

Chapter 554

(Senate Bill 357)

AN ACT concerning

St. Mary's County – Gaming by Qualified Organization – ~~License~~ Permit Required

FOR the purpose of requiring a qualified organization to hold a gaming ~~license~~ permit whenever the qualified organization ~~conducts~~ operates a certain gaming device in St. Mary's County; authorizing the County Commissioners of St. Mary's County to adopt certain regulations; requiring the Board to designate a person to administer the issuance of gaming ~~licenses~~ permits in the county; and generally relating to gaming in St. Mary's County.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 Article – Criminal Law
 Section 13–2101 and 13–2111
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

Article – Criminal Law

13–2101.

- (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.
- (b) “County commissioners” means the [Board of] County Commissioners of St. Mary's County.
- (c) “Designee” means a person designated by the county commissioners to administer the issuance of bingo licenses **OR GAMING ~~LICENSES~~ PERMITS** in the county.
- (d) (1) **“GAMING DEVICE” MEANS A MECHANISM FOR PLAYING A GAME OF CHANCE.**
- (2) “Gaming device” includes a paddle wheel, wheel of fortune, chance book, bingo, Nevada card, and a stamp machine.
- ~~(2)~~ (3) “Gaming device” does not include a slot machine, as defined in § 12–301 of this article.

- (e) “Gaming event” means a carnival, bazaar, or raffle.
- (f) “Qualified organization” means:
 - (1) a volunteer fire company; or
 - (2) a bona fide:
 - (i) religious organization;
 - (ii) fraternal organization;
 - (iii) civic organization;
 - (iv) war veterans’ organization; or
 - (v) charitable organization.
- (g) “Sheriff” means the Sheriff of St. Mary’s County.

13-2111.

(A) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION MUST HOLD A GAMING ~~LICENSE~~ PERMIT WHENEVER THE QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION ~~CONDUCTS~~ OPERATES A GAMING DEVICE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBTITLE.

(B) A qualified organization may hold a gaming event and may operate a gaming device if an individual or group of individuals does not:

- (1) benefit financially from the operation of the gaming device; or
- (2) receive from the operation of the gaming device any proceeds for personal use or benefit.

(C) THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DESIGNEE UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, TO ADMINISTER AND ENFORCE ~~GAMING ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED~~ THE GAMING DEVICE PERMIT REQUIRED UNDER THIS SECTION IN THE COUNTY.

(D) THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SHALL DESIGNATE A PERSON TO ADMINISTER THE ISSUANCE OF GAMING ~~LICENSES~~ PERMITS UNDER THIS SECTION IN THE COUNTY.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect ~~October~~ July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2026.