

Personal Importation of Alcoholic Beverages

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide clarification on the personal importation of alcoholic beverages into the state of Iowa. This bulletin replaces Educational Bulletin EB-2017-01 issued October 13, 2017.

DISCUSSION

The personal importation of alcoholic beverages into Iowa is allowed, but is limited in the amounts and uses once imported.

What types of alcoholic beverages can be personally imported?

Alcoholic liquor, wine, and beer can be personally imported by individuals of legal age. (IC §§ 123.22, 123.146, 123.171)

How much of each type of alcoholic beverage can be personally imported?

Alcoholic Liquor

- Up to 9 liters of alcoholic liquor that is personally obtained outside of the state of Iowa can be imported and be in an individual's possession per calendar month. (IC § 123.22)

Wine

- Up to 9 liters of wine per calendar month that is personally obtained outside of the state of Iowa.
- In the case of wine personally obtained outside of the United States, a quantity which does not exceed the amount allowed by federal law governing the importation of alcoholic beverages into the United States. (IC § 123.171)

Beer

- Up to 4.5 gallons of beer per calendar month that is personally obtained outside of the state of Iowa.
- In the case of beer personally obtained outside of the United States, a quantity which does not exceed the amount allowed by federal law governing the importation of alcoholic beverages into the United States. (IC § 123.146)

What are the restrictions on personally-imported alcoholic beverages?

- Alcoholic beverages that have been personally imported can only be consumed in a private home or other private accommodation. (IC §§ 123.22, 123.146, 123.171)
- Alcoholic beverages that have been personally imported cannot be brought onto a licensed premises and consumed. (IC §§ 123.22, 123.146, 123.171)
- Personally-imported alcoholic beverages cannot be resold, purchased from another individual, exchanged, bartered, dispensed, or given in consideration of purchase for any property or services. (IC §§ 123.22, 123.59, 123.146, 123.171)

Are there any exceptions for larger collections of alcoholic beverages?

Yes. Individuals of legal age desiring to import alcoholic liquor, wine, or beer in excess of the allowable amounts may apply for a waiver. Only individuals who were domiciled outside of the state of Iowa within one year of the request for a waiver are eligible to apply. Any alcoholic liquor, wine, or beer personally imported pursuant to the waiver shall be for personal consumption only in a private home or other private accommodation. (IC § 123.10(13))

VIOLATIONS

License/Permit Holders

A license/permit holder that is found to be in violation of Iowa laws or rules may be subject to criminal penalties and/or administrative sanctions, including, but not limited to, civil penalty, license/permit suspension, or license/permit revocation. (IC §§ 123.39, 123.59, 123.90, 123.91)

Non-License/Permit Holders

Violations of any of the provisions outlined in this bulletin by a non-license/permit holder may result in criminal penalties. (IC §§ 123.59, 123.90)

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions concerning this bulletin, please contact the Division's Education and Outreach Unit at education@iowaabd.com.

The Alcoholic Beverages Division was created to administer and enforce the laws of Iowa concerning beer, wine, and alcoholic liquor.

*This bulletin does not replace statutes, rules, or court decisions.
This bulletin should not be considered legal advice or a substitute for legal counsel.*