

Chapter 45

(House Bill 40)

AN ACT concerning

Natural Resources – Fishing Licenses and Stamps – Alterations

FOR the purpose of altering the fees for resident consolidated senior sport fishing licenses, angler's licenses, and trout stamps; repealing the exemption from the requirement to obtain a trout stamp under certain circumstances for a holder of a resident consolidated senior sport fishing license; and generally relating to fishing licenses and stamps.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Natural Resources
Section 4–216, 4–604, and 4–614
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

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

Article – Natural Resources

4–216.

(a) The Department shall establish a resident consolidated senior sport fishing license, to be issued to residents of Maryland beginning in the calendar year in which they attain the age of 65.

(b) **(1)** The resident consolidated senior sport fishing license may be obtained from the Department or from any authorized agent of the Department.

(2) The annual fee for the license is [~~\$5~~] **\$12**.

(3) As compensation, an agent shall retain 50 cents for each license issued.

(c) A resident consolidated senior sport fishing license shall be valid for 1 year following the date of issuance.

(d) A holder of a resident consolidated senior sport fishing license may:

(1) Engage in angling on the nontidal waters of the State without holding an angler's license under § 4–604 of this title; **AND**

(2) [Engage in angling for trout on the nontidal waters of the State without holding a trout stamp under § 4–614 of this title; and

(3)] Fish for finfish in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries or in the State waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Atlantic coastal bays and their tributaries without holding a Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing license under § 4–745 of this title.

4–604.

(a) This section provides a fund to pay the expense of protecting and managing game and freshwater fish and preventing unauthorized persons from fishing or attempting to fish for any game and freshwater fish without first procuring an angler's license.

(b) Any person 16 years old or older shall secure an angler's license to fish in the nontidal waters of the State. An angler's license entitles the holder to fish in the nontidal waters of the State only during the open season.

(c) An angler's license is not required of the following:

(1) The owner or tenant of land bordering on nontidal water, his spouse and children, or the spouse of any child who resides on the land with the owner or tenant when he fishes in nontidal water adjoining his land;

(2) Any resident serving in the armed forces of the United States, while on leave in the State, during the resident's leave period, if, while angling, the resident possesses a copy of the resident's official leave order;

(3) A person who fishes in nontidal waters of the State on free fishing days designated by the Secretary;

(4) A person holding a current resident consolidated senior sport fishing license issued under § 4–216 of this title;

(5) A person fishing in a free fishing area established under § 4–214(b)(2) of this title; or

(6) A person authorized by a disability exemption issued under § 4–217 of this title.

(d) A person who wishes to obtain an angler's license shall complete and submit an application to the Department or to any person designated by the Department to issue an angler's license.

(e) (1) An applicant for a license issued under this section:

and (i) Shall provide all the information requested by the Department;

(ii) May not willfully make a false statement or representation to the Department on the application.

(2) The Department shall require an applicant for a license under this section to provide the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number, if the applicant has a Social Security number.

(f) (1) Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, the following annual license fees shall apply:

(i) Resident [~~\$20.50~~] **\$32**

(ii) Subject to paragraph (2)(ii) of this subsection, short-term license valid for 7 consecutive days from date of issuance [~~\$7.50~~] **\$16**

(iii) Resident and nonresident blind persons No fee

(iv) Complimentary license No fee

(2) For a nonresident:

(i) The fee for an annual angler's license is the greater of:

1. [~~\$30.50~~] **\$55**; or

2. A fee equal to the fee charged a Maryland resident by the nonresident's home state for a similar license; and

(ii) The fee for a short-term license valid for 7 consecutive days from the date of issuance is the greater of:

1. [~~\$7.50~~] **\$45**; or

2. A fee equal to the fee charged a Maryland resident by the nonresident's home state for a license that permits an equal number of days of fishing or the next higher number of days as permitted by the Maryland license.

(iii) The fee for a short-term license valid for 3 consecutive days from the date of issuance is the greater of:

1. [~~\$5~~] **\$35**; or

2. A fee equal to the fee charged a Maryland resident by the nonresident's home state for a license that permits an equal number of days of fishing or the next higher number of days as permitted by the Maryland license.

(3) The Department shall implement a program to provide discounted angler's licenses and trout stamps to Maryland residents who are recipients of the Purple Heart Award.

(4) (i) All fees collected by the Department under this section may only be used in accordance with § 4-208 of this title.

(ii) The Department shall publicly report annually the amounts collected and the expenditures under this section.

(g) A person designated to sell an angler's license shall issue the license and collect the fee prescribed in subsection (f) of this section. The collected money shall be transmitted to the Department as prescribed by the Department. As compensation, the agent shall retain \$1 for each license issued.

(h) (1) Every angler's license shall be valid for 1 year following the date of issuance.

(2) The license may not be transferred to another person, nor used or presented by any person other than the person to whom it was issued.

(i) Every person licensed under this section shall submit any report the Department requires in accordance with Department regulations.

4-614.

(a) (1) The Department shall adopt regulations to establish fishing areas where a trout stamp is required.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection, a person may not fish or possess trout in an area established in paragraph (1) of this subsection unless the person first obtains a trout stamp in addition to an angler's license.

(3) A trout stamp is not required of the following:

(i) [A holder of a current resident consolidated senior sport fishing license issued under § 4-216 of this title;

(ii)] A holder of a lifetime complimentary angler's license issued under § 4-607(a)(2) or (3) of this subtitle;

[(iii)] (II) A person authorized by a disability exemption issued under § 4–217 of this title;

[(iv)] (III) Any resident serving in the armed forces of the United States while on leave in the State, during the resident’s leave period, if, while angling, the resident possesses a copy of the resident’s official leave order; or

[(v)] (IV) A person under 16 years of age.

(4) The stamp may be obtained from the Department or an authorized agent of the Department.

(b) A person is not required to have a trout stamp to possess trout taken from:

(1) Any privately owned lake or pond that is stocked with trout artificially propagated by commercial hatcheries or purchased from persons licensed to sell fish; or

(2) Any fee fishing lake or pond operated under § 4–11A–20 of this title.

(c) The following annual trout stamp fees shall apply:

(1) Resident.....**[\$5] \$20**

(2) Nonresident.....**[\$10] \$30**

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor, April 8, 2025.