



**Charles County Sheriff's Office**  
**Legislative Proposal**  
*Legislative Session 2024*

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: UNLICENSED ESTABLISHMENTS**

**Issue:** Currently Maryland law prohibits an unlicensed establishment from allowing the consumption of alcohol on their premises. This regulation only applies to unlicensed establishments that offers or provides live entertainment. There is no law to prohibit a commercial type business from encouraging and allowing its customers to bring and consume alcohol within the establishment. This practice allows these establishments or venues to avoid obtaining alcohol related licenses and permits. The Sheriff's Office is frequently called to these locations for complaints of illegal drug activity, disorderly conduct, other alcohol related offenses and other crimes.

**Proposal:** Amend Alcohol Beverages § 18-2501(a) to prohibit an unlicensed establishment in Charles County from allowing consumption on its premises by deleting "that offers or provides live entertainment." See suggested bill draft.

**BILL DRAFT - Alcoholic Beverages §18-2501**

AN ACT concerning

**Charles County – Selling, serving, keeping, or allowing consumption of alcoholic beverages**

FOR the purpose of prohibiting in Charles County the selling, serving, keeping, or allowing of alcoholic beverages by unlicensed establishments.

BY amending

Article – Alcoholic Beverages  
Section 18-2501  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2216 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

SECTION I. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, that the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article- Alcoholic Beverages**

18-2501

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, an unlicensed establishment ~~that offers or provides live entertainment~~ may not, at a location under the control or possession of the establishment, sell, serve, keep, or allow to be consumed:

- (1) alcoholic beverages;
- (2) setups; or
- (3) other component parts of mixed alcoholic drinks.

(b) As long as ~~live entertainment is not offered or provided~~ ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE NOT OFFERED, SOLD, SERVED, KEPT, OR ALLOWED TO BE CONSUMED more than 8 days in a calendar month, the following are exempted from the prohibitions in subsection (a) of this section:

- (1) the room of a registered guest in a hotel or motel;
- (2) property owned by a volunteer fire company;
- (3) property owned and operated by a community or homeowners association composed only of property owners in a single subdivision; or

(4) property owned by a religious institution.

(c) A person that violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or both.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2024.