



Notice of Revised Permanent Rules for the Responsible Vendor Program

This explanatory statement concerns the Washington State Liquor Control Board's adoption of revisions to WAC 314-02-108 Responsible Vendor Program and new WAC 314-02-1081 What is the responsible vendor program for beer and wine retail licensees selling beer and wine for off-premises consumption?

The Administrative Procedure Act (RCW 34.05.325(6)) requires agencies to complete a concise explanatory statement before filing adopted rules with the Office of the Code Reviser. This statement must be provided to anyone who gave comment about the proposed rule making.

Once persons who gave comment during this rule making have had a chance to receive this document, the Liquor Control Board will file the amended rules with the Office of the Code Reviser. These rule changes will become effective 31 days after filing (approximately August 16, 2014).

The Liquor Control Board appreciates your involvement in this rule making process. If you have any questions, please contact Karen McCall, Rules Coordinator, at (360) 664-1631 or e-mail at rules@liq.wa.gov.

What are the agency's reasons for adopting this rule?

The RVP was established in Initiative 1183. It is a free, self-monitoring, and voluntary program that rewards retailers that take positive steps to ensure alcohol is sold responsibly. We currently offer the RVP only to spirits retailers. More than 65% of the spirits retailers have joined the program. Retailers participating in the program produced the highest compliance rates at 94.5%. During fiscal year 2013, off-premises beer and wine retailers produced the lowest compliance rates at 79%.

The components of the RVP include the following actions by the licensee:

- Establish and enforce an in-house alcohol policy.
- Post signs to deter illegal purchases by patrons.
- Train employees on responsible liquor sales such as acceptable forms of ID, how to check ID, and consequences of selling alcohol illegally. Employee training is required annually.

- Maintain employee training records for inspection.
- Post the RVP member certificate at the main entry of the premises.

There are more than 5,000 off-premises beer and wine retailers. Making the RVP available to this large number of retailers is a positive step to ensure alcohol is sold responsibly.

Summary of all public comments received on this rule proposal.

No comments were received at the public hearing held on July 9, 2014, in the Board Room in Olympia, WA. No written comments were received..

WAC Changes

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending WSR 12-11-008, filed 5/3/12,

effective 6/3/12)

WAC 314-02-108 Responsible vendor program. (1) What is the purpose of this chapter? The purpose of this section is to establish standards and procedures for a responsible vendor program for spirits retail and beer and wine retail licensees selling alcohol for off-premises consumption.

(2) What is the responsible vendor program for spirits retail licensees? This program is free, voluntary, and self-monitoring. Spirits retail licensees who hold a responsible vendor certificate and maintain all requirements are eligible

for reduced sanctions on their first single violation within any period of twelve calendar months.

(3) **How ((~~do you~~)) does a spirits retail licensee become a responsible vendor?** Any spirits retail licensee who meets the program standards may participate. To apply for a responsible vendor certificate, the licensee must have no public safety violations within the last two years and must complete and submit a board-provided application form. Board staff will review the application for completeness, and will:

(a) Certify the completed application clearly indicates the licensee has all program standards in place and send a certificate to the licensee; or

(b) Return an incomplete application that does not clearly indicate the licensee has all program standards in place. Staff will notify the licensee of the reason(s) the application is being returned.

(4) **To qualify as a responsible vendor, a spirits retail licensee must:**

(a) Post their responsible vendor program certificate for public viewing at the main entrance of the premises;

(b) Train each employee supervising or selling alcohol in responsible liquor sales. Licensees may require employees to obtain a mandatory alcohol server training permit from a board certified provider or train employees themselves using the training criteria specified in subsection (5) of this section; and

(c) In an area visible to employees, post the house policies on alcohol sales and checking identification. The licensee must have each employee read and sign the house policies which must include at a minimum:

(i) A list of acceptable forms of identification which are accepted at the premises;

(ii) Directions for checking identification for customers; and

(iii) The consequences for selling spirits to a minor or apparently intoxicated person.

(d) In an area visible to patrons, post signs to deter illegal purchases of alcohol. Examples of information include, it is illegal to purchase alcohol under twenty-one years of age

or while apparently intoxicated. Other information may include acceptable forms of identification at the premises;

(e) Have an on-going training plan for employees, to include annual training at a minimum. Examples of training include computer based training, video training, classroom instruction, and meetings. The training may be done individually or in a group. At a minimum, training must cover the topics listed in subsection (5) of this section; and

(f) Retain employee training records and signed house policies for three years and must be able to present employee training records upon request.

(5) **What are the program standards, program content, and other requirements for the responsible vendor program?** All training must include, at a minimum, the following:

(a) Guidelines for recognizing minors and apparently intoxicated persons;

(b) Forms of identification for purchasing alcohol;

(c) How to check identification and how to recognize false or altered identification;

(d) A requirement to check identification in accordance with house policies;

(e) Recommended actions for refusing sales of alcohol to minors or apparently intoxicated persons;

(f) A review of the consequences for selling to minors, and the importance of not selling alcohol to minors or apparently intoxicated persons;

(g) A review of house policies on alcohol sales. Each licensee must ensure that his/her employees receive training that covers the licensee's own house policies; and

(h) The standards and requirements for the mandatory alcohol server training stipulated in WAC 314-17-060 are deemed sufficient for employee's initial training for the responsible vendor training.

(6) **What are the sanctions when a licensee violates liquor laws or regulations?** For violations, as outlined in WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040, involving the sales of spirits, the prescribed penalty is doubled. If a licensee has a certified responsible vendor program having all program standards in place, the board will impose the standard penalty detailed in

WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040 for that violation. Any subsequent violation involving spirits within any period of twelve calendar months will be double the standard penalties. Regardless of the type of alcohol sold; beer, wine, or spirits, WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040 are applicable.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 66.08.030, 66.24.630. WSR 12-11-008, § 314-02-108, filed 5/3/12, effective 6/3/12.]

NEW SECTION

WAC 314-02-1081 What is the responsible vendor program for beer and wine retail licensees selling beer and wine for off-premises consumption? (1) The program promotes retail licensees selling beer and wine for off-premises consumption taking positive steps to ensure alcohol is sold responsibly. The program is provided free and licensees may join the program voluntarily. Retail licensees selling beer and wine for off-premises consumption who hold a responsible vendor certificate and maintain all requirements are eligible for reduced penalties

on their first public safety violation within any period of twenty-four calendar months.

(2) **How does a beer and wine retail licensee become a responsible vendor?** Any beer and wine retail licensee selling beer and wine for off-premises consumption who meets the program standards may participate. To apply for a responsible vendor certificate, the licensee must have no public safety violations within the last two years and must complete and submit a board-provided application form. Board staff will review the application for completeness, and will:

(a) Certify the completed application clearly indicates the licensee has all program standards in place and send a certificate to the licensee; or

(b) Return an incomplete application that does not clearly indicate the licensee has all program standards in place. Staff will notify the licensee of the reason(s) the application is being returned.

(3) **To qualify as a responsible vendor, a beer and wine retail licensee selling beer and wine for off-premises consumption must:**

(a) Establish and enforce a house policy relating to the sale and service of alcohol products that includes at a minimum:

(i) Who needs responsible alcohol sales training and how often;

(ii) A list of acceptable forms of ID at the premises;

(iii) When and how to check ID;

(iv) When and how to refuse sales;

(v) When to notify the supervisor and/or law enforcement for problems; and

(vi) The consequences for failing to check ID and/or making illegal alcohol sales.

(b) Train employees prior to engaging in the sale of alcohol and provide refresher course annually at a minimum. The minimum training component must include:

(i) Information on the misuse and risks of underage use of alcohol;

(ii) Washington state liquor laws and regulations;

(iii) House policy (see house policy above for components);

(iv) How to identify the signs of intoxication; and

(v) How to get additional resources/training.

(c) Maintain a responsible alcohol management policy which may include:

(i) Delegate a supervisor level employee to oversee and enforce store policies;

(ii) Participate and cooperate with local community organizations and/or efforts promoting public safety;

(iii) Monitor employee conduct and reinforce training;

(iv) Program point of sale system to recognize age restricted products and prompt cashiers to check ID and stop the transaction until the date of birth is entered and the age is calculated;

(v) Provide "birth date eligible to purchase alcohol" daily;

(vi) Provide appropriate ID checking tools such as current ID checking guide (shows valid ID formats from all states and U.S. territories), and "black lights" to check the authenticity of an ID;

(vii) No advertising targeting youth;

(viii) Displaying alcohol products in such a way to enable unobstructed monitoring, away from youth-oriented products; and

(ix) Use of theft deterrent devices.

(d) In an area visible to patrons, post signs to deter illegal purchased of alcohol. Examples include; it is illegal to purchase alcohol under twenty-one years of age or while apparently intoxicated. Other information may include acceptable forms of identification at the premises;

(e) Post the responsible vendor program certificate for public view in a conspicuous area at the front of the premises; and

(f) Retain employee training records and signed house policies for three years and be able to present employee training records upon request.

(4) What are the employee training standards and other requirements for the responsible vendor program?

(a) The training courses shall have the standards and requirements as stipulated in (a) and (b) of this subsection at a minimum;

(b) Training must require employee to demonstrate reasonable mastery of the topics;

(c) Training may be presented in-class, online course or other methods not compromising the training requirement;

(d) The training course content must be up-to-date with the latest laws and rules and must be provided in its entirety as certified by the board;

(e) The standards and requirements for the mandatory alcohol server training stipulated in WAC 314-17-060 are deemed sufficient for employee's initial training for the responsible vendor training; and

(f) The training course provided by the board is deemed sufficient for employee's initial and follow-up training for the responsible vendor training.

(5) How does a retailer maintain the certification?

(a) The licensee must maintain all program requirements at all times and have no more than three public safety violations within a two-year period.

(b) When a public safety violation occurs, licensee must submit an action plan to the board's licensing staff illustrating ways to prevent further violations within ten days from the date of violation.

(c) Update training materials and inform employees within thirty days from the board's notification regarding new legislation and/or regulations.

(d) Present the employee training records upon request by the board's staff.

(6) What must a licensee do when a second public safety violation occurs within a two-year period?

(a) The licensee must submit an action plan to prevent further violations to the board's licensing staff within ten calendar days of violation.

(b) The board may decertify the responsible vendor certification if the licensee fails to submit an action plan and/or demonstrate poor commitment to the program including having three or more public safety violations within a two-year period.

(7) How long does a licensee have to wait before rejoining the program? Once decertified from the program, licensee may reapply for the program after two years. Any public safety violation during this time may prohibit the licensee from joining the program.

(8) **What are the sanctions when a licensee violates liquor laws or regulations?** If a beer and wine retail licensee has a certified responsible vendor program having all program standards in place and has a public safety violation, the board will impose a deferral for a two-year period. If there are no further public safety violations within that two-year period, the violation is dismissed. If another violation occurs within that two-year period, the board will end the deferment and process both the first and the second violation based on the standard penalties described in WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040.

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