Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 400 (Anne Arundel County Senators)
Finance Government, Labor, and Elections

Anne Arundel County - Alcoholic Beverages - Entertainment Permits

This bill revises and renames various alcoholic beverages entertainment permits in Anne Arundel County as follows: (1) a music permit is renamed a background entertainment permit; (2) an entertainment permit is renamed a general entertainment permit; and (3) a dancing permit is renamed a full entertainment permit. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect Anne Arundel County finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary/Current Law: Under current law, in Anne Arundel County, except for piped-in background music or one television screen, the holder of an alcoholic beverages license generally may not play music (including live music or music by a disc jockey), operate a karaoke machine, or allow dancing, floor shows, or any other similar type of entertainment on the licensed premises or on an adjacent property in which the licensee has ownership or control, unless the license holder is issued the appropriate entertainment permit authorizing the activity. The bill removes the prohibition on dancing for license holders without an entertainment permit.

Music Permit Becomes Background Entertainment Permit

Under current law, a music permit may be issued to the holder of a Class B, Class BLX, Class D, or Class H alcoholic beverages license. The music permit authorizes the playing of (1) more than one television and (2) recorded music or live music with no more than two musicians. The permit does not authorize floor shows, dancing, or similar live entertainment. The annual permit fee is $100.

Under the bill, a music permit is renamed a background entertainment permit, which the board may continue to issue to the same classes of license holders. A background entertainment permit authorizes the playing of more than one television and recorded music or piped-in background music. The permit does not authorize floor shows or similar live entertainment. The annual permit fee is $100.

Entertainment Permit Becomes General Entertainment Permit

Under current law, an entertainment permit may be issued to the holder of a Class B, Class BLX, Class D, or Class H alcoholic beverages license. The entertainment permit authorizes (1) live music with up to four musicians; (2) playing more than one television; (3) a karaoke machine; and (4) music by a disc jockey. The permit does not authorize floor shows, dancing, or similar live entertainment. The annual fee for an entertainment permit is $200 for the holder of a beer and wine license and $300 for the holder of a beer, wine, and liquor license.

Under the bill, an entertainment permit is renamed a general entertainment permit, which the board may continue to issue to the same classes of license holders. A general entertainment permit authorizes (1) any entertainment authorized by a background entertainment permit; (2) live music with up to four musicians; and (3) the playing of trivia games, a karaoke machine, and music by a disc jockey. If the entertainment under the permit occurs outside, the area must be at least 100 feet away from any residentially zoned property. The annual fee for a general entertainment permit is $200 for the holder of a beer and wine license and $300 for the holder of a beer, wine, and liquor license.

Dancing Permit Becomes Full Entertainment Permit

Under current law, a dancing permit may generally be issued to the holder of a Class B, Class BLX, Class C, Class D, or Class H alcoholic beverages license. A dancing permit authorizes music, dancing, and other legal forms of entertainment. The annual fee for a dancing permit is $200 for the holder of a beer and wine license, $400 for the holder of a beer, wine, and liquor license, or free for the holder of a Class C license.

Under the bill, a dancing permit is renamed a full entertainment permit, which the board may continue to issue to the same classes of license holders. A full entertainment permit authorizes (1) any entertainment authorized by a general entertainment permit and (2) music, a permanent dance floor, a stage area, floor shows, and other legal forms of entertainment. If the entertainment under the permit occurs outside, the area must be at least 100 feet away from any residentially zoned property. The annual fee for a full entertainment permit is $200 for the holder of a beer and wine license, $400 for the holder of a beer, wine, and liquor license, or free for the holder of a Class C license.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 519 (Delegate Pruski) - Government, Labor, and Elections.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2026
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