

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2021 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Regulated Industries

CS/SB 148 — Beverage Law

by Regulated Industries Committee and Senator Bradley

The bill permits certain public food service establishments (restaurants) with an alcoholic beverage vendor license to sell and deliver for off-premises consumption alcoholic beverage drinks prepared and sealed by the vendor under certain conditions. Alcoholic beverages sold for off-premises consumption in containers sealed by the vendor must be accompanied by the sale of food within the same order.

The bill applies to restaurants with a “quota alcoholic beverage” license, i.e., vendors licensed to sell beer, wine and liquor for on-premises consumption and “special restaurant” alcoholic beverage licensees, known as “SRX licensees.”

Current law permits SRX licensees to sell beer, wine and liquor for on-premises consumption with certain conditions, including the requirements that the business derive at least 51 percent of gross food and beverage revenue from the sale of food and nonalcoholic beverages, and may not sell alcoholic beverages after the hours of serving or consumption of food have elapsed. Under current law, an SRX licensee may not sell manufacturer-sealed containers of beer, wine, or liquor for off-premises consumption. The bill permits an SRX licensee to sell manufacturer-sealed containers of beer and wine for off-premises consumption. The bill also permits an SRX licensee to sell and deliver alcoholic beverage drinks in containers sealed by the licensee. However, the bill prohibits an SRX licensee from selling bottles of distilled spirits for off-premises consumption.

Current law permits a restaurant with a consumption on-premises quota license (quota licensee) to sell manufacturer-sealed containers of beer, wine, and liquor for off-premises consumption. Under the bill, a quota licensee may sell containers of alcoholic beverages sealed by the licensee or its employees only if: the quota licensee is also licensed as a public food service establishment under ch. 509, F.S., the sale or delivery of the sealed containers is accompanied by the sale of food within the same order, the charge for the sale of food and nonalcoholic beverages is at least 40 percent of the total charge for the order, and the sale or delivery of the sealed containers does not occur after food preparation has stopped for the day or midnight, whichever is earlier. The percentage of food sales requirement does not apply to sales by SRX licensees.

The bill requires alcoholic beverage drinks prepared by the licensee to be sealed by the licensee with an unbroken seal that prevents the beverage from being consumed, and placed in a bag or other container secured in such a manner that it is visibly apparent if the container has been opened or tampered with. A dated receipt of the beverage and meal must be provided and attached to the container. Alcoholic beverages prepared and sealed by the licensee that are delivered or transported by motor vehicle must be placed in a locked compartment, locked trunk, or other area behind the last upright seat of the motor vehicle.

Additionally, the bill provides that allowing a person under 21 years of age to deliver an alcoholic beverage on behalf of an alcoholic beverage vendor is a violation of the prohibition against selling, giving, or serving alcoholic beverages to a person under 21 years of age. It also requires an alcoholic beverage vendor or an agent or employee of a vendor to verify that the person making a delivery of an alcoholic beverage is at least 21 years of age.

The bill also amends s. 564.09, F.S., which under current law permits a restaurant patron to take home a partially consumed bottle of wine under certain conditions if the restaurant patron purchases and consumes a full course meal consisting of an entrée, salad or vegetable, beverage, and bread. The amendment repeals the requirement that the meal purchased and consumed by the patron be a full course meal consisting of an entrée, salad or vegetable, beverage, and bread.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2021.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 111-1