or any other jurisdiction.

21 (2) This subsection applies only to:

22 (i) a person who is at least 18 but under 21 years of age; or

23 (ii) a minor if the minor is subject to the jurisdiction of the court.

24 (3) If a person is found guilty of a Code violation under § 10–113 of this
25 part that involved the use of a driver’s license or a document purporting to be a driver’s
26 license, the court shall notify the Motor Vehicle Administration of the violation.

27 (4) The Chief Judge of the District Court, in conjunction with the Motor
28 Vehicle Administrator, shall establish uniform procedures for reporting Code violations
29 described in this subsection.

30 (l) (1) A defendant who has been found guilty of a Code violation has the right
31 to appeal or to file a motion for a new trial or a motion for a revision of a judgment provided
32 by law in the trial of a criminal case.

1 (2) A motion shall be made in the same manner as provided in the trial of
2 criminal cases, and the court, in ruling on the motion has the same authority provided in
3 the trial of criminal cases.

4 (m) (1) The State's Attorney for any county may prosecute a Code violation in
5 the same manner as prosecution of a violation of the criminal laws of this State.

6 (2) In a Code violation case the State's Attorney may:

7 (i) enter a nolle prosequi in or place the case on the stet docket; and

8 (ii) exercise authority in the same manner as prescribed by law for
9 violation of the criminal laws of this State.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 October 1, 2019.