
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020AG0042-001075
June 16, 2020

Ministry of Attorney General

Province expands measures to support restaurant, tourism industries

VICTORIA – The Province has approved a temporary wholesale pricing model that will allow liquor licensees to purchase beer, wine and spirits at reduced cost.

This measure will provide much-needed financial support for businesses like restaurants, bars and tourism operators with liquor licences. It will be in place from the end of July 2020 until March 31, 2021, when the program will be reviewed.

“The hospitality industry has been one of the hardest hit during the pandemic, badly hurting the more than 190,000 British Columbians who work within the sector,” said David Eby, Attorney General. “Offering a wholesale discount for licensees was something we were exploring before COVID-19, but after the onset of the pandemic we accelerated efforts in order to support these community businesses as they try to find their feet.”

Currently, hospitality licensees, including restaurants, bars and pubs pay full retail price – wholesale price, plus a retail mark-up set by the Liquor Distribution Branch (LDB) – on all liquor purchases. The new model will have licensees pay only the wholesale price of the products they order.

“The people working in the hospitality industry are a major driver of B.C.’s economy,” said Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture. “This change recognizes the restaurant sector’s important role in supporting tourism activity throughout the province.”

In addition to changes to the hospitality pricing model, work is underway by government on several other measures identified within a report created by the Business Technical Advisory Panel (BTAP). This includes the adoption of several recommendations contained in a third-party assessment by Deloitte of the LDB’s liquor distribution centre in Delta, and conversion of all rural agency store authorizations currently administered by the LDB to a new form of rural liquor licence regulated under the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch by the end of 2020.

Learn More:

View the Business Technical Advisory Panel (BTAP) report here:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/employment-business-and-economic-development/business-management/liquor-regulation-licensing/documents/business_technical_advisory_panel_report_and_recommendations.pdf

View the Deloitte report on BTAP’s original recommendations one and three here: http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-16-20_BCLDB_FinalReport.pdf

2019 news release regarding the Deloitte review commissioned by the government:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019AG0047-000935>

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

Ministry of Attorney General

Media Relations

778 678-1572

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND

For Immediate Release
2020AG0042-001075
June 16, 2020

Ministry of Attorney General

Policy changes made during COVID-19

Additional policy changes already made to support the hospitality sector during COVID 19:

- **LCRB:**
 - Authorized liquor primary and food primary establishments to sell packaged liquor for offsite consumption with the order of a meal.
 - Authorized BC liquor manufacturers to use their licenced facility to produce sanitizer and hand sanitizer.
 - Extended the allowable hours of operation of retail liquor stores to allow an earlier opening to coincide with early grocery store hours reserved for elderly and more vulnerable customers.
 - Introduced expedited approval for expansion of the service areas, such as patios, of a licenced establishment.
- **LDB:**
 - Introduced a process to enable licenced establishments closed due to COVID 19 to sell their liquor inventory to another licenced establishment or to a licenced liquor retail store.
 - Amended LDB's current wholesale price change policy to allow liquor suppliers to request greater price reductions, in order to support suppliers' efforts to sell slow moving products and generate better cash flow.

Contact:

Ministry of Attorney General
Media Relations
778 678-1572