Types of Liquor Licences Issued in the Province of British Columbia

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The Liquor Control and Licensing Branch (LCLB) supervises over 10,200 licensed establishments and over 25,000 temporary special events per year in B.C.

The purpose of this document is to give a broad understanding of the types of liquor licences issued in B.C. Visit the LCLB's website at www.gov.bc.ca/liquorregulationandlicensing and the hyperlinks below for the most up to date information.

Licences:

Agent – for independent liquor agents who market products from liquor manufacturers outside of B.C.

Catering – for catering companies who wish to serve liquor in addition to food, with food service as the primary purpose.

Food Primary – for businesses where the primary purpose is to serve food (such as restaurants).

> A Patron Participation Endorsement is an additional term and condition on a food primary licence that permits the active involvement of patrons in entertainment or results in patrons leaving their seats, such as dancing or karaoke. An application for this endorsement requires additional considerations beyond the routine assessment of an initial application. To ensure that community concerns about noise, nuisance and other impacts are considered, input from local government or First Nation authorities is required before patron participation entertainment will be approved for a food primary establishment.

Liquor Primary – for businesses where the primary purpose is to sell liquor (such as bars, pubs, and nightclubs, as well as stadiums, theatres, aircraft, etc.). Liquor primary licences are also for businesses that wish to serve liquor as an additional service to their primary business (such as spas, salons, art galleries, etc.)

> *Liquor Primary Club* – a sub-class of the liquor primary licence for private clubs. To be eligible to apply, the club must be a society registered under the provincial Societies Act or a non-profit or veterans organization incorporated by special act of parliament. LP Clubs must have at least 50 members who pay annual fees. The service area of an LP Club is restricted to members and guests only.

Manufacturer – for businesses making wine, cider, beer (this includes brew pubs), or spirits (known as wineries, breweries, and distilleries). Manufacturers can also apply to add a lounge, special event area, and/or picnic area endorsement to their manufacturer licence.

UBrew/UVin (Ferment-on-Premises) – for businesses that sell ingredients, equipment and provide advice for customers to make their own beer, wine, cider or coolers.

Licensee Retail Store* – for selling liquor by the bottle at retail stores (often called private liquor stores).

Wine Store* – for wine stores including winery-operated stores, independent wine stores, VQA stores and tourist wine stores.

Special Wine Store – available to eligible grocery stores only, the special wine store licence permits the sale of 100% BC wine on grocery store shelves.

**No new licences are available at this time.*

Permits:

Special Event Permit – for individuals and groups holding special events (such as community celebrations, weddings or banquets).

Ethyl Alcohol Purchase Permit – for purchasing ethyl alcohol for commercial and industrial use.

Charitable Auction Permit – for registered charities and non-profit organizations that wish to hold liquor auctions to raise funds for a charitable purpose.

What is the difference between a food primary and a liquor primary licence?

A food primary licence is issued when the primary purpose of the business is the service of food (such as restaurants and cafes). A liquor primary licence is issued when the primary purpose of the business is the service of liquor, hospitality or entertainment (such as bars, pubs, spas, and art galleries).

The approval process is different for both types of licences, with the process for liquor primaries being more involved. Minors are generally prohibited from liquor primary establishments, unless the licence specifically allows them.

Additional Resources:

Forms – access to all LCLB forms, including application forms and licence change forms.

Frequently Asked Questions – answers to common liquor-related questions.

Licensed Establishment Locations – a list of all licensed establishments in B.C.

Publications & Resources – access to the licensee terms and conditions handbooks, public consultations, and the Local Government/First Nations Guide page and more.