



Department of Police

50 WEST MAIN STREET
MERIDEN, CONNECTICUT 06451



ROBERTO M. ROSADO
Chief of Police

Jerry Scully,
Deputy Chief of Police
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May 31, 2022

M. Caitlin S. Anderson
Director, Liquor Control Division,
CT Dept. of Consumer Protection
450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 901
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Director Anderson,

On behalf of Chief Roberto Rosado, we are respectfully requesting a “summary suspension” of the Café Liquor license of “TEQUILA GALORE LOUNGE & GRILL,” 575 N Colony St, Meriden, CT, reference permit/ credential # LCA. 0008667. This liquor permit was issued/effective 11/23/21. This establishment poses an immediate danger to its customers, the residential neighborhood that adjoins it, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic.

On 05/30/22 at approximately 01:10 hours the Meriden Police Dept. responded to this business on the report of a fight in progress, with individuals possibly in possession of firearms, reference Meriden Case#22-003235. As officers responded dispatch advised that they received a separate call for a report of several gunshots heard (approximately 7 shots) approximately five minutes prior. One of the callers was Drew Durant, one of the bar owners.

Upon arrival, Officer Gentile #656 radioed that the bouncer advised him that the shooting possibly occurred in the adjacent parking lot on Hicks St. A few moments later, Officer Gentile advised that he located several shell casings in the roadway on Hicks St, approximately thirty (30) yards north of N Colony St. It was noted that this area is used for parking by patrons of Tequila Galore Lounge & Grill.

The upper part of the glass front door was shattered. One of the employees alleged the glass was shattered by a patron that was thrown out of the establishment. It is unknown if the bottle was removed from the establishment when thrown out.

At approximately 00:59 hours, Dispatch advised that MidState Medical Center had received a gunshot victim that was dropped off in a vehicle. Officer Benson #637 responded to MidState where he identified an uncooperative victim, Titus Cooper (DOB 9/20/1991). Titus was shot in

the hip area and was in stable condition. Titus was belligerent and said that he was not a "snitch" and was not going to tell officers anything.

Det. Sgt. John Wagner located fresh blood splatter inside the establishment. As you entered the establishment it was located on the left wall and ceiling. As you exited the back door to the patio area there began a trail of blood droplets which continued down the patio, down the steps. Around the corner, over a fence, and on top of the business dumpster was found a larger pool of blood. The blood trail continued around the business, on the driveway, and onto the sidewalk in front of the business where it ended. The bar owner Drew Durant informed D/Sgt. Wagner that there was a fight inside of the bar between a group of people from Middletown and Meriden that preceded the shooting. However, Drew claimed not to know any of the individuals involved but knew where both groups of individuals were from. Drew told detectives on the scene that he would forward them the video surveillance from the bar, however, as of 05/31/2022, he has still not forwarded the surveillance. During the last incident where there was a shooting outside the bar Durant told Officers that the surveillance did not record, however, it's the same system that detectives viewed on 05/30/2022 that was recording.

On 05/14/22 at approximately 01:30 hours this agency responded in front of Tequila Galore Lounge & Grill on the report of shots fired, reference Meriden case # 22-002898. It was learned that a male person had been inside the establishment. He reported having no disputes or issues while in Tequila Galore Lounge & Grill, however, while standing in front of the establishment a male person approached him, engaged in conversation, and then shot him in the hip and buttocks. The victim was also put in a vehicle and dropped off at MidState Medical Center

On March 12, 2022, at approximately 01:50 hours officers were across the street from the establishment when they heard a loud verbal disturbance. Upon approach, officers used the public address system to tell the growing crowd the business was closed and it was time to leave. Patrons went back into the business and closed the door. This disturbance required 12 officers to eventually disperse them from the business, roadway, and area.

Although no one wished to press charges, two parties sustained injuries. As the situation de-escalated and was under control, a black male was observed to be walking back toward the bar while holding his blood-covered t-shirt to his face. Medical attention was requested and during this time, officers were informed that at some point during the disturbance inside the bar he was hit in the face with a glass bottle causing him to sustain a significant laceration to his face. This male party was later identified as Darien Tompkins (DOB:04/02/88) who declined to press charges and was transported to Hartford Hospital.

The Meriden Police Department has made numerous referrals to your agency for violations other than those noted above. That a review of the incident reports will show recommendations have been made to the permittees on how to conform to state liquor laws. Additionally, the Chief of Police has met with Deja Durant, and discussed the persistent issues at Tequila Galore Lounge & Grill.

In the 6 months this establishment has been permitted we have seen persistent issues with their customers, employees, and received numerous complaints from neighbors. The level of violence

has not subsided and in fact, is occurring on a more frequent basis. Gunfire, combined with crowds of patrons, passing vehicles, and a residential/commercial mix is a serious threat to the health, safety, and welfare of everyone.

This agency respectfully requests a summary suspension of the Tequila Galore Lounge & Cafe liquor permit to allow for a complete review of all reports and complaints related to this business. If desired, we can send a link to the blood documented in the business on 05/30/22. We can also provide body camera footage for all of our responses to this establishment.

Deputy Chief J. Kelly Zita



State of Connecticut

Lookup Detail View

Name and Address

| Name | DBA | Address |
|---------------|-------------------------------|---|
| DREW M DURANT | TEQUILA GALORE LOUNGE & GRILL | 575 N COLONY ST MERIDEN, CT 06450-2287 |

Backer

| Name |
|--------------------|
| TEQUILA GALORE LLC |

Endorsements

| Entertainment | Facility | Additional Consumer Bars |
|---|----------|--------------------------|
| Acoustics (not amplified), Comedians, Disc Jockeys, Karaoke | | 0 |

Credential Information

Specific

| Credential | Credential Type | Effective Date | Expiration Date | Status | Supervisor Name | Supervisor Cred# |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| LCA.0008667 | CAFE LIQUOR | 11/23/2021 | 11/22/2022 | ACTIVE | | |

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