

Ohio to implement liquor buyback program in response to COVID-19



Todd C. Baumgartner, Kevin Butler, Kelsey M. Smith | Thursday, March 19, 2020

In an effort to curb the negative economic affects of Governor DeWine’s executive order closing Ohio restaurants and bars, the Ohio Department of Commerce has announced a one-time liquor buyback option. According to the notice sent out by the Division of Liquor Control, bars and restaurants will be allowed “to return unopened high proof liquor products purchased within the past 30 days as a way to provide economic assistance to bar and restaurant owners during the [COVID-19] pandemic.”

The notice also addresses the individuals and businesses who may have obtained a temporary permit (F2) to serve alcohol for St. Patrick’s Day or other events. The buy-back program “extends to those who may have obtained a temporary permit for an event, scheduled between March 12, 2020 and April 6, 2020, and that event is now cancelled.”

If a bar, restaurant or F2 permit holder desires to take advantage of this program, it must return the high proof liquor product to the Contract Liquor Agency where the product was purchased. The Contract Liquor Agency will then seek immediate approval from the Liquor Enterprise Service Center.

At this time, no other states have implemented similar policies to address the widespread closure of restaurants and bars throughout the country.

For questions or more information regarding this program, please contact [McDonald Hopkins' Public Law Practice Group](#).

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