

A Wisconsin Alcohol Industry Update

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The Division of Alcohol Beverages has some bittersweet news to share in this edition. In March 2026, the division said goodbye to Special Agent Kurt Goodreau, who is deservedly starting his retirement. Kurt’s law enforcement career spanned over 35 years. He began his career with the Wisconsin State Patrol before serving approximately 23 years with the Lake Delton Police Department. Kurt, headquartered out of the Appleton office, served the division since its creation in 2024, after serving about seven years with the DOR Alcohol & Tobacco Enforcement Unit prior to DAB’s creation. Kurt’s knowledge of the law, commitment to service to our community, and his fair treatment will be missed by the clerks and business owners in the Fox Valley, northeastern, and north-central portions of Wisconsin. The Division will miss Kurt’s positive attitude, commitment to teamwork, and his wealth of knowledge, which he happily shared with anyone willing to listen. We are grateful for Kurt’s many years of service to the people of Wisconsin.

Also in March 2025, the Division is pleased to announce Buck Robertson has been promoted to supervisory enforcement agent (Special Agent

in Charge). Buck has served the Division since its creation in 2024, after serving about two years with the DOR Alcohol & Tobacco Enforcement Unit. Buck brought 17 years of law enforcement experience from the Washington and Waukesha County Sheriff’s Departments prior to joining DOR. Buck will supervise enforcement special agents headquartered in Eau Claire and Appleton. We look forward to Buck’s continued effective leadership with the division.

With these staffing changes, combined with an additional enforcement special agent position to fill, the division will start a recruitment soon for three additional special agents. The division will announce any new appointments in a future article of On Tap.

If you know anyone who may be interested in serving as a special agent with the division, future job postings may be found at <https://wisc.jobs/Pages/Welcome.aspx>.

Connect with us:

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Click, Bid, Cheers! The New Era of DAB Liquor Auctions

Alcohol beverages possessed in violation of state law are considered contraband and may be seized by the Division of Alcohol Beverages. After there is no longer a reason to maintain the seized products, they may be disposed of or sold by the division through an auction. People who hold a valid alcohol beverage license or permit may bid on auction lots.

Proceeds from the liquor auction are deposited into the Common School Fund, where the money is distributed annually to Wisconsin public schools to purchase library books and instructional materials for student use.

Conducting liquor auctions has historically been low-tech, requiring a lot of manual labor by DAB's Bureau of Enforcement staff. The division has created many improvements to make liquor auctions more efficient, including:

- An online inventory system that replaces piles of paperwork.
- An online bid form, so qualified alcohol beverage businesses can bid on auctions more efficiently.
- A webpage with information about how to bid, and any current auction opportunities. Now you don't have to rely on word of mouth or the newspaper to find out when there's an auction!
- A dedicated email address to facilitate easier communication between the division, bidders, and auction winners.
- A new email list for interested alcohol beverage businesses to learn when there is an auction lot up for bid!

Check out the NEW [Division of Alcohol Beverages Liquor Auction webpage](#). You can also find this page linked on the [Alcohol Beverage Landing page](#).

[Sign up to be notified when there is an open auction.](#) Select "Liquor Auction" from the list and enter your email address.



Check Out Tax 7!

Effective January 1, 2026, the permanent administrative rules DAB and stakeholders worked so hard on went into effect.

Chapter Tax 7, Alcohol Beverage Regulation, is filled with relevant information about municipal retail licenses, full-service retail sales by producers, and state-issued permits.

Chapter Tax 7 is linked for your convenience on the [Alcohol Beverage Landing Page](#) under "References" in the center column.

Temporary Licenses — Ready to Pour?

In Wisconsin, if you're selling alcohol beverages or hosting a public "cheers," you generally need a license — it's the law. Short-term events such as festivals, fairs, fundraisers, and beer/wine walks typically obtain a temporary license (sec. [125.26\(6\)](#), Wis. Stats). Here is your fast-track guide to staying legal:

The Basics: Who & How

- **Who needs one?** Any person or business selling alcohol beverages to consumers OR those allowing consumption of alcohol beverages in a public place. Only certain organizations are eligible to hold temporary licenses:
 - **Established Organizations:** Churches, lodges, or societies active for at least six months.
 - **Community Groups:** Local chambers of commerce or similar civic or trade organizations, fair associations, and agricultural societies.
 - **Clubs & Posts:** Bona fide clubs (not for profit) and veterans' posts.
- **How do I get one?** Your local city, village, or town clerk handles the paperwork and provides final approval.

Pro Tips for Temporary "Picnic" Licenses

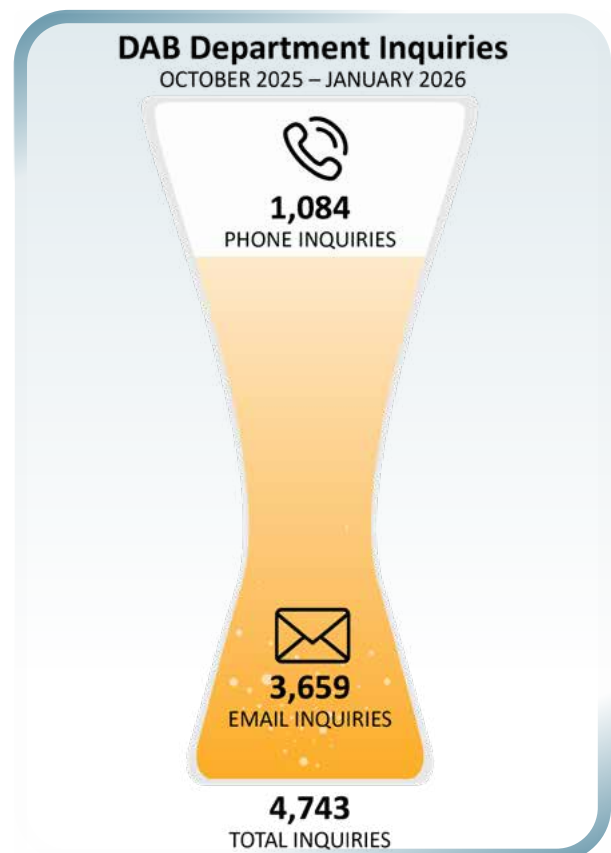
- **Planning a fundraiser picnic?** Set the beverage menu with a permitted wholesaler or self-distributing brewer or brewpub. It is illegal to purchase alcohol beverages at local grocery/liquor

stores for resale at events. Check out the [listing](#) of current permit holders on our website to establish a relationship with a permitted wholesaler.

- **Sip & Serve:** Your licensed event can sell beer and/or wine by the glass or include it in your event's entrance fee.
- **Hard Limit:** Temporary licenses cover beer and wine only. No distilled spirits are allowed.
- **Liquid Gastronomist:** Run your event with licensed or permitted operators to oversee alcohol beverage sales/service.
- **The More the Merrier!** Breweries and wineries can come to you and do sampling at licensed events, but they may not sell. Check out the [listing](#) of current permit holders on our website to see who may sample at your event.
- **Wine Walks:** Temporary licenses are eligible to obtain a maximum of 20 temporary licenses for a specific date and time. See [Fact Sheet 3109](#) for more information and restrictions on these events.

Thirsty for more details?

Check out the Wisconsin Department of Revenue's Information for Wisconsin Alcohol Beverage Retailers ([Publication 302](#)).



Agents in the Field

In May 2025, a southeastern Wisconsin business was found to be illegally warehousing alcohol beverages.

Upon learning of the situation, Special Agents with the Division of Alcohol Beverages (DAB) arrived at the business and observed a large quantity of alcohol beverages being stored at the warehouse. Though the business had previously applied for an alcohol beverage warehouse permit and a beer wholesaler permit, no permits were issued at the time.

Additionally, Special Agents observed intoxicating liquor being stored at the warehouse.

Further investigation revealed that liquor products had illegally come from an unauthorized out-of-state entity. The alcohol beverage excise tax on much of the product had not been paid. Special Agents took enforcement action to seize and/or hold the alcohol beverages at the warehouse. In total, over 4,000 cases of beer, 276 kegs of beer, and over 1,100 cases of liquor were seized or ordered held at the warehouse.

DAB remains committed to ensuring that licensees and permittees abide by Wisconsin law. Avoiding excise taxes gives an unfair advantage in the competitive alcohol marketplace in Wisconsin. Generally, sales of alcohol beverages — whether at the supplier, wholesaler, or retailer tier — require the appropriate license(s) or permit(s). Additionally, off-site storage warehouses used by suppliers or wholesalers require an alcohol beverage warehouse permit. Finally, alcohol beverages must be purchased only through authorized sources that hold the appropriate license(s) or permit(s) and report and pay the excise tax on those alcohol beverages.



Clerk's Corner: Municipal Retail Alcohol Beverage License Forms Update

We have made minor changes to [AB-100](#), and [AB-101](#), with most changes centering on [AB-200](#).

AB-200, Alcohol Beverage License Application

- The biggest visual change for AB-200 is the flip-flop of the instructions and fillable sections. We did this because we have spent significant time developing line-by-line assistance for completing the form and our hope is that featuring the instructions will result in more licensees and clerks relying on them.
- There will be two pathways in the AB-200, one initial application pathway and one renewal pathway. The renewal pathway will allow licensees to check boxes to maintain the same premises description and provide old copies of the AB-100 and AB-101 as long as the information remains accurate.
- We have also added **Appendix A** to Form AB-200. Appendix A replaces the table found in Part C and provides more clarity and consistency for licensees and clerks.

The new versions of the forms are live on our Alcohol Beverage webpage now, in the middle top tile under [License Application and other forms](#). Additionally, we have a [recorded webinar](#) addressing the licensing season form changes.

**Alcohol Beverage Excise Tax
Reports are Updated for Fiscal
Year 2025**

[Visit our dashboard.](#)

Friendly Reminder: Alcohol Beverage Permit Fees Increased

The **Division of Alcohol Beverages** would like to remind all alcohol beverage permit holders and new applicants of recent changes to permit fees. Under 2023 Wisconsin Act 73, the division has established updated biennial permit fees by administrative rule.

- New applicants will pay the updated fees at the time of application
- Current permit holders will see the new fees applied at their first renewal after December 16, 2024

Please review the updated [fee schedule](#) to ensure you are prepared for your next application or renewal.

Permit Type	Biennial Fee
1. Operator's Permit (s. 125.175 , Stats.)	\$200
2. Alcohol Beverage Warehouse (s. 125.19 , Stats.)	\$200
3. Common Carrier Permit (s. 125.22 , Stats.)	\$2,000
4. Fulfillment House Permit (s. 125.23 , Stats.)	\$200
5. Industrial Fermented Malt Beverages (s. 125.275 , Stats.)	\$200
6. Fermented Malt Beverage Wholesaler (s. 125.28 , Stats.)	\$4,000
7. Brewer (s. 125.29 , Stats.)	\$1,000
8. Brewpub (s. 125.295 , Stats.)	\$1,000
9. Out-of-State Shipper of Fermented Malt Beverages (s. 125.30 , Stats.)	\$1,000
10. Class "B" Sports Club (s. 125.27(1) , Stats.)	\$200
10a. Retail "Class B" Sports Club (s. 125.51(5)(a) , Stats.)	\$600
11. Retail "Class B" Airport/Public Facility (s. 125.51(5)(b) , Stats.)	\$600
12. Class "B" Vessel (s. 125.27(2) , Stats.)	\$200
12a. Retail "Class B" Vessel (s. 125.51(5)(c) , Stats.)	\$600
13. Class "B" Racetrack (s. 125.27(5) , Stats.)	\$100
13a. Retail "Class B" Racetrack (s. 125.51(5)(f) , Stats.)	\$300
14. Limited Manufacturer (s. 125.52(2) , Stats.)	\$1,000
15. Rectifier (s. 125.52 , Stats.)	\$1,000
16. Manufacturer (s. 125.52 , Stats.)	\$1,000
17. Winery (s. 125.53 , Stats.)	\$1,000
18. Direct Wine Shipper (s. 125.535 , Stats.)	\$200
19. Intoxicating Liquor Wholesaler (s. 125.54 , Stats.)	\$1,000
20. Sacramental Wine (s. 125.56 , Stats.)	\$0
21. Out-of-State Shipper of Intoxicating Liquor (s. 125.58 , Stats.)	\$1,000
22. Wholesale (Ethyl) Alcohol (s. 125.60 , Stats.)	\$200
23. Medicinal Alcohol (s. 125.61 , Stats.)	\$0
24. Industrial Alcohol (s. 125.62 , Stats.)	\$200
25. Industrial Wine (s. 125.63 , Stats.)	\$200
26. Intoxicating Liquor Salesperson (s. 125.65 , Stats.)	\$200

Full-Service Retail Sales for Producers

First written in 2024, refreshed for this edition

2023 Wisconsin Act 73 authorizes eligible producers (manufacturers/rectifiers, wineries, and breweries) to make full-service retail sales at their production premises and *up to three* off-site retail outlets. “Full-service retail sales” means sales of fermented malt beverages or intoxicating liquor for on-premises or off-premises consumption, or the provision of taste samples of fermented malt beverages or intoxicating liquor, or any combination of these activities.

For a producer to be eligible to make full-service retail sales on their production premises, they must produce a certain volume of alcohol beverages, determined by the type of producer. Additional production volume will earn the producer additional full-service retail outlets if approved, with a maximum of three off-site, full-service retail outlets. See the [Common Questions](#) for volume requirements.

The maximum number of outlets applies to the producer regardless of the number and type of producer permits held by the producer (e.g., a manufacturer (distiller) and brewer can still only have three outlets maximum).

Production volumes are determined by the *aggregate* volume of alcohol beverages produced on all production premises operated by the producer.

Additionally, alcohol beverages produced under a contract production agreement **do not** count toward either party’s volumes for the purposes of full-service retail authorizations; see [Contract Production Common Questions](#) for more details.

The following apply to full-service retail sales locations:

- Producers must receive approval **first** from the governing municipality for any off-site, full-service retail outlet by submitting [AB-105](#). Producers must then apply for and receive approval from the Division of Alcohol Beverages to engage in full-service retail sales at an off-site premises. A full-service retail outlet on the production premises only needs DAB approval.

- There are fixed off-site outlets and unlimited transfer locations. Both require municipal approval first and [Tax 7.17\(2\)\(b\)](#) requires that producers turn their municipally approved AB-105 to DAB **at least 15 days prior** to the first date sales will take place.
- Municipalities must approve or deny these applications using the same standards and criteria that the municipality has established by ordinance for the evaluation and approval of retail license applications. Municipal approval is addressed in [Tax 7.17\(4\)](#) and may include more than limiting the scope of alcohol beverages sold. Municipalities can limit the scope of alcohol beverages offered for sale at an off-site, full-service retail outlet, but only with respect to alcohol beverages that are *not* of the same type as those made by the producer.
- Alcohol beverages sold at a full-service retail location, other than those made by the producer, must be purchased by the producer from a permitted Wisconsin wholesaler or a self-distributing brewer or brewpub.
- Permit certificates for full-service retail outlets must be displayed as retail alcohol beverages licenses are, framed and prominently displayed per sec. [125.04\(1\)](#) Wis. Stats.
- Licensed or permitted operator (bartender) requirements apply in the same way that they do for retail licensed premises.
- Closing hours are the same as that of Class “B” licensed premises.

Retail Alcohol Beverage Licensing Resources

[Publication 309](#), *Retail Alcohol Beverage Licensing Guide for Municipalities* remains the top resource we recommend to clerks, in addition to [DAB fact sheets](#), [Tax 7](#), and [Chapter 125](#), of course.

Check out the [DAB Municipal Clerk’s Workshop on licensing season 2026](#) to see the form updates in action and get helpful tips and reminders.

Clerk's Corner: General Licensing Process

This article first ran in the May 2023 Edition. It has been refreshed and is ready for your use for the 2026-2027 licensing season!

Alcohol beverage renewals are just starting in most municipalities. Licenses across the state, except those issued by the City of Milwaukee, expire on June 30. State law requires municipalities to follow a specific process when an alcohol beverage license application is received. Below is a general outline of this process.

1. Application Forms

New businesses and renewing licensees should submit [Form AB-200](#), Alcohol Beverage License Application. Include the following forms with each application, if applicable:

- Individual Questionnaire ([AB-100](#) for each agent, officer, member, partner, or individual owner) as required by the municipality.
- Appointment of Agent ([AB-101](#)) if the business is an LLC or corporation.
- Any other documents or information the municipality may need to make a licensing determination.

2. Waiting Period

Applications for initial issuance and renewal retail alcohol beverage licenses must be received by the clerk 15 days prior to the board granting the license.

3. Publication

The municipal clerk must publish each application for a Class "A" beer, Class "B" beer, "Class A" liquor, "Class B" liquor, or "Class C" wine license.

- The publication shall include the name and address of the applicant, the type of license applied for, and the location of the premises to be licensed.
- The newspaper utilized for publication

shall be one that is published daily; a weekly newspaper may be utilized if a daily newspaper is not published in the municipality.

- The publication shall be printed in a daily newspaper on three successive occasions, or if a weekly newspaper is utilized, it shall be printed at least once.
- At the time the application is filed, the applicant shall pay to the clerk the cost of publication as determined under sec. [985.08](#), Wis. Stats.
- There is no statutory timeline for publication, but DAB generally suggests publishing about seven days before the governing body meeting in step 4.

4. Board/Council Review

The applicant will go before the municipal board or council to review the application.

- The applicant must meet the minimum qualifications to hold the license described in sec. [125.04\(5\)](#), Wis. Stats.
- Municipalities generally have broad authority when considering new license applications and may consider factors beyond the minimum qualifications, such as business plans, parking issues, and law enforcement access concerns, provided the municipality does not discriminate.

5. Fees

Retail licenses may not be issued until the applicant pays the applicable license fees.

- Cities and villages may not require their applicants to pay fees more than 15 days prior to the license issue date.
- Towns may not require their applicants to pay fees more than 30 days prior to the license issue date.

6. Issuance

If granted by the governing body, the clerk will issue the alcohol beverage license document to the new licensee. Alcohol beverage license documents may vary in appearance as they are prepared by each municipality but must include the information listed in Tax [7.035\(4\)](#).

Event Venue Basics

As we see event spaces start their 2026 seasons in earnest, we wanted to convey some basics, especially for those venues in their first licensed or permitted season.

Event Venues with Retail Alcohol Licenses

- Event venues are held to the same standards and regulations as any other licensee and should become familiar with [Publication 302, Information for Wisconsin Alcohol Beverage Retailers](#).
- Event venues must renew their licenses annually, as other licensees do. Municipal clerks will ask for renewal paperwork to be completed in April or May so there is adequate time for governing body action before your license expires June 30 (outside of Milwaukee County).
- Venues with licenses may have either applied through their municipality or applied first through the Division for qualifying event venue certification in order for their municipality to issue an above-quota liquor license.
- Above-quota liquor licenses are unique in that the fees are not subject to a state-imposed minimum or maximum, meaning that municipalities may need to pass ordinances to set these fees if they have previously not done so. Kudos to the municipalities who have worked hard alongside their event venues to ensure things have been running as smoothly as possible during this process.

Please review the [Common Questions for Event Venue Licensing](#) if you are an event venue or municipality that has questions about the licensing process.

Event Venues with No-Sale Event Venue Permits

- Event venues are authorized to have events with alcohol beverages present no more than six times annually and no more than once per month.
- Event venues are prohibited from allowing distilled spirits at events. Only consumption of fermented malt beverages and wine are allowed under this permit.
- Events with twenty or more guests are required to have at least one licensed operator onsite to supervise the service of alcohol beverages.
- The only authorized applicant for this permit is the venue property owner. Lessees of venues are not authorized to hold this permit.

Please review [Fact Sheet 3122 No-Sale Event Venue Permits](#) for additional information. These permits may be applied for at any time of year.

We have received a lot of questions not only from traditional event spaces, but other types of organizations who've found themselves in need of assistance (historical museums, agrotourism spaces, and recreation spaces to name a few). Our Education & Outreach team is happy to walk through the new public place definition to assist with your licensing or permitting decision-making process.

Event Venue Applications

The Division of Alcohol Beverages' Permitting Bureau has been busy processing event venue applications after the recent law change at the start of the year. See the figures above for information on how many applications DAB has received and processed. Note that new Qualifying Event Venue Certification applications were no longer accepted as of March 2nd, 2026.

