

ALCOHOL AWARENESS PROGRAM

Employee Hand Out

This program was designed to inform you and help you build skills in the responsible service of alcohol. Responsible service is viewed in the eyes of the law as a reasonable effort on the part of the company and the server to avoid intoxicating guests and letting them drive an automobile.

Possible penalties for not serving alcohol responsibly are:

1. Fines of up to \$1,000 for the server, manager on duty and/or company.
2. Liquor license suspension or revocation and difficulty receiving new licenses for future restaurants.
3. Loss of our jobs; no license = no service = no sales = no jobs.
4. Termination of an employee knowingly serving a minor.
5. Possible criminal penalties.
6. Bad publicity.
7. Lawsuits under third party liability or common law.

In order to protect our guests, our employees, and our community, the objectives of this program are:

- a. To become aware of our responsibilities under the law and as a corporate citizen in the service of alcohol.
- b. To understand some of the physiological facts about alcohol and the body.
- c. To be able to recognize levels of intoxication.
- d. To know what effective intervention procedures to use in discouraging a guest from driving impaired.

It is also important for you to realize that we are in the business of selling alcohol and will continue to do so in a responsible, friendly, hospitable atmosphere within the limits of the law.

The following information is to help you understand how to be a responsible server of alcohol and how to exercise "reasonable efforts" in the service of alcohol, thus reducing dramatically the risk of penalty.

THE LAW

You must know the Local, State and Federal laws that apply to your restaurant, specifically:

1. What is the local legal drinking age? _____
2. What are the local legal serving hours? _____
3. What is adequate identification?
4. What is "third party liability (Dramshop laws) and common law?
5. What is the legal intoxication level?

Let's review each item:

The Legal Drinking Age in your state is 21 and over

The Legal Serving Hours varies from state to state. You must know the hours when no alcoholic beverages can be served or consumed at the restaurants. If in doubt ask your manager.

Adequate Identification is a valid picture driver's license or military card. All other forms of I.D. must be approved by management.

- a. You must card anyone who appears to be under 25 years of age.
- b. You must examine all the information on the license; birth date, photograph, height, weight, sex, race, etc.
- c. You must card the person who pays for and consumes the alcohol.

If a guest is offended by your refusal to serve because of improper identification, call a manager to the table immediately to talk with the guest and assure them that we want them to enjoy their stay at our restaurant and we will be happy to serve them alcoholic beverages with adequate identification on their next visit.

Third Party Liability Law basically states that if a guest consumes too much alcohol in our restaurant and has an accident, or causes other damages, as a result, the Company, the manager on duty, AND the individual serving the guest are ALL responsible.

It is crucial that you not serve a guest who is obviously intoxicated. Watch for signs of intoxication such as : slurred speech, stumbling, being overly loud or friendly, spilling drinks, difficulty walking, etc.

If a guest appears intoxicated, (even if he has entered the restaurant intoxicated) we all must politely discourage him/her from drinking any more alcohol or trying to drive. Let your manager know immediately.

The Legal Intoxication Level is measured by BAC (Blood Alcohol Content). In most states people are considered legally intoxicated at approximately 0.06 - 0.10 BAC. To reach 0.10 BAC level, a person weighing 140 pounds would have to drink two or three drinks within one hour - more if he/she was drinking on a full stomach. (A "drink" in this context is considered to be 12 ounces of beer, 4 oz. of wine or 1 oz. of 100-proof spirits.)

NOTE: Remember that our drinks usually contain more liquor than the standard 4 oz. of wine or 1 oz. of 100 proof. Therefore, a person would get legally intoxicated with less drinks.

As stated earlier, you will, at the end of the program, be able to recognize levels of intoxication and take appropriate intervention measures.

When servers and the restaurant practice consistent "reasonable effort" to avoid irresponsible service of alcohol, judgments against servers and restaurants are very difficult to prove and most importantly, our guests get home safely and can come back to see us again.

WHAT IS ALCOHOL?

Knowing how alcohol effects the human body is the first step in alcohol awareness.

After being consumed, alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream through the stomach walls and the small intestine. The bloodstream then transports the alcohol to all parts of the body. Because the brain receives such a rich supply of blood, it is the organ most obviously affected by alcohol, as evidenced in the change of drinker's behavior. Although alcohol may appear to be a stimulant, it is actually a depressant.

The blood also transports alcohol to the liver, where it is processed by the method of oxidation. Alcohol is continually recycled through the body as the liver oxidizes the alcohol at the rate of about 1 oz. per hour for the average person. In the kidneys the end products of the oxidation process are filtered and excreted.

The important point in this process is the absorption rate, the amount of time it takes for alcohol to be absorbed into the bloodstream, and hence, transported to other body organs such as the brain.

You should also understand that the percentage of alcohol varies in different beverages such as beer (4% per oz.), wine (9-12% per oz.) and hard liquor (40-50% per oz. or 80 to 100 proof). However, a 12 oz. can of beer, a 4 oz. glass of wine, or a mixed drink containing 1 oz. of 100 proof liquor, all include the same amount of alcohol and will have the same effect on the typical drinker's brain and body if drunk slowly.

Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) level is used to measure the percentage of alcohol in the blood. Higher BAC levels depress brain activity, possibly impairing balance, memory and muscular coordination. Still greater BAC levels can cause severely affected judgment, dulling sensory perceptions and loss of control and even death. The following are some factors that affects the body's tolerance of alcohol intake:

- a. A 1 oz. alcoholic drink, can of beer, or glass of wine is absorbed in approximately one hour if sipped slowly.
- b. The absorption rate is much slower if drinks are taken after eating a meal than if taken on an empty stomach.
- c. Gulping drinks will cause instantaneous intoxicating effects.
- d. Many common and legal drugs can speed up the effects of alcohol or cause a serious reaction.

- e. Drinks diluted with water help to decrease the absorption rate but drinks mixed with carbonated beverages increase the rate of absorption.
- f. Because alcohol is quickly distributed throughout the circulatory system, the heavier person will have smaller concentration of alcohol in the bloodstream than the lighter person.
- g. Alcohol has less of an effect on a person who is relaxed and sitting than one who is standing and drinking.
- h. Alcohol may have a stronger-than-usual effect on persons who are emotionally upset or tired. For example, if a depressed person begins drinking, that person will probably feel even more depressed since alcohol is a "depressant".
- i. Expectations will also have an influence on drunkenness; if someone is "in the mood" to become drunk, his/her chances are heightened.

NOTHING BUT TIME WILL BURN OFF ALCOHOL IN THE BODY. Therefore, you should always try to "buy" time by suggesting food, non-alcoholic drinks or slow down service.

The following are some special drinking situations of which you should be aware:

- a. Competitive drinkers plan to drink the others "under the table". Watch for guests who boast of their drinking ability. They usually speed up or gulp their drinks.
- b. Solitary drinkers are difficult because their behavior is harder to observe and consequently, their drinking levels are harder to identify. One way to learn, is by taking some extra time and talk to them.
- c. Inexperienced and younger drinkers could overreact to the unfamiliar effects of alcohol. Suggest drinks with fruit juice or with water and sell appetizers or food, if possible.

When handling special drinking situations, always be polite and tactful and try to be sympathetic to the guests feelings; view the situation from the guest's point of view as well as from your own.

RECOGNIZING DRINKING LEVELS

Recognizing the intoxicated guest is difficult, but it is a skill every restaurant employee should try to acquire. Monitoring the amount a guest drinks does not address the question of how much the person drank before arriving at the restaurant, or other factors such as food intake, medication, mood, etc. Therefore, you need to recognize the drinking levels of your guests and thus identify those who are reaching a drinking level that may make driving a risk.

You should begin by learning the behavioral signals that indicate a guest's drinking level. So that you can better relate these behavioral signals to driving, you can classify them into the green, yellow, and red coding of traffic signals. Green is the safe first level; yellow, the flashing warning; and red, the dangerous level at which driving is a risk.

GREEN This level of drinking is reached approximately after one drink. Most drinkers feel relaxed, comfortable, talkative, and happy. They are usually sociable and behave as they would if they were not drinking.

YELLOW This level is where the first sizable changes begin to occur. Though specific behaviors of individual drinkers may vary, the progression of behaviors is the same. This is because alcohol effects the body progressively.

First alcohol relaxes inhibitions, then it impairs judgment. Behaviors that exhibit relaxed inhibitions and/or impaired judgment may signal a yellow drinking level. These drinkers act with less restraint, possibly becoming overly talkative or overly friendly. Some may become so relaxed that they get giddy. On the other hand, they may start to argue or bait others and increase their use of foul language. Other signals of impaired judgment are increased consumption rate, drinking other people's drinks, and buying rounds for strangers.

Alcohol effects a person's judgment, including judgments regarding personal abilities such as driving. Therefore, a yellow level should be labeled "caution", since driving ability may be impaired.

RED After affecting inhibitions and judgment, alcohol progresses to slow down reaction time and reduce motor coordination. At this level driving is a definite risk.

Drinkers may look glassy-eyed. They may lose their train of thought and/or make irrational statements. Their clumsy actions may cause them to spill a drink or drop money. Other signs of reduced motor coordination are inability to sit up straight, light a cigarette or perform other simple motor tasks that normally could be performed.

In summary, alcohol affects people's behavior progressively - inhibitions first, then judgment, then reactions, and finally coordination. These behavioral signals can be correlated to the amount of alcohol in the blood. As the percentage of Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) increases, a drinker's behavior progresses from a green drinking level to a red drinking level. The following summarizes stages of behavior at each level:

GREEN LEVEL

(no noticeable behavior change)

Guest:

- . is talkative
- . is relaxed
- . is comfortable and happy

YELLOW LEVEL

(relaxed inhibitions and impaired judgment)

Guest:

- . becomes louder or more talkative
- . becomes more quiet
- . behaves in an overly friendly way or argumentative
- . increases use of foul language
- . increases consumption rate/buying rounds

RED LEVEL

(loss of motor coordination)

Guest:

- . looks glass-eyed and speaks with a slurr
- . spills drinks
- . is unable to sit up straight
- . drops money/unable to pick up change
- . annoys or argues with other guests
- . asks for doubles
- . falls or stumbles

Making an accurate judgment is difficult because most people become legally intoxicated (BAC level of 0.08 - 0.10) long before they show the stereotypic signs of drunkenness. Therefore, the signs describe above are only intended as a guide in differentiating the various stages of intoxication. You should be conservative in interpreting the guest's level of intoxication, rather than waiting until the problem becomes severe.

INTERVENTION/HANDLING DRINKING LEVELS

To determine the drinking levels of your guests, you should look for drinking patterns and behavior. You can also determine a guest's mental alertness by engaging in a conversation. Ask for details about a recent news or sports event, or ask for directions to a large town or city in the area. You need to know what to do if you identify a guest approaching a yellow or red drinking level. The following are some intervention techniques that can be used to maintain service and slow absorption rate:

- . Remove all glasses before serving another round, thereby adding another step to service.
- . Bring menus to the table and/or casually suggest that the guest order something to eat.
- . Serve one drink at a time to a guest.
- . Mention that "fresh" coffee has just been made. Coffee does not speed up the sobering process, but simply buys time for the process to occur.
- . Serve water to the table.
- . Know the recipes of the drinks we serve in order to suggest drinks with a lower absorption rate.

Notify a manager immediately if you suspect that a guest is at or approaching the RED level of intoxication. Only a manager can cut off service to a guest.

You should not wait until a guest is "reeling" into the red light level before notifying a manager.

GETTING YOUR GUESTS HOME SAFELY

Each year 25,000 deaths, 700,000 injuries, and productivity losses totaling 50 billion are related to drunk driving. In fact, alcohol related car accidents is the number one killer of Americans under the age of 40. You, as a server of alcoholic beverages, must do what you can to help prevent such tragic statistics from increasing.

Despite your efforts to serve alcohol responsibly, a guest may reach a red drinking level. Your concern for the guest does not end with your good efforts. You must try to keep such guests from driving. Although we believe that the guests are always right, this is one case where they are NOT right and if unrestrained, may be DEAD wrong.

When a red drinking level guest is identified, a manager should be notified. The following are some techniques that can be used to prevent a red drinking level guest from driving home:

1. Asking questions is the best way to find out how the guest is planning to get home. This should be done tactfully, by asking him/her or the companion quietly and without passing judgment.
2. Tactfully suggest safe alternatives:
 - a. Offer to call someone to come and pick them up.
 - b. Offer to call a taxi.
 - c. Ask if the companion could drive if he or she is not at the same level.

Remember to be polite and tactful when handling these situations to avoid any arguments or embarrassment.