



# Update on Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) Operating Status during COVID-19 Emergency

## What is our operating status?

Along with the rest of District government, ABRA remains operational with services available online and by mail while employees work remotely through the duration of the public health emergency.

## How does this impact what we do?

- **Licensing** – Modified service. See service enhancements, temporary privileges, and deadline extensions in next section.
- **ABC Board Hearings** – Modified. All ABC Board meetings will take place via teleconference through the duration of the public health emergency. Agendas and call-in instructions are posted at [abra.dc.gov](http://abra.dc.gov).
- **Mediations** – Modified. All mediations conducted through the duration of the public health emergency will take place via teleconference.
- **Protest Hearings** – Modified. Roll Call hearings on protests will take place virtually through the duration of the public health emergency.
- **Community Meeting Attendance** – Modified. Agency representatives may attend virtual community meetings based on availability through the duration of the public health emergency. Personnel will continue to respond to phone and email inquiries as normal.
- **Enforcement** – No changes. Compliance with ABC laws will continue to be monitored and appropriate enforcement action will be taken if a licensee violates any law.
- **Afterhours Hotline** – No changes. Investigators will continue to respond to complaints and inquiries made to the complaint hotline and email daily from 7:00 pm to 4:00 am.
- **Recruitment** – Modified service. We will continue to post new positions and accept applications. No in-person interviews will take place through the duration of the public health emergency.

## How does this impact our physical locations?

- **ABRA's Office** (2000 14th Street NW, Suite 400 South, Washington, DC 20009) is unavailable for in-person services through the duration of the public health emergency. All employees are telecommuting and are available by phone and email during normal business hours of 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.

## What else are we offering to meet your needs?

- **On-Site Consumption** – Per Mayor’s Order 2021-038, effective at 5:00 am on Monday, March 22, 2021, alcohol establishments may resume selling and serving alcohol for on-premises consumption (indoor and outdoor) between 6:00 am – 12:00 am daily. Full guidelines available at [abra.dc.gov](http://abra.dc.gov).
- **Outdoor Dining** – Establishments may continue to offer outdoor dining on existing licensed sidewalk cafes and summer gardens, and on new and expanded outdoor public and private space. Registration is required for new and expanded space. Effective May 1, 2021, patrons seated outdoors are not required to accompany the purchase of alcohol with one (1) prepared food item.
- **Capacity Maximums** – Indoor dining is limited to 25 percent of the seated number on an establishment’s Certificate of Occupancy or up to 250 people. There is no outdoor capacity maximum but physical distancing and other guidelines apply.
- **Seating** – Effective May 1, 2021, no more than ten (10) individuals may be seated at a table or a joined table, and indoor and outdoor fixed tables that accommodate larger groups than are permitted may demarcate six (6) feet between groups and allow seating at those large tables.
- **Live Entertainment** – Effective May 1, 2021, live music may accompany dining outdoors while diners remain seated and distanced from such music, provided the music is played at the restaurant, and sound levels are consistent with regulations as promulgated by ABRA. Restaurants and other licensed entities may not commission musicians for live music in parklets or on the streets near Streateries. Live music is approved for Summer Gardens, courtyard dining, and sidewalk cafes controlled by the restaurant.
- **Carry-Out and Delivery Privileges** – Alcohol may be sold for carry-out and delivery with at least one (1) prepared food item from 6:00 am to 12:00 am, daily. Registration is required. Full guidelines available at [abra.dc.gov](http://abra.dc.gov).
- **Physical Distancing** – All tables must be configured to allow for at least six (6) feet between parties. Patrons are required to wait outside at least six (6) feet apart until they are ready to be seated. Guests queuing to order, pick-up, pay or use the restroom must also be at least six (6) feet apart from one another.
- **Bar Service** – Guests may be seated at bars not being staffed or utilized by bartenders. All seated parties must be at least six (6) feet apart from one another. Guests standing at indoor or outdoor bars is prohibited.
- **Licensing** – Service enhancements have been made to allow individuals to submit licenses and make payments remotely.
  - **Applications can be emailed, mailed, or placed in the lobby drop box.**
    - Email | [abra@dc.gov](mailto:abra@dc.gov)
    - Mail and Drop Box | ABRA, 2000 14th Street NW, Suite 400 South, Washington, DC 20009
  - **E-signatures are allowed.**
  - **Self-certification.** Notarization is not required.
  - **Payment by mail or over the phone at (202) 442-4423.**
- **Medical Cannabis Registration** – Effective Thursday, July 1, 2021, all DC residents must present a valid DC medical cannabis program patient or caregiver registration to purchase up to 4 ounces of

medical cannabis within a rolling 30-day period.

- **Digital Offerings** - Applications, quick guides, and other resources are available at [abra.dc.gov](https://abra.dc.gov).

#### What precautions are we taking to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Our employees are taking precautions to keep themselves healthy and limit the spread of infections like regularly washing their hands, cleaning facilities more frequently, and reducing close contact with each other and residents. Employees have been asked to let their supervisor know immediately if they feel sick.

#### Where should you go if you have questions?

For questions about any of the services we provide and information on any future changes, please contact us at (202) 442-4423 or [abra@dc.gov](mailto:abra@dc.gov). For more information, please visit [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov).