

## Maryland Bottle Bill Updates, 2006

### 1. What changes have been made to the program since the 2025 General Assembly?

- The stewardship organization will reimburse public and private MRFs for the collection, transportation, and processing of the tonnage of unredeemed redeemable containers they collect.<sup>1</sup>
- The Grant Fund financed by 10% of unclaimed deposits will be managed by the Chesapeake Bay Trust (instead of MDE). The Grant Fund award cap of \$5 million is removed. The unclaimed deposits are sent directly to the CBT (not through MDE).
- It clarifies that the Stewardship Organization shall reimburse a retailer for the value of valid refund receipts presented by consumers.
- In the unlikely event that no application to operate a Beverage Container Stewardship Organization is submitted, MDE must establish or designate a Stewardship Organization to implement the program and require all producers to join and fund the organization as a condition of selling or distributing beverages in the State.
- The Stewardship Plan must describe the location and distribution of redemption facilities to comply with the convenience standards established by MDE and achieve the performance targets.
- It clarifies that a county or municipal corporation may not be required to host, operate, or provide land, facilities or any other resources for the establishment or operation of a redemption facility.
- MDE must consult with local governments to assess the impacts of the program on litter, recycling operations, and municipal budgets and offer recommendations<sup>2</sup>
- The deposit would be added starting January 1, 2029.

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<sup>1</sup> An amendment to the 2025 bill that passed the Environment and Transportation Committee and is added to HB 331.

<sup>2</sup> Also an amendment from the ENT committee (Committee chair amendment)

## 2. How has the bill addressed the concerns of other stakeholders?

Stakeholder	How concerns were addressed
Retailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retailers that own private labels will not be considered producers if they can arrange by contract for another entity to take responsibility (2024)</li> <li>• Retailers with less than 3,000 square feet of sales area OR larger retailers with &lt;150 square feet of shelf space displaying redeemable beverage containers are exempted from having to take back empty containers, unless they sell redeemable containers that cannot be accepted by a reverse vending machine (e.g., the tiny “nips” bottles). In the latter case, they would have to offer refunds for the nips, but not for other beverage containers. (2024)</li> <li>• Clarification that the Stewardship Organization will reimburse retailers for refunds paid out to customers (2026)</li> </ul>
Restaurants / venues with sales for “on premises” consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Stewardship Organization will collect empty redeemable beverage containers and finance all receptacles necessary for their collection and return. (2024)</li> <li>• In addition to refunding the deposits, the Stewardship Organization will pay a small “materials handling fee” per container as an extra incentive to return them (2024)<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
Materials recovery facilities (MRFs – recycling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Stewardship Organization will reimburse public and private MRFs for the collection, transportation, and processing of the tonnage of unredeemed redeemable containers, from the program’s launch (2026)</li> </ul>
Maryland Department of the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single Stewardship Organization instead of msny (2024)</li> <li>• Extension of the preparation phase from 18 months to 2 ½ years (2024)</li> <li>• The costs for the preparation phase are fully reimbursed to the General Fund by the Stewardship Organization at the start of the program (2024); all MDE oversight is paid for by beverage producers via a registration fee.</li> <li>• Responsibility for managing the Grant Fund for reuse moved from MDE to the Chesapeake Bay Trust (2026)</li> </ul>
Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification that they are not required to finance, operate, or enforce any part of the program (2026)</li> <li>• If they’d like to operate a redemption point/center and receive a handling fee per container, they may apply to do so (2023)</li> <li>• Increased recovery of beverage containers will be credited to the County’s recycling rate (2023)</li> <li>• For the first three years of the program, if they experience any net losses in revenue over their entire waste management system (disposal, recycling, etc) that can be attributed to the deposit-return system, 100% of the net losses attributed to the bottle bill will be covered by the Stewardship Organization (2023)</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup>If passed, Maryland would be the only U.S. deposit program that offers a handling fee for “on premises” sellers. This is offered in a couple of European countries (Denmark, Norway).