

# HOUSE BILL 657

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By: **Delegates Stonko, Chang, and Hinebaugh**

Introduced and read first time: January 30, 2026

Assigned to: Economic Matters

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

### 2 **Certified Public Accountants – Licensure – Qualifications**

3 FOR the purpose of altering certain educational and experiential qualifications for a license  
4 to practice certified public accountancy; and generally relating to licensure  
5 qualifications for certified public accountants.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
7 Article – Business Occupations and Professions  
8 Section 2–302 and 2–303  
9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
10 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
12 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

### 13 **Article – Business Occupations and Professions**

14 2–302.

15 (a) To qualify for a license, an applicant shall be an individual who meets the  
16 requirements of this section.

17 (b) The applicant shall be of good character and reputation.

18 (c) The applicant shall be at least 18 years old.

19 (d) The applicant shall meet the educational requirements under § 2–303 of this  
20 subtitle.

21 (e) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, the applicant shall pass an  
22 examination given by the Board under this subtitle.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1                         (f)     The applicant for an initial license shall complete practical work experience  
2 that is approved by the Board and that:

3                         (1)     is obtained over a period of:

4                             (i)     not more than [3] 6 years; and

5                             (ii)    [1.     not less than 6 months if the applicant applies before  
6 October 1, 2000; or

7                             2.]     not less than 1 year [if the applicant applies on or after  
8 October 1, 2000];

9                         (2)     includes providing any type of service or advice involving the use of  
10 accounting, attest, management advisory, financial advisory, tax, or consulting skills;

11                         (3)     is performed under the direction of:

12                             (i)     a licensed certified public accountant; or

13                             (ii)    an appropriately qualified professional as determined by the  
14 Board;

15                         (4)     is obtained through employment in government, industry, academia, or  
16 public practice; and

17                         (5)     amounts to:

18                             (i)     [1,000 hours if the applicant applies before October 1, 2000; or

19                             (ii)]    2,000 hours if the applicant [applies on or after October 1, 2000.]

20     SEEKS TO QUALIFY FOR A LICENSE UNDER § 2-303(A)(2)(I) OR (II) OF THIS  
21 SUBTITLE; OR

22                         (II)    **4,000 HOURS IF THE APPLICANT SEEKS TO QUALIFY FOR A**  
23 **LICENSE UNDER § 2-303(A)(2)(III) OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

24 2-303.

25                         (a)     (1)     In order to take the examination, an applicant shall [have satisfactorily  
26 completed 120 semester hours or their equivalent, and] hold a baccalaureate or higher  
27 degree that meets the requirements of this section.

28                         (2)     In order to become licensed, in addition to the other qualifications for a  
29 license set forth in this subtitle, an applicant shall have satisfactorily completed [150

1 semester hours or their equivalent, including the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher  
2 degree that meets the requirements of this section]:

3                   **(I) 1. A MASTER'S DEGREE WITH A CONCENTRATION IN**  
4 **ACCOUNTING OR AN EQUIVALENT OF A CONCENTRATION IN ACCOUNTING; AND**

5                   **2. NOT LESS THAN 1 YEAR OF PRACTICAL WORK**  
6 **EXPERIENCE AS DESCRIBED IN § 2–302(F)(5)(I) OF THIS SUBTITLE;**

7                   **(II) 1. A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE AND AN ADDITIONAL 30**  
8 **SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS WITH A CONCENTRATION IN ACCOUNTING OR AN**  
9 **EQUIVALENT OF A CONCENTRATION IN ACCOUNTING; AND**

10                  **2. NOT LESS THAN 1 YEAR OF PRACTICAL WORK**  
11 **EXPERIENCE AS DESCRIBED IN § 2–302(F)(5)(I) OF THIS SUBTITLE; OR**

12                  **(III) 1. A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE WITH A CONCENTRATION**  
13 **IN ACCOUNTING OR AN EQUIVALENT OF A CONCENTRATION IN ACCOUNTING; AND**

14                  **2. NOT LESS THAN 2 YEARS OF PRACTICAL WORK**  
15 **EXPERIENCE AS DESCRIBED IN § 2–302(F)(5)(II) OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

16                  (b) The applicant shall have completed for the **BACCALAUREATE OR MASTER'S**  
17 **degree REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION**, a curriculum that the  
18 Board considers to constitute:

19                  (1) a major in accounting; or

20                  (2) a substantial equivalent to a major in accounting, of which required  
21 credits or courses may be taken at any 2– or 4–year regionally accredited institution of  
22 higher education.

23                  (c) The degree required under this section shall be awarded by a school, college,  
24 university, or other institution that:

25                  (1) is a member of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of  
26 Business;

27                  (2) is a member of the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and  
28 Programs;

29                  (3) is accredited by or is a constituent unit of an institution accredited by:

30                  (i) the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; or

4           (d) (1) The Board may use the services of any institution that it considers  
5 appropriate to determine what constitutes a substantial equivalent to a major in accounting  
6 under subsection (b)(2) of this section.

(2) If the Board uses an institution to determine curriculum equivalencies, the Board may accept as final the determination of that institution.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
10 October 1, 2026.