

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 357

(Senator Bailey)

Budget and Taxation

Ways and Means

St. Mary's County - Gaming by Qualified Organization - Permit Required

This bill requires a qualified organization to hold a gaming permit whenever the qualified organization operates a gaming device in St. Mary's County in accordance with current law. A gaming device is a mechanism for playing a game of chance. The St. Mary's County Commissioners must designate a person (designee) to issue gaming permits and may adopt regulations, in consultation with the designee, to administer and enforce gaming device permits. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: St. Mary's County can issue permits and enforce the bill with existing resources. St. Mary's County revenues are not materially affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A qualified organization in St. Mary's County may conduct a gaming event (a carnival, bazaar, or raffle) and may operate a gaming device (including a paddle wheel, a wheel of fortune, a chance book, bingo, Nevada card, and a stamp machine) for the exclusive benefit of a qualified organization if an individual or a group of individuals does not benefit financially from the gaming device or gaming event or receive any of the proceeds from the gaming device or gaming event for personal use or benefit. Qualified organizations include volunteer fire companies and *bona fide* religious, fraternal, civic, war veterans', and charitable organizations. Members of qualified organizations must personally manage the operation of gaming devices and gaming events.

If a qualified organization uses a gaming device on a daily basis, the qualified organization may not operate more than five gaming devices and the premises in which the qualified organization operates the gaming device may not contain more than five gaming devices.

A qualified organization must keep accurate records of proceeds and expenditures involving gaming devices. On request, a qualified organization must allow the State's Attorney for the county, a State Police officer, the designee, and the sheriff or deputy sheriff to examine these records.

A qualified organization must have a bingo license to conduct bingo in St. Mary's County. The St. Mary's County Commissioners must designate a person to issue bingo licenses.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 610 (Delegate T. Morgan) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): St. Mary's County; Comptroller's Office; Department of State Police; Maryland State Lottery and Gaming Control Agency; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 2, 2026
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Analysis by: Heather N. MacDonagh

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510