



CR 101 Memorandum

Re: Seasonal Hours Requirements for Alcohol Licensees

Date: April 23, 2025
Presented by: Jeff Kildahl, Policy and Rules Coordinator

Background

Many Washington restaurants experience variations in the numbers of customers that they serve throughout the year. This can be due to seasonal fluctuations in the number of part-time residents in their communities, or seasonal fluctuations in the number visitors to their geographical area throughout the year. This is especially true in regions of the state such as the San Juan Islands, Leavenworth, and the many wilderness areas that attract visitors every year for seasonal outdoor activities.

Restaurants in Washington that hold beer or wine licenses, or both, maintain their licenses according to regulations in [WAC 314-02-045](#). This rule section currently requires license holders to be open for business to the public at least five hours a day, three days a week throughout the year.

In December 2024, the Washington State Liquor & Cannabis Board (Board) accepted a rulemaking petition to consider allowing seasonal adjustments to the minimum hours and days of operation for beer and wine restaurants.

Reasons Why Rulemaking Is Needed

Rulemaking is needed to consider amending WAC 314-02-045 to allow seasonal adjustments to hours and days of operation for beer and wine restaurants.

Reducing the current requirement for a business to be open to the public from would be beneficial and would give these licensees more control of their business hours. This change could help licensees save business resources during slower seasons of the year and still maintain the beer or wine licenses by opening to the public two days per week.

Process

The rulemaking process begins by announcing the Board's intent to consider changes to existing rules, adding new rule sections, or both, by filing a preproposal statement of inquiry (CR 101) form with the Office of the Code Reviser. This allows

staff, stakeholders, industry partners, and all members of the authorizing environment to begin discussing proposed rule changes.

At this stage of the rulemaking process, no proposed language is offered. Any interested party may comment on this possible rulemaking during the designated comment period. Notice will be sent to all who have indicated that they want to receive notice of rule activity related to this preproposal statement of inquiry. The notice will identify the public comment period and where comments can be sent.