

Date: September 18, 2020

To: All Licensees
All LCRB Staff
All Industry Associations
All local government, First Nations and police agencies

Re: **Temporary Expanded Service Area, extension**

Current Policy

Under the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation (LCLR), s.109.1, the General Manager (GM) of the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) may issue a Temporary Expanded Service Area (TESA) authorization to Food Primary, Liquor Primary, and Manufacturer licensees.

Under LCLR, s. 109.4 all TESA authorizations expire at the end of the day on October 31, 2020. Further, under LCLR s. 109.5, the TESA provisions in the LCLR will be repealed on October 31, 2020.

See Policy Directive 20-13 for further information.

New Policy

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Province's March 2020 declaration of a state of emergency and the Provincial Health Officer's (PHO) March 2020 declaration of a public health emergency, this time-limited measure is being amended to support the PHO's direction and recommendations.

The TESA provisions in the LCLR will now expire on **October 31, 2021**. Licensees may apply for new TESA authorizations up to this date.

The GM's authority to extend existing approved TESA authorizations up to this date, without first requiring the licensee to make an application, has also been made explicit.

The LCRB is reaching out to local authorities with approved TESAs in their jurisdiction to confirm their support for extending the TESAs to Oct. 31, 2021. To limit the risk of disruptions in service, local authorities must confirm their position with the LCRB by Oct. 16, 2020.

If concerns related to public safety and public interest are raised regarding the TESA authorizations or the operation of particular TESAs, the LCRB will work with licensees and local authorities to ensure TESAs operate in a manner that balances the interests of licensees, municipalities and the general public.

If the local authority is supportive, the LCRB will reissue authorization letters to licensees with existing TESAs in that jurisdiction prior to Oct. 31, 2020. The new authorization letter will provide an extended expiry date of the TESA. Unless a new authorization letter has been issued, the existing TESA will expire on Oct. 31, 2020.

Licensees will not need to apply to the LCRB for an extension, and there will be no fee charged.

All other requirements relating to TESA authorizations remain the same. To meet the intent of this temporary authorization, licensees will not be permitted to increase or exceed their currently approved person/patron capacities or occupant loads. All means of access to the service area must also be supervised to the satisfaction of the GM. Finally, licensees must comply with all local bylaws and health and fire regulations.

Approved TESAs must be in compliance with local bylaws and requirements. If the local authority bylaws or requirements change and prevent the operation of TESAs in that jurisdiction, the local authority should advise the LCRB.

For licensees who are applying for new TESA authorizations, an expedited online application is available at no charge. Please check our website for a link to the application.

Explanation

The new policy is provided in the context of the provincial state of emergency and public health emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Extending TESA authorizations, which increase the size of existing service areas, is expected to support licensees in complying with requirements under the PHO and recommendations, in particular with respect to social/physical distancing.

Further Information

Further information regarding liquor and cannabis regulation and licensing in British Columbia is available on the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch website at <http://www.gov.bc.ca/liquorregulationandlicensing>

If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch toll free in Canada at 1-866-209-2111 or 250 952-5787 if calling from the Victoria area.

Disclaimer

This communication is intended to be used only for general informational purposes and may not apply to all situations. This communication does not constitute legal advice nor is it a comprehensive statement of the legal obligations that arise under the Liquor Control and Licensing Act, regulations, or any other applicable laws. When interpreting and applying the information contained in this communication, you are encouraged to seek specific advice from your professional advisors as appropriate in the circumstances.

Original signed by
Mary Sue Maloughney,
Assistant Deputy Minister and General Manager