



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
CONSUMER PROTECTION

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From the Office of John J. Suchy
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Guidance Statement- Liquor Caterer Permits

In the upcoming weeks we will be issuing guidance statements and information concerning Public Act 21-37 “An Act Concerning Department of Consumer Protection Licensing and Enforcement, Antitrust Issues and the Palliative Use of Marijuana and revisions to the Liquor Control Act” (“Act”, or “The Act”) as it relates to liquor-related matters.

Public Act 21-37, which is effective, is approximately 138 pages in length, with 109 sections.

Today’s guidance statement relates to the caterer liquor permit.

The caterer liquor permit was amended and now specifies that caterer liquor permittees may sell and serve alcoholic liquor without food, prohibits them from self-dealing or self-hiring in order to generate catering events, and allows for exclusive catering contracts.

The Act specifies that (1) a caterer liquor permittee may sell and serve alcoholic liquor for on-premises consumption with or without food at any event the permittee was hired for and (2) the service must be done pursuant to a contract between the permittee and the hiring party. The Act also prohibits caterer permittees from self-dealing or self-hiring in order to generate catering events. Under the Act, caterer permittees may enter into an exclusive contract with another

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business entity to provide catering services at a specific venue, as long as the caterer is available for hire and uses the permit at other venues. It prohibits the permittee, backer, or their spouse or children from having an ownership interest in the venue that has the exclusivity agreement.

In the next few weeks, we will be issuing an updated caterer notification for permittees to use. The notification of the events for which they will be hired will be submitted by electronic format by permittees into their e-licensing accounts, eliminating the need for “paper” notifications.

Below is the text of the Act as it relates to the caterer liquor permit (in italics):

Sec. 85. Section 30-37j of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2021):

(a) A caterer liquor permit shall allow a person regularly engaged in the business of providing food and beverages to others for service at private gatherings or at special events to sell and serve alcoholic liquor for on-premises consumption with or without the provision of food at any activity, event or function for which such person has been hired, pursuant to a contract between the holder of the caterer liquor permit and the hiring party. The holder of a caterer liquor permit shall not engage in self-dealing or self-hiring in order to generate catering events. The annual fee for a caterer liquor permit shall be four hundred forty dollars.

(b) The holder of a caterer liquor permit shall, on a form prescribed by the Department of Consumer Protection or electronically, notify the department, in writing, of the date, location and hours of each event at which alcohol is served under such permit at least one business day in advance of such event. If the holder of a caterer liquor permit is unable to provide the written notice required under this section due to exigent circumstances, such holder may provide notice to the department by telephone of the date, location, and hours of each event at which alcohol is served under such permit.

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(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of section 30-48, as amended by this act, a backer or holder of a caterer liquor permit may be a backer or holder of any other permit issued under the provisions of this chapter, except that a backer or holder of a caterer liquor permit may not be a backer or holder of any other manufacturer permit issued under section 30-16, as amended by this act, or a wholesaler permit issued under section 30-17, as amended by this act.

(d) The holder of a caterer liquor permit and any other permit issued under the provisions of this chapter that prohibits the off-premises consumption of alcoholic liquor shall be exempt from such prohibition for the purposes of conducting such holder's catering business only.

(e) The holder of a caterer liquor permit shall be exempt from the provisions of sections 30-38, as amended by this act, 30-52, as amended by this act, and 30-54, as amended by this act, and from the requirements to affix and maintain a placard, as provided in subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 30-39, as amended by this act.

(f) The holder of a caterer liquor permit may enter into a contract with another business entity to provide exclusive catering services at a specific venue, provided the holder of the caterer liquor permit is available for hire at other venues and is using the permit at other venues. No holder or member of the backer of the caterer liquor permit, nor the holder's or member's spouse or child, shall have an ownership interest in the venue that is subject to the exclusivity agreement.