



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control

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CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER/SECRETARY TO THE BOARD
TRAVIS G. HILL

Circular Letter 16-02

Issue Date: March 22, 2016

To: Virginia Wineries, Farm Wineries and Breweries operating a tasting room/retail shop on their licensed premises.

Purpose: To communicate to winery, farm winery and brewery licensees a change by the Department of ABC to permit the use of areas utilized for retail sales space or tasting rooms for events conducted by third parties at which alcoholic beverages are served and consumed. This document also establishes the parameters under which these areas may be used for such events.

Background: The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control historically has not permitted wineries, farm wineries or breweries to utilize areas approved for retail sales and tastings to be used for events conducted by third parties at which alcoholic beverages would be served and consumed. While many of these licensees have separate event spaces which they rent for events such as weddings, private parties or charitable events, the agency has recently received requests to allow the retail sales and tasting areas to be used for such events.

Held: The Department has determined that wineries, farm wineries and breweries may utilize areas that are approved as retail sales and tasting areas to hold third party events provided the following is adhered to:

1. The retail privileges afforded by the winery, farm winery or brewery license(s) are not exercised during such events in the tasting room.
2. The retail sales and tasting areas are closed to the public.
3. Prior written notification is provided to the Department five days prior to the event. The notification should contain the date, hours and nature of the event by email to compliance@abc.virginia.gov.
4. During the times such events are being conducted, no sales by the winery, farm

- winery or brewery may occur and the inventory must be secured.
5. Any third party event held upon a manufacturer's licensed premises at which alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed must be appropriately licensed by the Department, if such licensing is required by law.

A winery, farm winery or brewery may obtain a manufacturer's multi-day special event license for use on their premises, to include the inside of their retail facilities, to hold an event in which they are educating the consuming public about alcoholic beverages not manufactured by them. When an event for which a manufacturer's multi-day special events license is being conducted in the retail sales or tasting areas, the procedures established above for third party events shall be adhered to. However, the above numerated procedures do not apply to a manufacturer's multi-day special event license that is obtained for an event that is being held on the manufacturer's premises outside of the retail shop or tasting room (i.e. parking lot, other event space, on the land of business, etc.).

Questions regarding this topic should be addressed to your Compliance Senior Special Agent or compliance@abc.virginia.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Travis G. Hill". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Travis G. Hill
Chief Operating Officer/Secretary to the Board