

LEGALLY SPEAKING

A PRIVILEGE THAT CATERS TO LICENSEES

Licensees looking to cater food and alcoholic beverages at a wedding, birthday party, anniversary or any private event will find the catering privilege a valuable addition to a liquor license. And the best part of adding the catering privilege is that it doesn't cost a thing!

The catering privilege is available to licensees that hold an annual class "B" or "C" liquor license. The catering privilege allows these licensees to provide and serve alcoholic liquor, wine, and beer as part of a food catering service for a private social gathering in a private place. The food and alcoholic beverages must be served to guests of the private social gathering without cost and neither the host of the event or the licensee may solicit donations in payment for the food or alcoholic beverages. A licensee catering food and alcoholic beverages must maintain a record that includes the date the catering was provided and the name and address of the host of the event.

For the event to qualify as a private social gathering, the private place must be a location that meets

all of the following criteria:

- Attendees are limited to the bona fide social host and invited guests; the general public may not have access at the time alcoholic beverages are kept, dispensed and consumed.
- Not of a commercial nature.
- Goods or services are not sold or purchased at the time alcoholic beverages are dispensed and consumed.
- Use of the location was obtained without charge or rent or any other thing of value was exchanged for its use.
- No admission fee or other kind of entrance fee, fare, ticket, donation or charge is made or required of invited guests to enter.
- Not a licensed premises.

For those licensees that don't qualify for the catering privilege there is always the possibility of transferring a license or obtaining a special event license.

Special Event Licenses

A special event license allows the license holder to sell and dispense alcoholic beverages for a shorter period of time; a 5-day license is the shortest special event license available. Licensing requirements for a 5-day license are the same as the requirements for an annual license of the same class.

Conclusion

Summer and fall are perfect times for festivities and with many alternatives, licensees may choose what licensing option best suits the occasion. To review your special event questions with a licensing specialist contact the Division at 1-866-469-2223, option 1 or 515-281-7400, option 1. 

*This article is intended to provide general information for reference only and should not be considered legal advice or a substitute for legal counsel.

YOU HAVE QUESTIONS. WE HAVE ANSWERS.

Do you have a question about Iowa laws, administrative rules, Division policies or anything else that affects you and your business? If you need clarification on an issue, chances are that others do too. Submit your questions by email to Schafer@IowaABD.com and use "legally speaking" as the subject of your email.