

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 853

(Washington County Senators)

Finance

Economic Matters

**Washington County - Alcoholic Beverages - Multi-Use Sports and Events Facility
Beer, Wine, and Liquor License**

This bill alters the existing stadium beer and wine (BW) license in Washington County to be a multi-use sports and events facility beer, wine, and liquor (BWL) license. The holder of a multi-use sports and events BWL license is authorized to sell beer, wine, and liquor for on-premises consumption to individuals present at an event in the specified facility. The bill also makes a series of changes related to the use of the multi-use sports and events facility BWL license, as specified. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: Washington County can handle any enforcement activity within existing resources. Washington County license revenues increase minimally due to the increase in licensing fees under the bill.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law:

Stadium Licenses and Multi-use Sports and Events Facility Licenses

Under current law, the Washington County Board of License Commissioners is authorized to issue a stadium BW license to the owner of a professional baseball team franchise that

may be in any form of business organization, including partnership, corporation, and limited liability company. The bill establishes that the board may issue a multi-use sports and events facility BWL license to the owner of a professional baseball team franchise that may be in any form of business organization, as specified, that will operate as a multi-use sports and events facility.

Under current law, the license authorizes the license holder to sell beer and wine (1) for on-premises consumption to individuals present at an event held in the stadium, and (2) in plastic, Styrofoam, or paper containers. The written approval of the board is required before any beer and wine may be sold, served, or consumed on a parking lot of the stadium or during an event other than a baseball game in which the team of the license holder is playing. Under the bill, the license authorizes the license holder to sell beer, wine, and liquor for on-premises consumption to individuals present at an event held in the multi-use sports and events facility. The bill also repeals the requirement that beer and wine must be sold in a specified container, in addition to repealing the requirement of obtaining the written approval of the board before any beer and wine may be sold, served, or consumed in the parking lot or during other specified events.

Under current law, the license holder may sell beer and wine from the time the stadium opens for the event until the event ends. The bill repeals this requirement and additionally establishes that the license holder must require all employees to complete an alcohol awareness training program and obtain a crowd control training certificate.

Under current law, the license holder may not allow an individual to carry alcoholic beverages onto or from the licensed premise.

Under current law, the annual license fee is \$2,000, and the fee for a Sunday permit is \$250. Under the bill, the annual license fee is increased to \$2,500, and the Sunday permit fee is repealed.

Under current law, “premises” includes the entire stadium facility. Under the bill, “premises” includes the entire multi-use sports and events facility.

Alcohol Awareness Training

Alcoholic beverages license holders are generally subject to alcohol awareness training requirements under State law. The program includes instruction on how alcohol affects an individual’s behavior and body; provides education on the dangers of drinking and driving and defines effective methods to (1) determine whether a customer is under the legal drinking age; (2) serve customers to minimize the chance of intoxication; and (3) stop service before a customer becomes intoxicated.

Local Fiscal Effect: Though the bill repeals the Sunday permit, the bill increases the annual license fee for the multi-use sports and events BWL license from \$2,000 to \$2,500. Therefore, Washington County revenues increase by \$250 annually, beginning in fiscal 2025, for each license issued under the bill.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 920 (Washington County Delegation) - Economic Matters.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 14, 2024
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