



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

Date: February 19, 2026

BILL NUMBER: SENATE BILL 580 - FIRST READER

SHORT TITLE: STATE GOVERNMENT - WALK-IN SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: LETTER OF CONCERN

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT'S POSITION

This legislation will impact the Department's Licensing & Registration Service Centers operationally. It requires service centers to provide walk-in service once a week during the hours of 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Complying with this legislation would hinder the flexibility of the various proven customer preferred methods currently in place when planning a visit to one of our seven service centers. The Department currently offers advanced appointment scheduling, same-day appointment scheduling, in addition to allowing "walk-in" visits any day of the week. The transactions that the Department processes are seasonal in nature. Offering multiple appointment methods during peak seasons for our service centers helps keep customer wait times to a minimum. Requiring the department to adopt a "first-come, first-served" policy would undermine these benefits.

Having scheduled appointments allows service centers to better understand the demand of a particular day and thereby ensure staffing is adequate for timely service. Scheduled appointments also allow staff to review the customer's needs in advance, allowing employees to be prepared for more complex and involved transactions that may require additional time and review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Currently, DNR uses advanced appointment scheduling, same day appointment scheduling, and customers are able to walk into any service center on any day to have a transaction completed. Appointments are the preferred method for most customers, as it allows them to come in at a scheduled time and have their transaction processed in a timely manner.

The Department's newly implemented licensing system is actively being updated to allow customers to complete more transactions completely online, including commercial license renewals and striped bass declarations. Staff already have the capability of processing commercial renewals through email or texting of completed and signed applications, with payment being processed over the phone.

BILL EXPLANATION

This bill would require certain State Divisions and Programs that provide Public Services, including the Department's Licensing & Registration service centers to provide walk-in service to the public on a first-come, first-served basis at a reasonable frequency and at reasonable locations, which has been defined as at least one day a week from the hours of 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. beginning October 1, 2026.

Contact: Lydia McPherson, Director, Legislative and Constituent Services
lydia.mcpherson1@maryland.gov ♦ 410-260-8113 (office) ♦ 443-875-7785 (cell)