



Virginia Alcoholic Beverage
Control Authority



COVID-19 Licensee and Regulation Items

As an essential business, the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority remained open by adjusting its business practices to help ensure the survival of the Commonwealth’s hospitality industry.

Easing Regulations

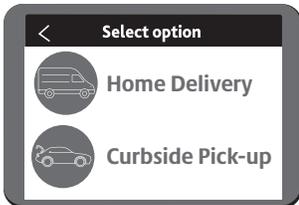
Utilizing authority granted pursuant to Executive Order, Virginia ABC enacted numerous regulatory changes to ease the stress businesses are experiencing. These temporary changes to Virginia’s existing alcohol regulations relax delivery criteria and extend the deadlines for licensee renewal, among other things, for manufacturers, wholesalers, distilleries and others.

Extending Privileges

Beginning March 20, through regulatory guidance enabled by Executive Order 51, businesses with strictly on-premise privileges (restaurants and other eat-in establishments) were allowed to exercise off-premise privileges under a general permit. These privileges include the sale of wine or beer in sealed containers for curbside pickup and delivery of those products to customers’ homes without needing a delivery permit.



Enabling Curbside Pick-up



Additionally, licensees with these expanded off-premise privileges (including breweries, farm wineries and wineries) were then permitted to sell products for curbside pickup or deliveries to customers’ homes without obtaining an additional delivery permit.

Licensees, upon securing a written contract with a vendor, were granted the privilege to use third-party delivery services to deliver wine or beer on their behalf.

Expediting Deliveries

ABC also waived the requirement for a signature on deliveries between wholesale and retail licensees, and between retail licensees (under delivery permit) and their customers. In lieu of collecting the actual physical signature of the purchaser, the wholesaler making the delivery will denote on the invoice the legible full name of the individual that is receiving the delivery as well as their applicable title within the business.

Exercising Take-out Privileges

Beginning April 8, Governor Northam announced a major shift in policy to temporarily allow restaurants with mixed beverage licenses and distilleries with approved tasting rooms the ability to provide delivery services and take-out mixed drinks. While the ability for mixed beverages to be sold for off-premise consumption was made in the Governor’s Executive Directive 10, Virginia ABC developed guidance on limitations and restrictions for licensees to ensure that this change is exercised within the bounds of public safety considerations.





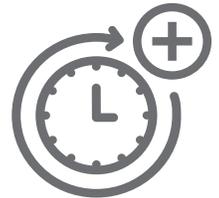
This temporary expansion permitting take-out cocktails was perhaps the most visible and impactful of all the regulation modifications. This action acknowledged the economic challenges mixed beverage licensees faced and enabled these businesses to continue to provide service to their customers while complying with the ongoing preventative measures necessary to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Expanding Approval of Outside Dining Areas

In another nod towards restaurants, the Governor issued Executive Orders 61 and 62 permitting a phased reopening of these businesses across the state beginning May 15. Because the directive limits occupancy to 50% in their outdoor dining areas, ABC created an accelerated process for receiving and approving requests for these new or expanded outside areas.

Extending Renewal Deadlines

Working with the Governor, Virginia ABC gained authorization to defer license renewal fees for 90 days from original expiration date for establishments with licenses expiring in March, April, May and June. The Authority is waiving late penalties and fees as long as the license is renewed by the 90-day expiration date. An estimated \$4.5 million in payments will be deferred.



Expressing Support

ABC also modified its agreement with distillery stores to temporarily permit the shipment of spirits directly to a customer's home using a common carrier such as FedEx or UPS. This change allows distillery stores, as agency stores of Virginia ABC, to ship spirits to Virginia consumers and Virginia licensees at a time when their tasting rooms are closed. Additionally, ABC revised its guidance to allow distillery stores to use their own employees or agents to make deliveries to Virginia customers.

Embracing Change

In response to a nation-wide shortage of hand sanitizers, the Authority permitted distilleries and brewery premises to re-purpose their equipment for the manufacturing of hand sanitizer. Furthermore ABC relaxed the permitting process to obtain industrial alcohol for hospitals and pharmacist in order to help them quickly produce hand sanitizer and disinfect equipment.

In the interest of public safety, ABC did not modify permits required for the shipping of alcohol as a result of the recent executive orders. All previous limitations around shipping remain in place and safeguards stay in effect to insure that only eligible people receive alcoholic beverages and proper sales and excise taxes are collected.

Excelling in our support of Virginia businesses

ABC is committed to supporting retailers, restaurants and their employees. These temporary waivers enabled many Virginia businesses to remain open and to provide enhanced delivery options to consumers during this period of social distancing. The regulation changes and any other adjustments will remain in effect so long as the relevant executive orders remain applicable or by extension granted by Virginia ABC.

