

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission
95 Fourth Street, Suite 3
Chelsea, Massachusetts 02150-2358*

Jean M. Lorizio, Esq.
Chairman

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION

July 15, 2021

**APPLE NEW ENGLAND LLC
D/B/A APPLEBEE'S NEIGHBORHOOD GRILL & BAR
990 PROVIDENCE HIGHWAY
WALPOLE, MA 02081
LICENSE#: 00025-RS-1314
VIOLATION DATE: 3/06/2020
HEARD: 12/3/2020**

After a hearing on December 3, 2020, the Commission finds Apple New England LLC d/b/a Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar violated 204 CMR 2.05 (2) Permitting an illegality on the licensed premises, to wit: M.G.L. c. 138, § 34C- Possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under twenty-one (21) years of age (3 counts). The Commission **suspends the license for a period of three (3) days to be served.**

The suspension shall commence on Monday, August 30, 2021 and terminate on Wednesday, September 1, 2021. The license will be delivered to the Local Licensing Board or its designee on Monday, August 30, 2021 at 9:00 A.M. It will be returned to the Licensee on September 2, 2021.

You are advised that pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c.138 §23, you may petition the Commission to accept an offer in compromise in lieu of suspension within twenty (20) calendar days following such notice of such suspension. If accepted, you may pay a fine using the enclosed form which must be signed by the Licensee and a Massachusetts Licensed Accountant.

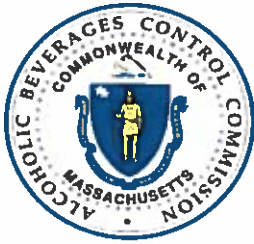
You are advised that you have the right to appeal this decision under M.G.L. c. 30A to Superior Court within thirty (30) days upon receipt of this notice.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION

Jean M. Lorizio
Chairman

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Το έγγραφο αυτό είναι σημαντικό και θα πρέπει να μεταφραστούν αμέσως.
这份文件是重要的，应立即进行翻译。

cc: Local Licensing Board
Frederick G. Mahony, Chief Investigator
Kyle E. Gill, Esq., Associate General Counsel
Christopher Temple, Investigator
Nicole Smith, Investigator
John Connell, Esq.
Administration, File



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DECISION

**APPLE NEW ENGLAND LLC D/B/A APPLEBEE'S NEIGHBORHOOD GRILL & BAR
990 PROVIDENCE HIGHWAY
WALPOLE, MA 02081
LICENSE#: 00025-RS-1314
VIOLATION DATE: 3/06/2020
HEARD: 12/3/2020**

Apple New England LLC d/b/a Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar (the "Licensee") holds an alcohol license issued pursuant to M.G.L. c. 138, § 12. The Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission ("ABCC" or "Commission") held a remote hearing via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, December 3, 2020, regarding an alleged violation of 204 CMR 2.05 (2) Permitting an Illegality on the Licensed Premises, to wit: M.G.L. Ch. 138, § 34C Possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under twenty-one years of age (3 Counts). The above-mentioned occurred on March 6, 2020 according to Investigator Temple's Report.

The following documents are in evidence:

1. Investigator Temple's Investigative Report;
2. Copy of ABCC Form 43 License Approval, 10/19/2011;
3. Copy of Fraudulent Driver's Licenses;
4. Bar Receipt, 3/6/2020.

A. Apple American Group's Manager Guide 2020.

There is one (1) audio recording of this hearing.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On Friday, March 6, 2020, at approximately 7:38 p.m., Investigators Smith and Temple ("Investigators"), conducted an investigation of the business operation of Apple New England LLC d/b/a Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar in Walpole to determine the manner in which its business was being conducted. (Testimony, Exhibit 1)
2. While inside the licensed premises, Investigators observed a group of three youthful appearing individuals seated in a booth on the left side of the entrance, in possession of

- what appeared to be alcoholic beverages. Investigators spoke with the bartender and confirmed the patrons were in possession of mixed drinks, Long Island Iced Teas. Investigators identified themselves to the patrons and asked to see proof of legal age. *Id.*
3. Underage #1, actual date of birth 6/28/2001 (age 18), was in possession of a mixed drink, a Long Island Iced Tea. He initially provided to Investigators a fraudulent Massachusetts driver's license in his name with a different birth date but eventually produced his true Massachusetts driver's license. (Testimony, Exhibits 1, 3)
 4. Underage #2, actual date of birth 6/10/2001 (age 18), was in possession of a mixed drink, a Long Island Iced Tea. He initially provided to Investigators a fraudulent Massachusetts driver's license in his name with a different birth date but eventually produced his true Massachusetts driver's license. *Id.*
 5. Underage #3, actual date of birth 4/05/2001 (age 18), was in possession of a Long Island Iced Tea mixed drink. He initially provided to Investigators a fraudulent Massachusetts driver's license in his name with a different birth date but eventually produced his true Massachusetts driver's license. *Id.*
 6. The three underage individuals informed Investigators they ordered and received their Long Island Iced Tea mixed alcoholic beverages from their server, later identified as Dimitri Rimpel. (Testimony, Exhibit 1)
 7. Investigators spoke to the general manager, Michael Boory, informed him of the incident and provided him with the fraudulent identifications. Mr. Boory confirmed that Mr. Rimpel had served the underage males. *Id.*
 8. Investigators advised Mr. Boory of the violations and advised him that a report would be filed with the Chief Investigator for further review. (Testimony, Exhibit 1)
 9. Mr. Boory attended the Commission hearing. He testified that staff undergo extensive training and are required to complete the Licensee's "Serving Alcoholic Beverages Responsibly" training annually. Mr. Boory stated he interviewed Mr. Rimpel who explained he inspected each identification, compared the information on the identification with the patrons presenting the identifications and believed he reasonably relied on the fraudulent identification presented by each patron. Mr. Rimpel has since been terminated from employment. Mr. Boory testified the Investigator laid out the three fraudulent identifications and pointed out one of the licenses had different coloring around the date of birth, which Mr. Boory agreed looked fraudulent. However, he stated he would not have been able to assess the identifications as fraudulent without the Investigator's assistance. (Testimony, Exhibit A)
 10. The Licensee has held a license under M.G.L. c. 138, § 12 since 2011 with no prior violations. (Exhibit 2, Commission Records)

DISCUSSION

Licenses to sell alcoholic beverages are a special privilege subject to public regulation and control, Connolly v. Alcoholic Beverages Control Comm'n, 334 Mass. 613, 619 (1956), for which States have especially wide latitude pursuant to the Twenty-First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Opinion of the Justices, 368 Mass. 857, 861 (1975). The procedure for the issuance of licenses and required conduct of licensees who sell alcoholic beverages is set out in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 138.

Chapter 138 gives the Commission the authority to grant, revoke and suspend licenses. Chapter 138 was "enacted ... to serve the public need and ... to protect the common good." M.G.L. c. 138, § 23. "[T]he purpose of discipline is not retribution, but the protection of the public." Arthurs v. Bd. of Registration in Medicine, 383 Mass. 299, 317 (1981). The Commission is given "comprehensive powers of supervision over licensees." Connolly, 334 Mass. at 617.

The Licensee is charged with a violation of 204 CMR 2.05 (2) - Permitting an illegality on the licensed premises, to wit: Chapter 138, § 34C- Possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under twenty-one (21) years of age. A Commission regulation promulgated at 204 CMR 2.05(2) provides in pertinent part, that "[n]o licensee for the sale of alcoholic beverages shall permit any disorder, disturbance or illegality of any kind to take place in or on the licensed premises. The licensee shall be responsible therefore, whether present or not." The law is well-settled that,

under the regulation [204 C.M.R. 2.05(2)], the responsibility of the licensee is to exercise sufficiently close supervision so that there is compliance with the law on the premises. A vendor who sells alcohol is "bound at his own peril to keep within the condition of his license." Commonwealth v. Gould, 158 Mass. 499, 507 (1893); Burlington Package Liquors, Inc. v. Alcoholic Beverages Control Comm'n, 11 Mass. App. Ct. 785, 788 (1981). It is, thus, quite possible for a licensee to offend the regulatory scheme without scienter.

Rico's of the Berkshires, Inc. v. Alcoholic Beverages Control Comm'n, 19 Mass. App. Ct. 1026, 1027 (1985). A licensee is responsible for illegalities that occur on the licensed premises. See id.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 138, § 34C states, in pertinent part, that: "Whoever, being under twenty-one years of age and not accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, knowingly possesses any alcohol or alcoholic beverages, shall be punished." M.G.L. c. 138, § 34C. Direct evidence was presented through the testimony of Investigator Temple as to three individuals under the age of 21 found to be in possession of alcoholic beverages on the licensed premise. The Licensee argued the employee acted reasonably in that he had examined and reasonably relied on the identifications the underage patrons presented.

A Massachusetts driver's license which purports to show that a patron is 21 years of age or older is not an affirmative defense available for the statutory violation of permitting an illegality of a minor in possession of alcoholic beverages pursuant to Section 34C. Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 138, § 34B offers protection from license suspension or revocation or criminal penalties to license holders who reasonably rely on one of four (4) pieces of identification specified in the statute, including a valid Massachusetts driver's license, Massachusetts liquor identification card, Massachusetts identification card, a United States passport, or a passport issued by the government

– recognized by the United States – of a foreign country, a passport card for a U.S. passport, or a valid U.S. military identification card. See M.G.L. c. 138, § 34B. Section 34B refers only to the activities of delivery and sale, and it omits any reference to the act of possession. See id. Consequently, Section 34B offers no relief from liability for allowing possession of alcoholic beverages in violation of Section 34C.

The Commission is persuaded by the evidence that the three patrons were younger than 21 years of age and were in possession of alcoholic beverages in the licensed premises. The Commission finds that the Licensee committed a violation of 204 CMR 2.05 (2) - Permitting an illegality on the licensed premise, to wit: M.G.L. c. 138, § 34C- Possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under 21 years of age (3 counts).

CONCLUSION

Based on the evidence, the Commission finds the Licensee violated 204 CMR 2.05 (2) Permitting an Illegality on the Licensed Premises, to wit: M.G.L. Ch. 138, § 34C Possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under twenty-one years of age (3 Counts). Therefore, the Commission **suspends the license for a period of 3 days to be served.**

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION

Crystal Matthews, Commissioner Cystal Matthews

Deborah A. Baglio, Commissioner Deborah A. Baglio

Jean M. Lorizio, Chairman Jean M. Lorizio

Dated: July 15, 2021

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