

Applying for a Special Alcohol License

Pursuant to MA General Law Chapter 138 Section 14, individuals or organizations who do not have an alcohol license must submit a One-Day Special Alcohol License application to the Somerville Licensing Commission prior to serving alcohol to the public.

EVENTS REQUIRING A SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSE:

- Events in which alcohol is served inside a facility that does not have an alcohol license.
- Events in which alcohol is served outside (restaurants with licensed outdoor patios excepted).

The following events do not require a Special Alcohol license:

- Events in which alcohol is not served.
- Events in which alcohol is served on an outdoor patio that is licensed for alcohol service.
- Events at which alcohol is served by an ABCC-licensed “12C Caterer.” You can find 12C caterers using the instructions at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/how-to-do-a-search-for-current-licensees/download>. If you don’t have time to apply for a Special Alcohol license, a 12C Caterer can be a useful alternative.

TIMELINE AND TERM:

- A complete Special Alcohol license application must be submitted at least three (3) weeks before the next Licensing Commission meeting. The Licensing Commission meeting schedule and corresponding due dates can be found here: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/licensing-commission>.
- The city will not begin processing an application until all questions are answered and all required documents are uploaded.
- A Special Alcohol License is only valid for the dates and times specified on the issued license certificate.

APPLICATION CONDITIONS:

- You must apply online on the city’s website.
- The license is valid only at the approved location and on the approved date(s) and time(s)., and rain date(s). Be sure to include any necessary rain date(s) in your application.
- The license cannot be modified; any changes require the submission of a new application.
- The license is not transferable.
- Incorporated organizations may apply for a Special Alcohol license to serve wine and malt beverages only.
- Nonprofit organizations may apply for a Special Alcohol license to serve wine and malt beverages, or a license to serve all forms of alcohol.
- Individuals may apply for a Special Alcohol license to serve wine and malt beverages; individuals may apply for a license to serve all forms of alcohol only if their event has a defined group of invited guests, is not advertised to the public, and will not generate a profit.

- If you would like to serve alcohol at a Public Event, you **must also** submit a Public Event License application: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/somervillema-live/s3fs-public/public-event-license-application.pdf>.

FEES:

- The fee for a Special Alcohol license is \$100 per day, payable when the license is approved.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

The city requires that you upload the following documents as part of your application:

- If some or all of your event is on private property, evidence that you are authorized to use that property, such as a lease or a letter of support from the owner of the property.
- If you are a corporation or nonprofit organization applying for a Special Alcohol License, a Workers' Compensation (WC) Insurance Affidavit (downloadable when you apply) or proof of WC Insurance.
- If you are a nonprofit organization applying for a Special Alcohol License, proof of your tax-exempt status.

HOW TO APPLY:

Go to <http://www.somervillema.gov/citizenserve>.

- Click the [citizenserve](#) logo.
- Click "MY ACCOUNT."
- Log in, or, if this is your first online application, click "REGISTER NOW" to create an account.
- Scroll down and click "APPLY FOR A LICENSE."
- At Application Type, select "SPECIAL ALCOHOL LICENSE."
- At Business Name, enter the name of your group and/or event.
- At "IS THIS APPLICATION FOR A NEW OR EXISTING BUSINESS LOCATION?":
 - Select "A NEW BUSINESS LOCATION" if this is your first application. Then enter your home or business address and click on "FIND ADDRESS." If Citizenserve does not identify your address, select "USE THIS ADDRESS." *OR*
 - Select "AN ADDITIONAL LICENSE FOR AN EXISTING BUSINESS" if you've already been licensed before. At "License #" select a license you've received before.
- Answer the remaining questions and upload the required documents.
- Review the terms and conditions. Don't proceed until you are ready to accept all of the terms and conditions.
- Note that once you submit the form, you may not be able to re-open it to edit it. If you're not ready to submit the form, click "SAVE FOR LATER," so you can finish it later.
- When you are ready to submit your application, click "SUBMIT."

LICENSE CONDITIONS:

Conditions for All Licenses

- Any fees charged by the city are your responsibility and must be paid in full prior to the event.
- This license is valid only for the listed location and time, and is subject to all of the license's terms, conditions, and limitations, as well as the Somerville Code of Ordinances, Federal and State law, City Council Rules, Licensing Commission Rules, and ABCC Regulations. Failure to adhere to all conditions may result in revocation of the license and cancellation of the event.
- You and your officers, employees, agents, and representatives hereby agree to release, discharge, indemnify and hold harmless, the City of Somerville and its officers, employees, agents and servants from all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation associated with this event or your conduct arising from the event, for any damages to the city's personal and real property resulting from the use, and any expenses the city incurs in restoring the property to its condition prior to the use.
- This license is subject to additional conditions and/or modifications whenever city officials determine that such conditions and/or modifications are required to advance public purposes.
- If you find more attendees signing up for or attending your event than you indicated on the application, notify the Police Department immediately.
- Submission of your application represents your acceptance of these conditions.

Alcohol

- You must purchase any alcohol that is sold or consumed at the event from a supplier that is licensed by the Mass. ABCC (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/authorized-sources-of-alcohol-for-1-day-licenses/download>).
- EXCEPTION: Registered nonprofit organizations (not individuals) are permitted to use donated alcohol.
- If you are not a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, you cannot use or serve donated alcohol.
- The designated Manager must be on-site at all times.

QUESTIONS?

- If you have questions about your Special Alcohol application, contact licensing@somervillema.gov.