

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 471

(Senator Rosapepe)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation

Vehicle Laws - Motor Vehicle Administration - 3-Hour Roadway Safety Driving Education Program - Requirements

This bill replaces an alcohol and drug education program administered by the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) with a newly established and more broadly focused three-hour Roadway Safety Driving Education Program. The Roadway Safety Driving Education Program must provide instruction on (1) understanding signs, signals, and pavement markings; (2) dangerous driving behaviors; (3) work zone safety; (4) the hazards of driving while impaired or intoxicated; (5) the criminal penalties and administrative sanctions for alcohol- and drug-related motor vehicle violations; (6) the medical, biological, and psychological effects of the consumption of alcohol and drugs and their impact on the operation of a motor vehicle; (7) the Maryland driving record and points systems; and (8) any other roadway safety-related information that MVA determines would be beneficial to applicants for a driver's license. MVA must adopt regulations establishing criteria for certifying a private entity to offer the three-hour program established by the bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MVA can implement the bill's requirements with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: MVA may issue a driver's license, without first issuing a learner's instructional permit and without a waiting period, to any individual who (1) has been

licensed regularly to drive in Maryland, in another state or country, or by the armed forces of the United States, if MVA is satisfied that the applicant's experience in driving vehicles of the type that would be authorized by the license class applied for is sufficient to justify issuance of the license without further training or (2) has successfully completed the basic motorcycle safety course. MVA may examine the applicant's driving record or issue a provisional license (if appropriate). An individual who never held a driver's license issued by MVA (or by another state), but who otherwise may obtain a license without first obtaining a learner's instructional permit, must successfully complete a three-hour alcohol and drug education program established by MVA.

Alcohol and Drug Education Program

MVA, in cooperation with the Behavioral Health Administration within the Maryland Department of Health, must establish an alcohol and drug education program to educate certain driver's license applicants (*i.e.*, applicants who are qualified to receive a driver's license without first being issued a learner's instructional permit, as noted above). The program must also be included as part of the driver education program. The program must provide three hours of instruction in:

- the hazards of driving while impaired or intoxicated;
- the criminal penalties and administrative sanctions for alcohol- and drug-related motor vehicle violations;
- the medical, biological, and psychological effects of the consumption of alcohol and drugs and their impact on the operation of a motor vehicle; and
- any other drug- and alcohol-related information that MVA determines would be beneficial to applicants for a driver's license.

MVA must adopt regulations establishing criteria for certifying a private entity to offer the alcohol and drug education program.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 463 (Delegates Edelson and Watson) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 31, 2025
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Analysis by: Eric F. Pierce

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510