

University Of Wisconsin-Madison Specific Alcohol Beverage Regulations Frequently Asked Questions

In order to assist University employees and students in understanding the [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#), the following frequently asked questions have been developed. These are designed only to provide general guidance. Individuals with additional questions should contact the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA).

1. How do I know if my event is considered a "University event"?

Determining whether an event is a "University event" to which the [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#) apply requires consideration of several factors. Any of the following factors is generally considered sufficient to make an event a "University event":

- it takes place on University lands; or
- it is partially or completely paid for by University funds or uses University resources including student segregated fees or UW Foundation funds; or
- it is university-sponsored such as using the University logo or name, or a logo or name associated with the University, for promotion [e.g., "Bucky Badger's Beer Bash" or "Department of Physics Symposium"]; or
- attendance is required or encouraged as a condition of employment or study.

A higher standard should be applied when undergraduate students will be in attendance at an event. When in doubt, assume your event is a "University event" and comply with the [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#) or seek clarification from OLA (if you are an employee) or the Division of Student Life (if you are a student.) Specific [scenarios](#) have been developed to assist you in thinking about these issues.

2. What if my University event is held off campus?

[UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#) apply to all University events regardless of location including those held outside of the United States.

3. I am not requesting reimbursement for my event expenses, is my event still a "university event"?

For purposes of the University alcohol policy, the definition referenced in question 1 is applicable. Reimbursement of expenses for an event is **not necessary** for the university alcohol policy to apply. While any event where expenses are reimbursed is a university event, many events at which expenses cannot be reimbursed are also considered university events for purposes of the university alcohol policy.

4. At what University events can alcohol be served?

Alcohol beverages can be served at events when in compliance with the [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#). Event planners are encouraged to consider carefully the decision to serve alcohol. While guests often simply expect that alcohol beverages will be served, alcohol can change the character and nature of an event. Alcohol should be

considered an amenity and should not be served during business hours. Many times an event can better support the University mission and values when alcohol beverages are not served. Alcohol beverages **should only be served at events when more than 2/3 of the anticipated attendees are expected to be of or above the minimum legal drinking age**. In general, this means that alcohol beverages should not be served at events primarily attended by undergraduate students.

5. What if my event is catered by a campus unit such as the Wisconsin Union or the Division of University Housing?

If the event is catered, event staff will work with you to ensure compliance with [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#). When planning an event on campus, you are encouraged to work with one of these professional caterers to improve compliance and reduce your risk of unplanned consequences.

6. Can I buy my own alcohol and serve it at my event to save money?

In many circumstances, units can procure and serve their own alcohol beverages if they obtain an [Alcohol Beverage Service Permit](#). A responsible employee(s) who has completed the required campus training must sign the permit, be present at the event, and be responsible for the alcohol service, in compliance with the requirements listed here [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#). Responsible employees may not consume alcohol. One responsible employee must be present for the first 50 anticipated guests. For events over 50 attendees, one additional responsible employee per additional 25 attendees is required. Events are generally limited to 150 attendees. The permit must be approved by both an authorized University official, in most cases the area Dean or Director, and by the facility. The [Alcohol Beverage Permit Checklist](#) has been developed to assist units in planning such events.

7. What if my event is held at an off-campus location and alcohol beverages are served by a caterer or a restaurant?

The licensed restaurant and/or professional caterer should follow procedures to ensure responsible service and prevent consumption by persons below the minimum legal drinking age. You do not need an alcohol beverage service permit, but are expected to comply with all other applicable UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations.

8. My unit hosts a weekly event, do I need a separate permit for each event?

An alcohol beverage service permit is required for each separate event. The permit must be specific to the date, time, and location of the event and submitted by the responsible employee(s) who will be present and responsible for the event. Because the responsible employee and other details may change over the course of several months, unique permits are required.

9. Can student groups serve alcohol?

Alcohol beverages should not be served at an event that is likely to be attended primarily by undergraduates. If more than 2/3 of the anticipated attendees are expected to be of or above the minimum legal drinking age, alcohol beverages may be served if the [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#) and the [Student Organization Code of Conduct](#) are complied with. Student segregated fees may not be used to purchase alcohol beverages.

10. What are the consequences of violating the campus alcohol policy?

Employees that violate [UW-Madison Alcohol Beverage Regulations](#) may be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, when an employee knowingly violates campus policies they may be considered acting outside of the scope of their employment and be held personally responsible for any consequences related to alcohol beverage consumption. Registered student organizations that violate policies may be subject to disciplinary actions such as suspension of their registration status. Students who violate the policy may be subject to disciplinary actions.

11. Can I collect money from attendees to fund alcohol beverages?

Alcohol beverage sales are only permitted by campus caterers and other licensed establishments. Collection of money by other groups and individuals, a “cup” fee or door charge, is illegal. Events serving alcohol beverages with an Alcohol Beverage Service Permit may not charge attendees.

12. Who can I contact if I have questions about serving alcohol beverages?

Employees can contact their department or divisional administrator or the Office of Legal Affairs (608-263-7400). Students may contact the Division of Student Life (608-263-5700 or dean@studentlife.wisc.edu).

13. Our event will be held at a restaurant. Do we need to display the responsible beverage sign?

The responsible beverage does not need to be displayed in a licensed establishment. When hosting an event with an on-campus caterer, the caterer is responsible for displaying the sign. Event organizers must display the sign for all other events.