

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 1412 (Delegate Hornberger)  
Environment and Transportation

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**Natural Resources - Crabs - Requirements and Prohibited Acts**

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This bill prohibits a person who is licensed to catch crabs and does not hold a seafood dealer license from selling cooked hard or soft crabs or crab meat harvested by the license holder. The bill also (1) requires that a mobile seafood vendor obtain a seafood dealer license; (2) prohibits a mobile seafood vendor or a seafood dealer from purchasing cooked hard or soft crabs or crab meat from a person licensed to catch crabs who does not hold a seafood dealer license; and (3) requires that a mobile seafood vendor and a seafood dealer comply with applicable Maryland Department of Health (MDH) requirements. “Mobile seafood vendor” means a person who sells or offers for sale any seafood (1) while outdoors on foot; (2) from any vehicle or conveyance; or (3) from any tent, temporary stand, roadside stand, roadside market, or other venue that is not an established place of business. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Special fund revenues increase annually, beginning as early as FY 2026, as discussed below. Expenditures are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential meaningful.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Apart from commercial licenses to fish for Chesapeake Channa and blue and flathead catfish, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) uses a single,

commercial license, known as a tidal fish license, which authorizes a licensee to engage in each activity indicated on the license.

The department may issue authorizations for activities listed in statute – which include catching/harvesting blue crabs for sale – for which the indicated fee has been paid.

The seafood dealer license is an authorization for a person to buy, process, pack, resell, market or otherwise deal in fish caught in the tidal waters of Maryland. The annual license fee is \$50 for a person licensed to harvest finfish, crabs, or shellfish and \$250 for a person not licensed to harvest.

Statute prohibits a person from buying for resale finfish, crabs, or shellfish from waters of the State unless the person is licensed and authorized as a seafood dealer; however, the following persons are not required to obtain a seafood dealer authorization in order to buy (including for resale) finfish, crabs, or shellfish from the waters of the State:

- a person who buys finfish, crabs, or shellfish for personal use or consumption;
- a person who buys for resale finfish or shellfish species defined as bait under DNR regulations; and
- a person who buys finfish, crabs, or shellfish from a person with a seafood dealer authorization.

**State Revenues:** Special fund revenues increase annually, beginning as early as fiscal 2026 (accounting for the bill’s June 1, 2026 effective date), due to the bill’s requirement that a mobile seafood vendor obtain a seafood dealer license. DNR indicates that a mobile seafood vendor currently is treated as exempt from the requirement to obtain a seafood dealer license, pursuant to the exemption above for a person who buys finfish, crabs, or shellfish from a person with a seafood dealer license, provided the mobile seafood vendor buys from a seafood dealer.

Each mobile seafood vendor who does not already have a seafood dealer license pays either \$50 or \$250 annually, depending on whether they are licensed to harvest (see Current Law). The extent to which special fund revenues increase cannot be reliably estimated. Information is not readily available regarding how many mobile seafood vendors do not already have a seafood dealer license. The Department of Legislative Services also notes it is unclear whether mobile seafood vendors need to obtain a seafood dealer license only if they sell fish (finfish, crabs, or shellfish) caught in the tidal waters of the State or also if they sell seafood from outside the State only. Under current law, the seafood dealer license is only required of those who deal in fish caught in the tidal waters of the State.

Seafood dealer license fees are deposited in the Fisheries Research and Development Fund.

**Small Business Effect:** Small business mobile seafood vendors that do not already have a seafood dealer license may be meaningfully affected by the bill's requirement that they obtain a license, for an annual fee of potentially \$250 (if they are not licensed to harvest finfish, crabs, or shellfish).

The bill does not appear to make mobile seafood vendors and seafood dealers newly subject to MDH requirements but instead only requires that they comply with existing applicable requirements.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Natural Resources; Maryland Department of Health; Maryland Department of the Environment; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 6, 2026  
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