



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission  
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**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION (“ABCC”) ADVISORY  
REGARDING THE REFILLING OF GROWLERS**

In response to several inquiries from the public and licensees, the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission provides the following guidance for those licensees interested in refilling consumers’ “growlers.”

Two types of growlers may be sold in Massachusetts: “bottle growlers” and “large glass growlers.” A growler is a “bottle growler” “when the brewer fills the container in advance of sale.”<sup>1</sup> A growler is a “large glass growler” when a “consumer uses the container to make a purchase and the brewer then fills the container.”<sup>2</sup> This Advisory only relates to large glass growlers, and not bottle growlers.

Farmer-Breweries licensed under M.G.L. c. 138, § 19C, and Pub-Breweries licensed under M.G.L. c. 138, § 19D, may refill *large glass growlers* not provided by the Farmer-Brewery or Pub-Brewery for consumers under the following conditions:

- 1) the growler is entirely blank, devoid of any labeling of another brewery;
- 2) the growler is empty of all alcoholic beverages; and
- 3) the growler is filled from a tank that is tax determined of beer made by or for the Farmer-Brewery or Pub-Brewery.<sup>3</sup>

As a reminder, all licensees must ensure that they are in compliance with the laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and that the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages take place only as authorized by applicable law.

(Issued May 24, 2017)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ttb.gov/beer/beer-faqs.shtml>.

<sup>2</sup> Id.

<sup>3</sup> Breweries must “determine” tax on beer at the time of its removal for consumption or sale and then submit the determined tax payment with the brewer’s Federal tax return. All tanks that hold beer for consumption or sale must be labeled as tax determined. See 27 CFR 25.159.