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RESPONSIBLE VENDOR PROGRAM

The Tennessee Responsible Vendor Act of 2006 allows off-premise beer permit holders to voluntarily participate in training of their employees on the responsible sale of alcoholic beverages. By meeting the requirements and becoming “certified vendors,” participants receive certain beneficial treatment when faced with a first offense related to the sale of alcoholic beverages to a minor. The following information addresses the highlights of the Responsible Vendor Program. For complete information, please refer to T.C.A. § 57-5-601 *et seq.* and the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission (“TABC”) Rules regarding responsible vendors.

- ***Why should a beer permittee participate in this program?***

To reduce the possible beer board penalties if a clerk sells alcohol to a minor and it is the first offense of this kind at a vendor location. The maximum fine that a beer board can impose on a certified vendor for a first offense sale to a minor is \$1,000, and the license may not be suspended or revoked. For those choosing not to participate in the program, a beer board may assess a fine of up to \$2,500 or possibly suspend or revoke the permit, even on a first offense sale to a minor. Most importantly, participation in the program will help to reduce any potential sale of alcohol to a minor by providing employees with valuable training.

- ***How do we participate in the program?***

Beer permittees need to apply annually to the TABC with an application, a clerk list, and a yearly fee, which varies depending on the number of clerks. If less than 16 clerks are employed at the location, the fee is \$25 per year. The yearly fees increase to \$75, for 16-49 clerks, \$150 for 50-100 clerks, and \$250 for over 100 clerks. Each location is treated as a separate vendor for certification purposes.

- ***How do the clerks receive the necessary training?***

Beer permittees may establish their own in-house training that meets the TABC requirements or the clerks may attend a training offered by an outside source that has been certified by the TABC. You may contact the TABC to obtain a list of certified responsible vendor training programs.

- ***Do employees need the training before they may begin their employment with the certified responsible vendor?***

Employees may begin working. They will be given a grace period of up to 61 days after their hire date in order to get the responsible vendor training. Training requirements are specific to each vendor location.

- ***Where can a beer permittee obtain a responsible vendor application?***

Applications and clerk list forms are available at TABC locations throughout the state. To receive an application by mail, please contact:

*Responsible Vendor Department
226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 300
Nashville, TN 37243
(615) 741-1602 ext. 100*