



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF

Alcoholic Beverage Control

Apr 1, 2020

Sacramento – Jacob Appelsmith, director of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC), has announced new regulatory relief, encompassing four main topics, to help California’s alcoholic beverage industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This second wave of regulatory relief is in effect immediately, and is in addition to the eight topics previously announced in the Department’s Notice of Regulatory Relief back on March 19,” said ABC Director Jacob Appelsmith.

“It is estimated that the 93,000 businesses the California ABC licenses employ over a million Californians. Those industry employees need paychecks to support themselves, their families, and loved ones. Many Californians have filed for unemployment recently, and this temporary regulatory relief could ease some of the state’s economic stress,” Appelsmith said.

The ABC has temporarily suspended enforcement of a number of specific restrictions related to the following activities:

9. Free delivery of alcoholic beverages
10. Delivery hours of alcohol to retailers extended to midnight
11. Certain charitable promotions related to sales of alcohol
12. Distilled spirits manufacturers providing high-proof spirits for disinfection purposes

The details of this additional relief can be found in the Department’s Notice of Regulatory Relief. These are in addition to the previously announced eight temporary prohibitions announced on March 19:

1. Returns of alcoholic beverages
2. Retail to retail transactions
3. Extension of credit
4. On-sale retailers exercising off-sale privileges
5. Sales of alcohol to-go
6. Off-sale transactions
7. Hours of operation for retail sales
8. Deliveries to consumers

The original Notice of Regulatory Relief on eight topics, and the new second wave covering four areas announced today, are designed to support the alcoholic beverage industry in its efforts to help California slow the spread of the virus while assisting the industry deal with the economic challenges it is facing as a result. The Department has carefully considered the public's health, safety, and welfare in providing this relief, and the department has concluded that none of these measures, exercised on a temporary basis, will jeopardize Californians health, safety, and welfare.

ABC has developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions as well as a tool to provide Guidance by License Type. We encourage licensees to check our website or contact us with any questions.

ABC's entire staff is committed to keeping communities safe with the enforcement work done by ABC agents, and by listening to the public and the industry about any concerns or issues they bring to the Department during this crisis. "We all have to work together, and I want to reassure the public that while ABC offices may be closed to public foot traffic, ABC agents are continuously providing public safety services, enforcing underage drinking laws and assisting local law enforcement. ABC's licensing staff continues to process permanent license applications and annual renewals." Appelsmith said.

ABC offices were closed to the public effective March 20, 2020. The closures are temporary during the COVID-19 pandemic to help slow the spread of the virus. During this time, ABC will continue to accept mail-in license applications, and ABC staff will continue to process those applications for permanent licenses, and renewal of licenses. ABC staff will also be available to answer questions and receive information via phone, email, and regular mail.

Please visit ABC's [Contact](#) page to reach a local office or email headquarters@abc.ca.gov if you have additional questions. We encourage all licensees to sign up with the Department for email notices. This is easily done by clicking [subscribe](#). If you have any questions, please contact the Department.

ABC's top priority is the health and safety of Californians. We encourage the public and industry members to follow the announcements made by Governor Newsom and the California Department of Public Health at [COVID-19](#) and learn the latest from the Centers for Disease Control [CDC](#). Californians should also follow the latest from local public health officials in the days and weeks to come as California fights the spread of COVID-19.

ABC protects communities through education and by administering prevention and enforcement programs designed to increase compliance with California's alcoholic beverage laws. To learn more about ABC programs that help protect communities, prevent alcohol-related harm, and potentially save lives, visit the [ABC website](#). ABC is a Department of the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency.

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