

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 839
Finance

(Dorchester County Senators)

Dorchester County – Alcoholic Beverages – Beer, Wine, and Liquor Tasting License

This bill renames the beer and wine tasting license as the beer, wine, and liquor tasting license in Dorchester County and authorizes the license holder to provide up to 0.5 ounces from each offering of liquor and up to 1.5 ounces from all offerings of liquor in one day. The bill also clarifies that a license holder may only offer tastings of alcoholic beverages they are authorized to sell under their Class A license. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Dorchester County can handle any additional enforcement activity with existing resources. Dorchester County revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Dorchester County’s beer and wine tasting license authorizes a license holder to allow consumption of beer or wine for tasting as long as the consumer is not charged for the beer or wine, and it is consumed on the premises of the license holder. A licensee that holds only a Class A beer license may only hold tastings of beer, and not wine. An establishment with a beer and wine tasting license may allow individuals to consume up to three ounces of beer from each offering and up to eight ounces from all offerings of beer in one day, and up to one ounce of wine from each offering and up to four ounces from all offerings of wine in one day. The licensee must notify the Dorchester County

Board of License Commissioners in writing at least seven days before an event at which the license is to be used.

The board may issue the license without a public hearing, but if an initial license application is denied, the board must hold a public hearing on request of the applicant before making a determination about the license application. The license fee is \$150 for up to 15 tastings per year and \$250 for up to 30 tastings per year, and renewal of the license may be made when the holder's Class A license is renewed.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 569 (Dorchester County Delegation) - Economic Matters.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2025
js/tso

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