



The Responsible Service of Alcohol

Responsible Alcohol Vendor Training

State of Florida



The information provided herein is intended only to inform the reader in understanding the basics of law regarding alcohol and their responsibilities therein. This information is not and should not be considered legal advice and this information is not intended to address how a particular law may or may not apply to a particular situation or occurrence. The reader should discuss this information, obtain advice and seek counsel from an attorney before making any decision with respect to matters included in this publication, the law and/or the service of alcohol. Hospitality Training Group, LLC are not and will not be held responsible or liable for any acts, omissions or decisions the reader makes regarding the service of alcohol in their or another's establishment.

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1. Introduction

The Responsible Service of Alcohol guide provides information that blends useful skills, legal considerations, social responsibilities and best practices together in order to achieve the responsible service of alcohol within the hospitality and retail industries. With the help of this guide, users will become familiar with the law and their legal responsibilities, promote social responsibility to communities in which they operate and support best practices within their professions. All members of staff within the hospitality and retail industries should appreciate and understand their responsibilities relating to the service of alcohol know how alcohol affects the body and be aware of the risks associated with alcohol consumption. This guide is a fundamental step on the path to achieving that goal. We also want to put tools in the hands of practitioners and policy-makers to help them understand their important role in ensuring the responsible service of alcohol.

2. History

It appears that alcohol has been around for thousands of years. With the discovery of Stone Age beer jugs from the Neolithic period (10,000 years B.C.), and wine appearing in Egyptian paintings near 4,000 B.C., and considering that Egyptians considered beer a “necessity of life” and home brewed it daily, it’s fair to say that alcohol as played a familiar role in society for quite some time. Alcohol has been used for medicinal purposes, not to mention for pleasure, nutrition, religious rituals, and remuneration (as a form of payment) and buried with the dead for their enjoyment in the after-life. And go figure- many European societies warned against the over-use of taverns, unless they were also used as houses of prostitution. Beer was a very common staple by the Babylonians by 2,700 B.C.

Alcoholic beverages were widely used in all segments of Chinese society, were used as a source of inspiration, were important for hospitality, were an antidote for fatigue, and were sometimes misused. Laws against making wine were enacted and repealed forty-one times between 1,100 B.C. and A.D. 1,400. However, a commentator writing around 650 B.C. asserted that *“the people will not do without beer. To prohibit it and secure total abstinence from it is beyond the power even of sages”*. In 1920, the U.S. passed a law prohibiting the manufacture, sale, import and export of intoxicating liquors called “Prohibition”. The illegal alcohol trade boomed and by 1933, the prohibition of alcohol was cancelled.

3. Alcohol and the law

In the U.S., there were 10,228 traffic related fatalities that were alcohol related, or 1 an hour. In the U.S., ½ of motor cycle drivers/riders who died in traffic accidents had a BAC of 0.8 or

above. In Florida in 2010, there were 2,445 traffic fatalities of which 660 were impaired driver fatalities. But we still have “Dram Shop” laws...

def: **dram** (*noun*) : a small portion of something to drink.

A dram shop law ***imposes liability on drinking establishments such as bars and taverns (“dram shops”) who serve alcohol to patrons who are already visibly or obviously intoxicated.*** Drinking establishments may have to pay damages to third parties who are injured by the people whom they sold alcohol to. While serving alcohol to minors is already illegal, dram shop laws also impose additional penalties for bars who serve alcohol to minors who are visibly intoxicated. Florida’s dram shop statute is found in Florida Statute 768.125. However, Florida’s dram shop law is very limited in its scope and application.

Under the law, individuals or businesses who sell alcohol will generally not be held liable for damages or injuries caused by a drunken person to whom they sold alcohol (unless the shop was otherwise negligent). This is especially true for liquor stores, since it is difficult to prove that the establishment was the cause of any injury sustained by the other party (the plaintiff).

But let’s be clear - a Florida business can and will be held liable under two scenarios:

- 1) The sale of alcohol to a minor: Bars/taverns will be held strictly liable for injuries caused by the service of alcohol to a person who is under 21 years of age. “*Strictly liable*” means that the employee need not have any knowledge that the person was under aged at the time that they sold the alcoholic beverage.
- 2) The sale of alcohol to a person who is known to be “*habitually addicted*” to alcohol: Similarly, establishments will be held liable if they serve alcohol to a person who is known to have a history of addiction to alcohol. Courts have held that such persons create a “*foreseeable risk of injury*” because they lack the capacity to make responsible decisions.

As you can see, dram shop liability is somewhat limited in Florida. Drinking establishments in Florida generally are not held liable for the injuries of others except under the circumstances detailed above. Finally, although a drinking establishment may not be held liable under criminal law, there may be other repercussions under civil law, especially if the business owner was negligent or reckless in providing the alcohol.

Statutory Language

Title XLV. Chp. 768 Torts, Negligence

768.125 Liability for injury or damage resulting from intoxication.

A person (Seller) who sells or furnishes alcoholic beverages to a person (Consumer) of lawful drinking age shall not thereby become liable for injury or damage caused by or resulting from the intoxication of such person. Except when a Seller who willfully and unlawfully sells or furnishes alcoholic beverages to a Consumer who is not of lawful drinking age or who knowingly serves a person habitually addicted to the use of alcoholic beverages, then the Seller may become liable for injury or damage caused by or resulting from the intoxication of such minor or person.

4. Your responsibility

If you are an individual who sells or serves alcohol, you can face criminal charges if you:

- Serve alcohol to a minor
- Serve a customer who is already intoxicated
- Sell or permit the sale of drugs in the establishment

The state can and will likely prosecute you and any other server who violates any one of these criminal offenses. This can include a monetary fine, jail time, probation or a combination thereof – this is a **very** serious matter for you to carefully consider!

There is also the prospect of civil charges being filed against you. Civil charges are brought by the individual(s), their families or a third party who was harmed by your actions or inactions. There is a lower burden of proof in civil cases, and although there are Dram Shop laws to help protect you, civil cases can often be more serious than the criminal charges. During a civil trial, the courts will take in to account a number of variables:.

- Did you authenticate the customer's identification?
- Was the guest already intoxicated when you served them?
- Did the establishment create an atmosphere that attributed to a problem?
- Did you further promote intoxication by discounting or having drink specials?
- Are there other prudent safety measures in place?
- Does all staff follow all policies including checking ALL ID's?
- Are you RVA (Responsible Vendor Act) compliant?

Every state, including Florida, has a regulatory authority to control the sales of and distribution of alcohol. In Florida, it is the **Div. of Business and Professional Regulation, division of Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco**. They are located at:

1940 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
850.487.1395

The Bureau can and will issue citations if you choose to:

- Sell alcohol to a minor
- Fail to authenticate ID's
- Serve an already intoxicated guest
- Permit a minor to use a fake ID
- Contribute to factors that lead to an alcohol related incident
- Sell alcohol during periods when it is prohibited (Sunday mornings for example)
- Permit the use of illegal drugs in your establishment

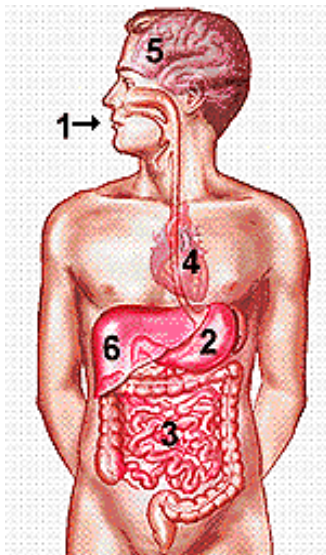
The Bureau may enter any licensed establishment at any time with or without notice. They have full jurisdiction over the establishment and don't need your, your managers or your owner's permission to enter, investigate and revoke your license to sell alcohol. The legal drinking age in all 50 states is 21 years of age. The current age to *serve* alcohol is 21 in most states. Some states permit the service (taking a drink to a table, for example or pouring a beer) of alcohol under certain conditions. In Florida, the "drinking age" is 21 and you may pour/serve/deliver at 18. It is illegal to serve an intoxicated guest, but it is also illegal to discriminate against a guest, like if the customer is pregnant, for example.

5. Recognizing intoxication

As alcohol is consumed, it flows down the throat and into the stomach, where it is absorbed by the walls of the stomach (20% of it) or, more likely, it travels to the small intestines (80% of it). The alcohol is then absorbed by the intestines and goes directly into the bloodstream. It quickly flows to the heart, where it is then pumped around to the entire body. It reaches the brain in 2.5 minutes and sends harmful signals (like motor skill dysfunction, for example) before taking a path to the Liver. From the Liver, it is processed, broken down, detoxified and removed from your blood, and eventually excreted from the body. The body will efficiently process 1/2 ounces of alcohol per hour (depending on several factors).

Since alcohol is a depressant for the central nervous system, the following factors can/will influence how the alcohol affects an individual:

- age
- gender
- physical condition
- quantity of food consumed
- other drugs and/or medicines taken



The Path of Alcohol in the body

1. Mouth: alcohol enters the body and some immediately enters the bloodstream in the mouth.
2. Stomach: some alcohol gets into the bloodstream in the stomach, but most goes on to the small intestine.
3. Small Intestine: alcohol enters the bloodstream through the walls of the small intestine.
4. Heart: pumps alcohol throughout the body in the bloodstream.
5. Brain: alcohol reaches the brain.
6. Liver: alcohol is oxidized by the liver at a rate of approx. 0.5 oz per hour.
7. The broken down alcohol is excreted from the body.

Possible Effects of Alcohol

In small doses:

- has a relaxing effect
- reduces tension
- lowers inhibitions
- impairs concentration
- slows reflexes
- impairs reaction time
- reduces coordination

In medium doses:

- slurs speech
- induces drowsiness
- alters emotions
- Induces stupidity, possibly followed by...
- pregnancy

In large doses:

- vomiting
- divorce
- breathing difficulties
- unconsciousness
- coma
- death

Since alcohol is a depressant, it affects many bodily systems, including the reticular formation, spinal cord, cerebellum and cerebral cortex, and many neurotransmitter systems. Alcohol is a molecule and is soluble in water. Because of these properties, alcohol gets into the bloodstream quickly and then crosses the blood/brain barrier. Chronic drinking can lead to dependence and addiction to alcohol and to additional neurological problems. Typical symptoms of withholding alcohol from someone who is addicted are shaking (tremors), sleep problems and nausea. More severe withdrawal symptoms include hallucinations and seizures.

Drinking and driving never ends well

The following tables illustrate the effects of alcohol consumption on blood alcohol levels and driving ability. This data should be used only as a general reference point regarding the effects of alcohol since body weight and other variables may influence the results. And some states define the limit of legal intoxication at a lower BAC than 0.08%.

ALCOHOL IMPAIRMENT CHART												
NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE	APPROXIMATE BLOOD ALCOHOL PERCENTAGE											
	Drinks	Body Weight in Pounds								ONLY SAFE DRIVING LIMIT		
		90	100	120	140	160	180	200	220		240	
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	0.00	Impairment Begins
1	.05	.05	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	0.02	Driving Skills Affected
2	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.04	0.04	Possible Criminal Penalties
3	.15	.14	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.06	0.06	Legally Intoxicated - Criminal Penalties
4	.20	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	.08	.08	0.08	
5	.25	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	.09	0.09	
6	.30	.27	.23	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	.11	.11	0.11	
7	.35	.32	.27	.23	.20	.18	.16	.14	.13	.13	0.13	
8	.40	.36	.30	.26	.23	.20	.18	.17	.15	.15	0.15	
9	.45	.41	.34	.29	.26	.23	.20	.19	.17	.17	0.17	
10	.51	.45	.38	.32	.28	.25	.23	.21	.19	.19	0.19	

Your body can get rid of one drink per hour.
Each 1½ oz. of 80 proof liquor, 12 oz. of beer or 5 oz. of table wine = 1 drink.

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NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE	APPROXIMATE BLOOD ALCOHOL PERCENTAGE											
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		100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240			
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	0.00	Impairment Begins
1	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	0.02	Driving Skills Affected
2	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.04	.03	.03	.03	0.03	Possible Criminal Penalties
3	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05	.05	.05	0.05	Legally Intoxicated - Criminal Penalties
4	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.07	.06	.06	0.06	
5	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.11	.09	.09	.08	.08	0.08	
6	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.10	.09	.09	0.09	
7	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11	.10	.10	0.10	
8	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13	.12	.12	0.12	
9	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13	.13	0.13	
10	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.14	0.14	

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Several factors can/will determine the effect alcohol has on an individual – like why different people drinking 1 can of beer react differently, or why the same person can have different reactions on different days. Some of those factors are as follows:

Speed of Drinking - The more rapidly alcohol is ingested, the higher the peak blood alcohol concentration (BAC). The liver metabolizes about 1/2 ounce of alcohol per hour, so slow down!

Presence of Food in the Stomach - Eating while drinking slows down the absorption rate, so if/when alcoholic beverages are taken with a meal, peak BAC may be reduced by as much as 50%.

Body Weight - A larger person has more blood and requires greater amounts of alcohol to reach a given BAC.

Drinking Tolerance – When there is a history of alcoholic consumption, then an increased amount of alcohol is required to result in the physical and behavioral reactions formerly produced at lesser concentrations.

The Drinker's Expectations - Many people become intoxicated on less alcohol only because they have that expectation before they begin drinking.

General State of Emotional and Physical Health - Many people seem more susceptible to the effects of alcohol when they are extremely fatigued, have recently been ill, or are under emotional stress and strain.

Gender - Given the same amount of alcohol and proportional body weight, females will generally have a higher BAC than their male counterparts, due to there being less body fluid to dilute the alcohol. Females are generally more affected by alcohol just prior to menstruation; oh great!!! Females taking birth control pills containing estrogen may remain intoxicated longer than those who do not, due to the liver needing to metabolize both.

Other Drugs – Prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs and/or illicit drugs all have potential reactions with alcohol. Be aware of the additive and synergistic effects when these drugs are mixed with alcohol, as this can create a very hazardous and dangerous combination.

6. Preventing intoxication

Alcohol is comprised of molecules that, through the drinking process, are absorbed into the bloodstream. This typically takes place in the small intestine, but in theory, if you were put a small amount of wine in your mouth without swallowing it, the alcohol would still be absorbed into your blood through your mouth's lining. Since cell membranes are highly permeable by alcohol, once alcohol is in the bloodstream, it is absorbed in to nearly every tissue of the body. So clearly the over-consumption and abuse of alcohol can damage a variety of the body's internal organs.

Normally, alcohol is swallowed and directly enters the stomach. The stomach breaks down food and beverage before passing it to the small intestine. If there is an absence of food in the stomach, the alcohol passes quickly into the small intestine from where it is absorbed directly into the bloodstream. The alcohol circulates throughout the body until it reaches the brain, which can happen in as little as 2 ½ minutes. At that point it begins to depress a variety of the

brains functions, starting with the part of the brain that controls inhibitions, judgment and fine motor skills.

If there is food in the stomach, alcohol will mix with the food before passing to the small intestine. It is this mixing with the food that slows down the alcohol being absorbed into the bloodstream. But this process of absorption is only slowed down - not stopped. Eventually, all of the alcohol consumed will be absorbed into the blood and will travel around the body, affecting other body functioning. Alcohol reaches the liver in approximately 20 minutes. The liver processes the alcohol – breaking it down and neutralizing it, then removing it from the body via the urination process. In general, the liver breaks down alcohol at the rate of around 1 drink per hour.

The amount of alcohol in the blood is determined by the quantity and type of alcohol consumed, the speed at which one drinks, whether or not there is food in the stomach and a variety of other factors. The immediate effects depends upon the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream, called Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC). BAC varies according to a person's weight, body composition, gender and speed of drinking. Women tend to have a slightly higher BAC than men after drinking the same amount of beer (for example) because they typically have less body fluid to dilute the alcohol.

A small amount of alcohol (less than 10%) is eliminated from the body in urine, breath and sweat, while the rest is oxidized in the liver. And as with food, the alcohol combines with oxygen in the bloodstream to release heat, energy or calories. But alcohol is of very poor nutritional value- it lacks vitamins, proteins and other beneficial nutrients. Furthermore, alcohol is metabolized entirely by the liver, so it is the first internal organ to suffer the harmful effects of alcohol abuse.

Generally speaking, when drinking the same amount of alcohol:

- A thinner person is more affected than a heavier person
- A person who has empty stomach is more affected than a person who just ate
- Women are more affected than men
- A person who rarely drinks may be more affected than a person who regularly drinks
- A short person is more affected than a tall person

7. Authenticating Identification

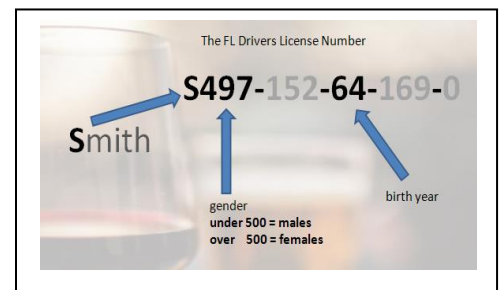
The authentication of identification cards is perhaps the most critical step in the process as it relates to the service of alcohol. On average, one out of every 12 ID's cards presented is altered or completely fraudulent (a "fake ID"). But with a little practice, you can quickly become

proficient at spotting an authentic ID versus a fake ID. Built in to every card are certain security features. They are known as:

1. Overt- like the picture.
2. Covert- like the micro-printing.
3. Forensic- requires laboratory testing (for example, is the signature really theirs?).

The digital picture is the best place to start. Then examine the microprint and the signature. If you are still uncertain, look at the numbers in the driver's license number itself. Using the below example:

- The first letter should match the first letter of their last name.
- The next three are the gender indicator
 - under 500 are male
 - Over 500 are female.
- The next three (in grey) are relatively covert.
- The next two are their year of birth.
- The next three are their day/month of birth (covert)
- The last is a check digit if two DL #'s ever match



Here are some of the quickest, easiest and most Obvious places to look when authenticating an ID card:

1. The micro-print. Microprint is very, very small and hard to replicate.
2. Does the DL # have the alphanumeric consistency as demonstrated above?
3. Is the card expired?
4. Does it appear to have glued, cut, uneven or bumpy surfaces?
5. Look for pin holes on the surface of the card (“bleaching”).
6. Use ultra-violet light.
7. Examine the card's reverse side (forger's focus on the front of the card).
8. Scrutinize the individuals' picture - height, weight, hair color, eye color, DOB.
9. What about the actual card's size, coloring, lettering, corners and thickness
 - compare it to you own ID

Is the card flexible and hard to break? It should be. If you are still unsure, **deny access!** You are better off safe than sorry- and if you serve an underage person, you are likely to be sorry!

8. Managing volatile situations

Seeing potential danger early on and preventing problems is always preferable to allowing a situation to get out of hand. Depending on the floorplan of your establishment, you may be able to see the entire premises from behind the bar; this is called “monitoring”. Have a plan and work as a team to monitor (sight, sound, cameras) your premises constantly.

Handling Complaints

It would be unreasonable to suggest that there will never be any complaints, conflicts or general strife in your establishment. However, depending on the type of establishment, its location and its typical clientele, problems will occur to a greater or lesser degree depending on how we manage those variables.

Dealing with complaints is an art in and of itself. If you handle it diligently, you have an opportunity to take the customer from dissatisfied to satisfied. However, if dealt with poorly, the customer will leave very dissatisfied and is likely to tell as many people as possible about the problem instantaneously, through media like Facebook, Twitter, texting, or cell phone camera pictures, leading to a loss of potential customers, and fast. When handling complaints, it is important to **LCAS**:

- **Listen** carefully without interrupting
- Show that you **Comprehend** the situation
- **Apologize**
- Find a **Solution**

Please don't raise your voice or argue with the customer. Observe how your other staff member's deals with issues. Remember that when people are angry, they get emotional (they tend to insult you, for example). Don't take it personally, and don't retaliate- remain professional. Dealing with complaints requires you to have patience, to maintain control and to keep others around you calm.

Refusal of Service

As with handling complaints, refusing service (if someone is intoxicated or underage, for example), should be done calmly, respectfully and professionally. A well-executed refusal should go unnoticed by other customers.

- Approach early
- State the law
- Apologize
- Welcome them back on another day

It will be difficult for newer staff with less experience to refuse service, so talk to your manager if you are uncertain, role play with them, and learn from more experienced coworkers. If customers are angry, calm them down by speaking calmly and quietly. If people or property is threatened, call the Sheriff's office (Hillsborough County is 247-8000. Put this number in your cell phone if you live/work in Hillsborough County). If a customer is intoxicated, their judgment will be impaired by the alcohol, making them less inhibited, quicker to anger and more likely to say/do things they wouldn't normally. They may very well have more difficulty understanding you and your directives, so speak clearly and slowly - you may have to repeat yourself several times, and try not to get angry. Remain patient and maintain control. Have an "escalation plan" if/when the environment deteriorates. This should include communicating with staff, having an

evacuation plan (for other guests), notifying the authorities (Sheriff's office) and documenting the incident. What else can you think of? The plan may vary depending on your circumstances. Post conspicuously displayed signs and enforce policies stating that underage customers will not be served, intoxicated customers will not be served, and that the illegal use of and trafficking in drugs and other controlled substances will result in ejection and prosecution.

Potential Problem Situations

It is impossible to predict everything that could possibly go wrong in your establishment, but there are some obvious scenarios that we know from experience are problematic. For example, large same gender groups (a group of 15+ guys, for example). In some types of establishments with a "party atmosphere", single gender groups often start drinking to excess and they can get boisterous, which can also upset other customers. So how should you deal with them?

- Speak to them when they first arrive and lay down the rules, like no drinking games, keep noise down, have a good night but don't get drunk
- Develop rapport early on so it's easier to speak to them later – find out their names and what they are celebrating
- Identify a likely leader- enlist him/her to help police the group's behavior
- Monitor what and how much they are drinking
- Communicate in no uncertain terms that if 1 goes they all go

Domestic Arguments

Domestic situations are the hardest to spot, and can be very dangerous. A couple enters and is clearly enjoying themselves, but then the situation deteriorates, and while you can't listen to each customer's conversation, it's rather obvious that there is a problem.

- Visit the table- ask how they are doing. The attention alone is usually enough to encourage them to modify their behavior and/or pay out.
- If it persists and/or gets louder, you should ask them again if they are "doing well".
- Let them know that, if they can't put aside their problems, they'll be asked to leave.
- Always remain impartial- DON'T ever take sides.
- De-personalize the situation- state that you are just doing your job and that it is not a personal thing.

Body Language

Understanding body language can be very helpful in spotting and preventing potentially problematic situations. Consider the following signs to look for if someone is getting aggressive. Also consider your own body language, because it alone can help diffuse a bad situation. Be assertive, maintain control and learn to read the guests body language. Generally and unscientifically speaking, when a person is:

Feeling aggressive, they may:

- Lean forward

- Have an angry facial expression
- Wave their arms about
- Have an unusually loud voice
- Have hands in a fist-like clenched position

Feeling assertive, they may:

- Sit very erect
- Have a very firm look on their face
- Use a voice appropriate for the conversation
- May appear relaxed but they are not

Feeling passive, they may:

- Be slouched with their head down
- Lack eye contact
- Have a soft voice and speak using fragmented sentences
- Will appear lost or disheveled
- Moves slowly and/or wandering about

It's not easy to get it exactly right, but try to be assertive, but not aggressive, and don't be passive. Take control! Don't give in to their misbehavior. Carefully choose your tone, your words, your movements and remain calm but in control. Choose your distances carefully. Leave yourself space, and be aware that others generally prefer their "personal space". If a stranger stands too close to you, it can be uncomfortable, and in heated situations, standing too close is seen as a threat, so keep a comfortable distance from the person you're speaking to. Remember that people of ethnicity (from a different country or culture) may prefer a different amount of personal space (they may like to stand closer or further away than you do). Always employ a "barrier", like a table or any furniture; this will buy you time if you need to maneuver yourself away from danger, and remember that the bar itself is a barrier. Any physical barrier acts as a psychological barrier as well.

When you see trouble or the possibility of trouble

Most conflicts can be prevented or controlled if there is intervention early on. But if a situation has already escalated, it's much more difficult to manage. Never jeopardize your safety or that of your staff or guests. Here are 5 good rules to follow:

- Keep calm and slow down the situation
- determine what the actual problem is
- listen
- put distance between the parties (when necessary)
- [insert your favorite here]

Once the issue is resolved, quietly apologize to other customers for the disruption, reassure them that the situation is resolved, and recognize that you have been through a heated situation - take a short break to regain your composure. Lastly, document the incident accurately while the incident is still fresh in your mind. The recording of incidents is critical, and there are good reasons to do so, like:

- It can be used as a training tool
- It will assist in communicating with staff and management
- It provides an accurate record for the police and your insurance co.
- It can help prevent similar incidents from happening again
 - The record should include the following:
 - Date & time
 - Exactly what happened
 - Who was involved (names, DOB, etc.)
 - How it was resolved
 - Police contact info (if they were involved)
 - Witnesses and their contact information.

A skillful server will be able to work as part of a team to provide friendly, safe yet efficient service, which makes customers feel welcomed (and really does a lot for profitability, thus job security!). This includes contributing to exceptional standards of an establishment while creating the right atmosphere. And servers will have to enforce their legal responsibilities while considering their social responsibilities. In situations involving the refusal of service, employ ample patience. Practice also helps you get it right. Reading this educational bulletin is a good first step, but putting it into practice and learning from your successes and mistakes are what this is really about!

There is an array of environmental factors that promote a **safe environment** while patrons are consuming alcohol. Some of the easier-to-implement practices are:

- Assure that the staff is friendly, unbiased, non-confrontational and well trained
- Call “last call” on time (but not early)
- Monitor patrons during entry, at the bar during consumption and the during their exit
- Assure that only age appropriate and non-intoxicated customers are served
- Monitor your establishment to assure an appropriate crowd size (and you certainly do not want to exceed your maximum capacity!)
- Assure the effective promotion of food (for several reasons)
- See that a larger percentage of customers are sitting (rather than standing)
- Provide quick and efficient service (for several reasons)
- Assure that all staff is trained in responsible service of alcohol
- Offer a wide array competitively priced non-alcoholic drinks
- Train every staff members on the protocols to contact Police, EMS and Fire departments
- Ban the carrying of any/all weapons in to your establishment

There is also an array of environmental factors that foster a **dangerous and volatile environment**. Some of them are:

- Intoxicated or underage persons granted access
- Music unnecessarily loud with obscene content
- Higher percentage of customers standing
- Drug dealing/drug use

- TV shows with aggressive, offensive or sexual content (like kick-boxing for example)
- Excessive noise and movement about the premises by patrons
- Staff sending people outside to fight (law enforcement should be called)
- Tardy intervention by staff in volatile situations
- Patrons served to close to or after closing time
- Congestion about the facility (front door, the bar, bathrooms, hallways, dance floor)

Sobering Up

Ask someone how to sober quicker, and you'll get a variety of answers. The fact is that most of this advice is flat out incorrect and some can cause medical complications. For example:

- Drink coffee? **Wrong.** Coffee contains the stimulant caffeine - mixing it with a depressant like alcohol can have harmful side effects.
- Drink water? **Wrong.** Water will help rehydrate the body, but has no effect on getting rid of the alcohol.
- Self-induced vomiting? **Wrong** – this will only rid the stomach of alcohol, which has likely already absorbed into the bloodstream.
- Discontinue drinking altogether? **Now we're talking!** There is nothing you can do but wait for your liver to process the alcohol out of your body. It takes around 20 minutes from when you first start drinking for the liver to start to process alcohol out of the body. The liver then processes this alcohol at a steady rate of around 1 drink per hour, so do the math.

The best way to avoid intoxication is for the consumer of alcohol to pace themselves and drink in moderation- drink only at a rate no faster than what body can break down and excrete. It's important to think about the amount of time it takes to rid your system of alcohol, especially if you are driving or operating machinery at any point in the same day or the following day, and if a person drank a significant amount of alcohol, they may still be impaired for hours to come.

9. Conclusion

This guide was written with the goal of providing useful and accurate information that blends useful skills, legal considerations, social responsibilities and best practices together in order to achieve the responsible service of alcohol within the hospitality and retail industries. We hope you have become more familiar with the laws and with your legal responsibilities with the goal of promoting increased social responsibility to the community you serve while supporting the best practices within the profession. Management and staff within the hospitality industry that serves alcohol has an awesome responsibility, and it's imperative that you fully understand your responsibilities relating to the service of alcohol, and that you know how alcohol affects the body and that you are aware of the risks associated with the service of alcohol. Understanding this guide is a fundamental step towards achieving that goal. The guide places tools in the hands of servers, practitioners and policy-makers alike to help them understand their important role in ensuring the responsible service of alcohol; now it's your job to carry it forward and execute upon it.