



Quick Guide for Class A Retailers

As a Class “A” or liquor store you may sell beer, wine, and spirits to individual customers and caterers in sealed containers for off-premises consumption. You may not allow a customer to open or consume an alcoholic beverage on your premises unless you have applied for a Tasting Permit. *You may only hold an off-premises Retailer’s Class A license and Class B license if the Class B license is a full service grocery store.*

Hours

A Retailer’s Class A License permits the sale of beer, wine, and spirits for off-premises consumption any day or time except between the following hours (unless a Board order or a settlement agreement states otherwise):

- **7:00 a.m. and Midnight**, Monday through Saturday
- **7:00 a.m. and Midnight**, Sunday

Please note that you must not permit a person under 18 years of age to enter your establishment between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on any day which public schools are in session during the regular school year.

Endorsement Requirements

ABC Board approval is necessary for a **Tasting Permit**. Please note that tastings can be conducted during the same hours as operating hours.

ABC Manager or Owner

An owner or ABC manager *must* be on the premises at all times when alcoholic beverages are being sold, delivered, or consumed. The manager *must* carry their manager’s license upon his or her person and must exhibit the license, upon request, to any member of the Board, an ABRA Investigator, or member of the Metropolitan Police Department.

Conspicuous Postings

ABC Licenses must be framed under glass. Please note that your license is renewable every three (3) years beginning March 31, 2015. Payment can be made in full or in yearly increments.

If a **settlement agreement (SA)** is a part of the license, the licensee must have a copy of the settlement agreement accessible to any member of the public, an ABRA Investigator, or officer of the Metropolitan Police Department upon request. You must follow the conditions of your SA, security plan and Board Order.

The licensee *must* post on the front window or front door of the licensee's premises, the **correct name** or names of the licensee or licensees and the **class** and **number** of the license in plain and legible lettering not less than one inch nor more than 1.25 inches in height.

The licensee *must* conspicuously post the **two signs** which ABRA provides:



These signs must not be covered or obscured.

Signs

You may not have exterior signs advertising alcoholic beverages, which signs have a total cumulative area in the aggregate in excess of 10 square feet.

You may have illuminated signs advertising alcoholic beverages during your approved hours of sales. However, these signs cannot contain intermittent flashes of light.

In addition, you may have advertisements relating to the prices of alcoholic beverages displayed in your window as long as the total area covered by the advertisements does not exceed 25% of the window space. You may not have any alcoholic beverage advertisements displayed on the exterior of any window or on the exterior or interior of any door.

Go Cups

You may not give or sell a "Go-cup" to a customer for the purpose of consuming alcoholic beverages off the licensed premises.

Invoices

All invoices and delivery slips and all importation permits after cancellation, must be systematically filed and maintained for a period of three (3) years from date of delivery and must show a true, accurate and complete statement of terms and conditions on which each purchase was made. You may request permission from the ABC Board to maintain your original invoices outside of the District of Columbia upon a determination by the Board that good cause exists. However, duplicate invoices must be maintained in the District of Columbia at either the licensed premises or a location approved by the Board. Books and records may be stored electronically as long as the records are made immediately available at the request of ABRA staff. The keg declaration of receipt form must be kept on premises for 2 years following the date of purchase.

Purchase of Alcohol

You are required to purchase all alcoholic beverages from a DC wholesaler. There is an exception which allows you to purchase alcohol from someone other than a DC wholesaler if you certify that the product is

not available or if a DC wholesaler cannot provide the quantity that you are requesting and you obtain an Importation Permit.

Importation Permit

You must apply for an Importation Permit if you determine that a DC wholesaler cannot provide you with the alcohol product that you wish to purchase. You must certify this request in writing. The permit must, immediately upon receipt of the alcoholic beverages by your establishment, be marked "canceled" by you.

Off-Premises Storage

You may apply for an off-premises storage permit to store alcoholic beverages at another facility other than your establishment.

Keg Registration

In order for you to sell a keg, a keg registration decal seal must be affixed to the keg and the Keg Registration Declaration and Receipt form needs to be completed.

Growlers

Liquor Stores are now permitted to sell growlers of beer for off-premises consumption. A growler is a reusable container that is capable of holding up to 64 ounces of beer and must be filled and sealed on the licensed premises for off-premises consumption.

Sale to Minors

ABRA is conducting compliance checks using minors to enter your establishment and attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages. The minors will be using their real ID that designates the minor is under the age of 21.

ABRA also conducts Fake ID Checks to determine if minors are entering licensed establishments using fake identifications to obtain alcoholic beverages. ABRA Investigators generally conduct Fake ID checks with the owner or licensed ABC Manager.

ABC Board Approval

ABC Board approval is needed for:

- Transfer of licenses
- Change of corporate officers
- Change of corporate structure
- Trade name
- Hours of operation or service for premises
- Increase use of space
- Storage facility

Regulatory Inspections

Regulatory Inspections are generally conducted a minimum of three times per year at each licensed establishment to ensure that licensees are in compliance with the ABC laws and regulations. Regulatory Inspections may be conducted at any time during an establishment's hours of operation. If your establishment is open, ABRA Investigators should be allowed entry and be provided with all the necessary information to complete the Regulatory Inspection.

Common Violations

- Sale to Minors
- Not posting warning and current legal drinking age signs
- No ABC Manager on duty
- Posting and carrying of licenses on premises
- Restriction of hours of operation (operating after Board-approved hours)
- Transfer of ownership without Board approval
- Failure to maintain or keep records or invoices on the licensed premises
- Violation of your settlement agreement (formerly voluntary agreement)
- Violation of Board order
- Trade name change without Board approval
- Go Cups

ABRA investigators or MPD officers to enter your establishment without delay. Failure to comply may result in a revocation or suspension of your ABC license.

Suspensions

Note that if you are serving a suspension, all alcoholic beverages must be secured. Removal of suspension placards or selling alcoholic beverages during a suspension period may result in a more severe penalty.

Contact Us

Please visit ABRA's website at www.abra.dc.gov or contact ABRA for more specific details regarding information contained in this brochure at (202) 442-4423.