

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1335
Economic Matters

(Caroline County Delegation)

Finance

Caroline County - Alcoholic Beverages - Rural Special Event Venue License and Multiple Event Licenses

This bill establishes a rural special event venue beer, wine, and liquor license in Caroline County and authorizes the Caroline County Board of License Commissioners to issue the license to owners of venues zoned for rural special events under county law, as specified. The license holder is authorized to sell beer, wine, and liquor for on-premises consumption. The license holder may sell beer, wine, and liquor from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on the day of a rural special event. The license fee is (1) \$250 for up to 10 events per year; (2) \$500 for up to 20 events per year; (3) \$750 for up to 30 events per year; and (4) \$1,000 for up to 40 events per year. A license holder must purchase all alcoholic beverages from a licensed wholesaler, and the license may not be transferred to another location. The bill also repeals current law provisions that authorize volunteer fire companies to store alcoholic beverages on licensed premises between individual licensed events and replaces with a broader provision that extends this authorization to all holders of multiple event licenses, as specified. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Caroline County revenues increase, beginning in FY 2026, to the extent that rural special event venue beer, wine, and liquor licenses are issued under the bill. Caroline County can handle any additional enforcement activity with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Caroline County offers various temporary licenses including tasting licenses, per diem licenses, and multiple event licenses. A multiple event license generally may only be issued for one premises to a single applicant for all events for which the license is issued. The number of days for which a multiple event license may be used by a single applicant may not exceed 40 per calendar year. The license fee is (1) \$250 for up to 10 events per year; (2) \$500 for up to 20 events per year; (3) \$750 for up to 30 events per year; and (4) \$1,000 for up to 40 events per year. The board may not issue a refund if the license holder holds fewer events during the calendar year than they are entitled to hold under their license, and a server who has completed an alcohol awareness program must be on the premises for which a multiple event license is issued when alcoholic beverages are served.

Volunteer fire companies can store alcoholic beverages to be sold at licensed events if the beverages are stored in a specially identified locked and secured location and are not sold or consumed except during licensed event hours. The fire companies must keep complete and accurate records of all alcoholic beverages purchased and sold on the licensed premises, as specified. License holders that violate this section are subject to a fine of \$100 for the first offense and for subsequent offenses, a fine up to \$500 and denial of future requests for a license for events.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: SB 910 (Caroline County Senators) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Caroline County; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2025
js/tso Third Reader - March 19, 2025
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