

Date: April 27, 2010

To: All LCLB staff
All Industry Associations
All Local Government, First Nations, and Police Agencies

Re: Liquor Serving Sizes

The purpose of this policy directive is to announce amendments to the maximum serving size rules. These changes take effect immediately.

Background

The purpose of the maximum single serving size rules is to encourage moderate consumption at all times and avoid over-serving patrons.

Concerns have been expressed that the previous serving size rules did not allow for serving a pint of draught beer and that the basis for the different serving sizes for different categories of liquor was unclear.

A standard drink in Canada contains 13.6 grams of ethyl alcohol, which is approximately equivalent to one 12 oz (340 ml) beer containing 5 per cent alcohol, one 5 oz (142 ml) glass of wine containing 12 per cent alcohol, and 1.5 oz (42.6 ml) of spirits containing 40 per cent alcohol. These revised serving sizes better reflect the alcohol content of different types of liquor by attempting to equalize the amount of alcohol which is contained in the different types of liquor.

Revised Serving Size Policy

The following are the maximum drink sizes which can be served to patrons at one time.

Distilled liquor: Drinks containing distilled liquor (spirits) must not contain more than three fluid ounces (85 ml) of distilled liquor. Drinks that two or more patrons intend to share may be served in larger containers, but the maximum of three fluid ounces per person must be maintained. Whole bottles of distilled liquor must not be served or sold. (There has been no change to the serving sizes for distilled liquor.)

Draught beer: Draught beer may be served in single servings of no more than 24 oz (680 ml) or smaller servings of multiple brands, provided the total served at one time is no more than 24 oz (680 ml). (A Canadian pint is 20 oz or 568 ml.) Pitchers or other multiple serving containers shared by two or more patrons may contain no more than 1.5 litres of draught beer.

Bottled beer: A maximum of two standard-sized or one large-sized (up to 24 oz or 680 ml) bottle of beer may be served to a single patron at one time.

Wine: Wine may be served in single servings of 10 oz (285 ml) or in smaller servings of multiple brands provided the total served at one time is no more than 10 oz (285 ml). Wine may also be served by the standard 750 ml bottle if it is to be consumed by at least 2 people and with food. Wine may also be served in non-refillable containers up to 1.5 litres or in refillable containers up to 1.5 litres (with approval for the container from the Public Health Protection Branch of the Ministry of Health) and subject to these serving size rules.

These are maximum serving sizes; licensees may continue to serve smaller servings which fit their existing glassware.

Further Information

Further information regarding liquor control and licensing in British Columbia is available on the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch website at www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/lclb. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch toll free in Canada at 1-866-209-2111 or 250-387-1254 if calling from the Victoria area.



Karen Ayers
General Manager