
Information for Liquor Licensees

Changes to the *Liquor Licensing Regulations & Ferment-on-Premises Regulations*

May 28, 2026

Licensees should be aware that amendments to the *Liquor Licensing Regulations* and *Ferment-On-Premises Regulations* take effect on **June 1, 2026**. This information sheet provides an overview of the changes.

A copy of the amendments can be found at: <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/2026-128.pdf> and <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/2026-129.pdf>.

Please note, if there is an inconsistency between this information sheet and the *Regulations*, the *Regulations* will prevail.

Questions about the changes can be directed to your local compliance officer or to licensing staff at 902-424-6160 (toll-free: 1-877-565-0556).

1. Security Employee Requirements

Licensees Affected: All Permanent Licensees

The *Liquor Licensing Regulations* have been amended to include requirements for in-house security employees (i.e. bouncers, door staff, etc.).

It is the responsibility of the permanent licensee to ensure all in-house security employees meet the following requirements:

- They have completed security and responsible alcohol service training programs approved by AGFT;
- They wear clothing (e.g., hat, shirt) that clearly identifies them as a security employee of the licensee while performing their duties;
- They are able to perform their duties of security in a way that will not compromise public safety; and
- They have provided results of a criminal record check showing a clean criminal record.

A clean criminal record means the individual has not been charged or convicted of any of the following:

- An offence under the *Criminal Code* (Canada)
- An offence under the *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act* (Canada).

PLEASE NOTE: An individual convicted of one or more offences who has received a pardon or a record suspension for each offence would also be considered to have a clean record.

The changes also allow AGFT to:

- **Waive the requirement for a clean criminal record** if, in the opinion of AGFT, the offences listed will not affect the security employee's performance of their duties or compromise public safety.
- **Prohibit a permanent licensee from employing a person as a security employee**, if in the opinion of AGFT, the person has engaged in conduct or behaviour that will likely affect their ability to perform the duties of a security employee or compromise public safety.

2. Infused Alcohol

Licensee Affected: All Permanent Liquor Licensees

In-house infusion of alcohol is now permitted.

The *Regulations* define an infusion as ingredients being added to the liquor, such as spices, herbs, fruit, vegetables, candy, flavouring agents, or other substances for human consumption.

To sell liquor that has been infused in-house, the licensee must ensure it meets the following requirements:

- The infusion does not cause additional fermentation resulting in an increase in the amount of alcohol in the drink;
- The drink's ingredients, including the infusion, are identified on the drink menu or price list;
- Cannabis is not used in the infusion;
- Infusions involving perishable ingredients such as fruit, juices or other consumable food items are stored in a manner consistent with provincial and municipal health and safety standards;
- The infusion occurs at the licensed premises;
- Each bottle, package, or container used for infusing liquor is clearly labelled with all the following information:
 - The date the infusion was prepared or the date the infusion agent was placed in the container;
 - The type, brand, and quantity of liquor used;
 - The non-liquor ingredients used;
 - The name of the person who prepared the liquor for infusing.

3. Minor Entertainers

Licensees affected: Beverage Room, Lounge, Class A Cabaret

Licensees are no longer required to apply to AGFT for approval of an underage performer in their premises.

For individuals under 19 years of age to be able to enter the licensed premises, all of the following conditions must be met:

- The person is employed or otherwise authorized by the licensee of the premises to provide entertainment on the premises;
- The person's presence on the licensed premises does not violate any order of a competent authority or any terms and conditions of the licensee's license;
- The person is accompanied, at all times, by 1 of the following persons who will be responsible for them:
 - Their parent,
 - Their legal guardian,
 - A person over 19 years of age who is designated in writing by their parent or legal guardian.

Licensees must also keep records about each person under 19 years of age who provides entertainment in the licensed premises containing the following information:

- The person's name;
- All dates that they provide entertainment on premises;
- The names of all persons accompanying them.

4. Minor Employees

Licensees affected: Lounge

Eating establishment or lounge licensees **may now permit an employee under the age of 19 to serve, but not dispense, alcohol to a customer's table when full meal service is available until 10pm.**

The licensee must ensure that liquor is not dispensed by an employee who is under 19 years old.

Example: a server under the age of 19 employed at an establishment holding both Eating Establishment and Lounge licenses would now be able to serve alcohol throughout the family side and bar side.

5. AGFT Approvals

Licensees affected: All permanent licensees

AGFT approvals are no longer required for certain activities related to selling alcohol for take away.

Provided the existing criteria are met, the licensees may conduct the following activities without approvals:

- Allow a customer to take liquor produced by the licensee and purchased in licensees licensed premises away from the licensed premises.
- Allow a customer to purchase beer, wine, ready to drink beverage or cider from their licensed premises for take away or delivery from the licensed premises with food.

- Prepare and sell mixed drinks from their licensed premises for take away or delivery from the licensed premises with food.

6. Prohibited Activities

Licensees affected: All permanent licensees

Additional activities are now prohibited in licensed premises.

A licensee must not permit:

- Any activity in the licensed premises that may be injurious to the health or safety of people in the premises.
- Any activity that contravenes a federal or provincial enactment or municipal by-law in their establishment.
- Disorderly persons to be in the licensed premises or in the immediate vicinity outside of the licensed premises.

7. Removal of Patrons

Licensees affected: All permanent licensees

Licensees have now been provided with specific criteria to allow the removal of patrons from licensed premises.

A licensee may request that a person leave the licensed premises or request that a person stop trying to enter the licensed premises if the person meets any of the following criteria:

- They are intoxicated.
- They are prohibited from entering the licensed premises.
- They have engaged in any unlawful activity or disorderly conduct in the licensed premises or in the immediate vicinity of the licensed premises.

PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure or arrange for intoxicated patrons to be safely removed from the licensed premises.

8. Notifications

Licensees affected: All permanent licensees

There are now added occasions where licensees must notify AGFT.

Licensees must notify AGFT and provide details of the incident by phone at 902-424-6160 or by email at agdinvest@novascotia.ca within 10 days if:

- There is any first responder presence at their licensed premises in relation to an incident involving a patron in or about their licensed premises. **For example, first responders are present to attend to an overserved patron or a patron that has been injured because of an altercation.**
- There is any allegation of the use of excessive force by a security employee involving a patron in or about their licensed premises.

- The licensee has information indicating that a security employee of the licensee has been **convicted of or charged** with an offence under the *Criminal Code* or the *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act*, after the date of the initial criminal record check for the security employee.

9. Record Keeping

Licensees affected: All permanent licensees

There are new record-keeping requirements reflecting the changes made to *Regulations*.

The following records must now be kept and available in the licensed premises at all times:

- Confirmation that a security employee has completed security and responsible alcohol training programs approved by AGFT; and
- All records relating to:
 - the results of criminal record checks for security employees;
 - in-house liquor infusion;
 - any person under 19 years old that is providing or has provided entertainment on the licensee's premises;
 - the presence of any first responder on the licensee's premises;
 - an allegation of use of excessive force by a security employee.

10. Administrative Penalties

Licensees affected: All permanent licensees

Monetary administrative penalties may now be imposed on a permanent licensee under the *Liquor Licensing and Ferment-on-Premises Regulations*. AGFT may impose an administrative penalty on a permanent licensee who does any of the following by serving a notice of administrative penalty:

- Contravenes a provision of the *Liquor Control Act* or *Regulations*; or
- Fails to comply with a term or condition of the license.

The amount of an administrative penalty imposed is at the discretion of AGFT, within the following ranges:

- First offence: between **\$500** and **\$3,000**
- Second offence: between **\$1,000** and **\$7,000**
- Third offence: between **\$2,000** and **\$10,000**

PLEASE NOTE: Each contravention or failure to comply under the previous conditions may be the subject of a separate administrative penalty.

The amount of an administrative penalty is subject to several considerations, including:

- Severity of the contravention or failure to comply;
- Degree of willfulness or negligence exhibited by the licensee;
- Any mitigating actions taken by the licensee;
- Whether steps were taken to prevent reoccurrence after the contravention;
- Licensee's history of contravening the *Act* or *Regulations*;

- Licensee's history of failing to comply with terms or conditions on a license;
- Whether the licensee received financial benefit because of the contravention or failure to comply;
- Any additional factors AGFT consider relevant.