



Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

Bill Description: Concerning alcohol server permits

Bill Number: SSB 5816

Sponsor: Sen. Kevin Van de Wege

Effective Date: 6/6/2024

Amends: Amends RCW 66.20.310.

Background

All bartenders and restaurant servers who serve alcohol to customers in bars and restaurants must have a Mandatory Alcohol Server Training Permit (MAST). There are two types: a class 12 type for managers, bartenders, and restaurant staff conducting off-site alcohol deliveries, and a class 13 type for servers who only serve alcohol at an on-premises licensed place (a bar, restaurant, tavern, etc.).

The penalties for serving alcohol to a minor or to an intoxicated person are gross misdemeanors. In general, there are no felony penalties related to alcohol service in state law.

State law gives the Liquor and Cannabis Board the authority to revoke or suspend a MAST permit if the holder or applicant has violated any state law governing alcohol or been convicted of a felony for specific laws in title 9A RCW.

Summary

ESB amends the language concerning suspending or revoking a MAST permit by limiting the felony convictions that could lead to Board action. Specifically, the bill calls out five categories of crimes by citing their statutes. They are 1: 9A.40 (Kidnapping), 9A.44 (Sex offenses), 9A.46 (Harassment), 9A.86 (Disclosing intimate images), and 9A.88 (Indecent exposure/Prostitution). Some of the identified crimes can be either misdemeanors or felonies, but the bill limits the Board's authority to revoke a MAST permit to those convicted of felonies. For example, a person with a prostitution conviction under RCW 9A.88.030 would not have a permit denied or revoked, but a person convicted of promoting prostitution under RCW 9A.88.070 could have a permit denied or revoked.

The bill adds that a revocation or suspension could follow if a licensee or applicant is convicted of a "felony that is directly related to alcohol service," but there do not appear to be any such felonies in current RCW.

The bill does not change the permissive language, and revocation or suspension falls within the Board's discretion, and is not a mandatory action.