



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

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Chairman

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION ADVISORY REGARDING  
THE OPENING OF LARGE CAPACITY VENUES**

On March 18, 2021, Governor Charlie Baker confirmed that the state will move into Phase 4, Step 1, of its reopening plan on March 22, 2021. Part of this phase and step includes the reopening of large capacity venues. An explanation of how these venues may reopen can be found [HERE](#).

For all licensees for on-premises alcohol consumption **with a capacity under 5,000 patrons**, there are no changes to their current required operating procedures, other than with regards to private events. Licensees may host private events (i.e. wedding, christening, bar mitzvah) of up to 100 people indoors and up to 150 people outdoors. Licensees must follow the latest Indoor and Outdoor Event Rules.

Beginning March 22, 2021, all “large capacity venues,” i.e. those licensees **with a capacity of 5,000 or more patrons** (indoor and outdoor stadiums, arenas, ballparks, or similar facilities used for spectator sports, entertainment, or similar performances), may commence operations and the sale of alcohol with the following requirements:

- 1) the licensee must file a facility-specific COVID-19 plan with the Department of Public Health;
- 2) the licensee may operate at up to 12% of permitted capacity as specified on the certificate of occupancy. Occupancy counts include all spectators and attendees but exclude workers and staff employed by the venue;
- 3) the licensee is responsible for complying with sector-specific rules applicable to all activities conducted at the facility, including musical performances;<sup>1</sup>
- 4) for food service:
  - a. any counter service or passed or in-seat service to spectators must follow relevant provisions of Indoor and Outdoor Events rules, and
  - b. seated table service must follow Restaurant rules;

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<sup>1</sup> All sector-specific rules, including for all types of licensees for on-premises alcohol consumption, including restaurants, indoor/outdoor events, and large capacity venues, can be found [HERE](#).

- 5) for alcohol service:
  - a. counter service or passed or in-seat service to spectators must follow relevant provisions of Indoor and Outdoor Events rules (drink service may be provided by servers and alcoholic beverages do not have to be accompanied by food orders), and
  - b. seated table service must follow Restaurant rules; and
- 6) private events must follow the latest Indoor and Outdoor Event rules.

Any question regards these guidelines should be directed by phone to 2-1-1 or 1-877-211-MASS (6277), or online [HERE](#).

As always, all licensees must ensure that they comply with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and that sales of alcoholic beverages take place only as authorized by federal, state, and local law. Any additional questions should be directed to the ABCC Executive Director Ralph Sacramone at [rsacramone@tre.state.ma.us](mailto:rsacramone@tre.state.ma.us) or (617) 727-3040 x 731.

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