

123.30 Retail alcohol licenses — classes.

1. a. A retail alcohol license may be issued to any person who is of good moral character as defined by [this chapter](#), the state of Iowa, or any state agency as defined in [section 669.2](#).

b. As a condition for issuance of a retail alcohol license or wine or beer permit, the applicant must give consent to members of the fire, police, and health departments and the building inspector of cities; the county sheriff or deputy sheriff; members of the department of public safety; representatives of the department and of the department of inspections, appeals, and licensing; certified police officers; and any official county health officer to enter upon areas of the premises where alcoholic beverages are stored, served, or sold, without a warrant during business hours of the licensee or permittee to inspect for violations of [this chapter](#) or ordinances and regulations that cities and boards of supervisors may adopt. However, a subpoena issued under [section 421.17](#) or a warrant is required for inspection of private records, a private business office, or attached living quarters. Persons who are not certified peace officers shall limit the scope of their inspections of licensed premises to the regulatory authority under which the inspection is conducted. All persons who enter upon a licensed premises to conduct an inspection shall present appropriate identification to the owner of the establishment or the person who appears to be in charge of the establishment prior to commencing an inspection; however, this provision does not apply to undercover criminal investigations conducted by peace officers.

c. As a further condition for the issuance of a class “E” retail alcohol license, the applicant shall post a bond in a sum of not less than five thousand nor more than fifteen thousand dollars as determined on a sliding scale established by the department; however, a bond shall not be required if all purchases of alcoholic liquor from the department by the licensee are made by means that ensure that the department will receive full payment in advance of delivery of the alcoholic liquor.

d. A class “E” retail alcohol license may be issued to a city council for premises located within the limits of the city if there are no class “E” retail alcohol licensees operating within the limits of the city and no other applications for a class “E” license for premises located within the limits of the city at the time the city council’s application is filed. If a class “E” retail alcohol license is subsequently issued to a private person for premises located within the limits of the city, the city council shall surrender its license to the department within one year of the date that the class “E” retail alcohol licensee begins operating, liquidate any remaining assets connected with the liquor store, and cease operating the liquor store.

2. A retail alcohol license shall not be issued for premises which do not constitute a safe and proper place or building and which do not conform to all applicable laws, ordinances, resolutions, and health and fire regulations. A licensee shall not have or maintain any interior access to residential or sleeping quarters unless permission is granted by the director in the form of a living quarters permit.

3. Retail alcohol licenses issued under [this chapter](#) shall be of the following classes:

a. Class “B”.

(1) (a) A class “B” retail alcohol license may be issued and shall authorize the holder to purchase wine from a class “A” wine permittee only and beer from a class “A” beer permittee only, and to sell wine and beer in original unopened containers at retail to patrons for consumption off the licensed premises.

(b) The holder of a class “B” retail alcohol license may sell wine to class “C”, special class “C”, class “D”, and class “F” retail alcohol licensees for resale for consumption on the premises. Such wine sales shall be in quantities of less than one case of any wine brand but not more than one such sale shall be made to the same retail alcohol licensee in a twenty-four-hour period.

(c) The holder of a class “B” retail alcohol license may sell beer to class “C”, special class “C”, class “D”, and class “F” retail alcohol licensees, and to special class “C” retail native wine licensees, for resale for consumption on the premises. Such beer sales shall be in quantities of not more than five cases of beer, high alcoholic content beer, and canned cocktails, but not more than one such sale shall be made to the same retail alcohol licensee

in a twenty-four-hour period. A class “A” beer permittee shall be held harmless concerning any beer resold as authorized by this subparagraph division.

(2) A special class “B” retail native wine license shall authorize the holder to purchase wine from a native winery holding a class “A” wine permit and to sell native wine only at retail for consumption off the licensed premises.

b. Class “C”.

(1) (a) A class “C” retail alcohol license may be issued to a commercial establishment but must be issued in the name of the individuals who actually own the entire business.

(b) The holder of a class “C” retail alcohol license shall be authorized to purchase alcoholic beverages as follows:

(i) Alcoholic liquors in original unopened containers from class “E” retail alcohol licensees only.

(ii) Wine from class “A” wine permittees.

(iii) Wine from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of less than one case of any wine brand in a twenty-four-hour period, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period.

(iv) Beer from class “A” beer permittees.

(v) Beer from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of not more than five cases of beer, high alcoholic content beer, and canned cocktails, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period. A class “A” beer permittee shall be held harmless concerning any beer resold as authorized by this subparagraph subdivision.

(c) The holder of a class “C” retail alcohol license shall be authorized to sell alcoholic beverages to patrons by the individual drink for consumption on the premises only. However, alcoholic liquor, wine, and beer in original unopened containers may also be sold for consumption off the premises. In addition, mixed drinks or cocktails may also be sold for consumption off the premises subject to the requirements of [section 123.49, subsection 2, paragraph “d”](#).

(d) The holder of a class “C” retail alcohol license may also hold a special class “A” beer permit for the premises licensed under a class “C” retail alcohol license for the purpose of operating a brewpub pursuant to [this chapter](#).

(2) (a) A special class “C” retail alcohol license may be issued to a commercial establishment.

(b) The holder of a special class “C” retail alcohol license shall be authorized to purchase alcoholic beverages as follows:

(i) Wine from class “A” wine permittees.

(ii) Wine from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of less than one case of any wine brand in a twenty-four-hour period, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period.

(iii) Beer from class “A” beer permittees.

(iv) Beer from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of not more than five cases of beer, high alcoholic content beer, and canned cocktails, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period. A class “A” beer permittee shall be held harmless concerning any beer resold as authorized by this subparagraph subdivision.

(c) The holder of a special class “C” retail alcohol license shall be authorized to sell wine and beer to patrons by the individual drink for consumption on the premises only. However, wine and beer in original unopened containers may also be sold for consumption off the premises. In addition, a mixed drink or cocktail that does not contain alcoholic liquor may be sold for consumption off the premises subject to the requirements of [section 123.49, subsection 2, paragraph “d”](#).

(d) The holder of a special class “C” retail alcohol license may also hold a special class “A” beer permit for the premises licensed under a special class “C” retail alcohol license for the purpose of operating a brewpub pursuant to [this chapter](#).

(e) The license issued to holders of a special class “C” retail alcohol license shall clearly state on its face that the license is limited.

(3) A special class “C” retail native wine license shall authorize the holder to sell beer and native wine as provided in [section 123.31C](#).

c. Class “D”.

(1) A class “D” retail alcohol license may be issued to a railway corporation, to an air common carrier, and to passenger-carrying boats or ships for hire with a capacity of twenty-five persons or more operating in inland or boundary waters, and shall authorize the holder to sell or furnish alcoholic beverages to passengers for consumption only on trains, watercraft as described in [this section](#), or aircraft, respectively. Each license is valid throughout the state. Only one license is required for all trains, watercraft, or aircraft operated in the state by the licensee. However, if a watercraft is an excursion gambling boat licensed under [chapter 99F](#), the owner shall obtain a separate class “D” retail alcohol license for each excursion gambling boat operating in the waters of this state.

(2) A class “D” retail alcohol licensee who operates a train or a watercraft intrastate only, or an excursion gambling boat licensed under [chapter 99F](#), shall be authorized to purchase alcoholic beverages as follows:

(a) Alcoholic liquors in original unopened containers from class “E” retail alcohol licensees only.

(b) Wine from class “A” wine permittees.

(c) Wine from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of less than one case of any wine brand in a twenty-four-hour period, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period.

(d) Beer from class “A” beer permittees.

(e) Beer from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of not more than five cases of beer, high alcoholic content beer, and canned cocktails, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period. A class “A” beer permittee shall be held harmless concerning any beer resold as authorized by this subparagraph division.

d. Class “E”.

(1) A class “E” retail alcohol license may be issued and shall authorize the holder to purchase alcoholic liquor in original unopened containers from the department only, wine from a class “A” wine permittee only, and beer from a class “A” beer permittee only; to sell alcoholic liquor, wine, and beer in original unopened containers at retail to patrons for consumption off the licensed premises; and to sell alcoholic liquor and high alcoholic content beer at wholesale to other retail alcohol licensees, provided the holder has filed with the department a basic permit issued by the alcohol and tobacco tax and trade bureau of the United States department of the treasury.

(2) A holder of a class “E” retail alcohol license may hold other retail alcohol licenses, but the premises licensed under a class “E” retail alcohol license shall be separate from other licensed premises, though the separate premises may have a common entrance.

(3) The holder of a class “E” retail alcohol license may sell wine to class “C”, special class “C”, class “D”, and class “F” retail alcohol licensees for resale for consumption on the premises. Such wine sales shall be in quantities of less than one case of any wine brand but not more than one such sale shall be made to the same retail alcohol licensee in a twenty-four-hour period.

(4) The holder of a class “E” retail alcohol license may sell beer to class “C”, special class “C”, class “D”, and class “F” retail alcohol licensees, and to special class “C” retail native wine licensees, for resale for consumption on the premises. Such beer sales shall be in quantities of not more than five cases of beer, high alcoholic content beer, and canned cocktails, but not more than one such sale shall be made to the same retail alcohol licensee in a twenty-four-hour period. A class “A” beer permittee shall be held harmless concerning any beer resold as authorized by this subparagraph.

(5) The department may issue a class “E” retail alcohol license for premises covered by a retail alcohol license for on-premises consumption under any of the following circumstances:

(a) If the premises are in a county having a population under nine thousand five hundred in which no other class “E” retail alcohol license has been issued by the department, and

no other application for a class “E” retail alcohol license has been made within the previous twelve consecutive months.

(b) If, notwithstanding any provision of [this chapter](#) to the contrary, the premises covered by a retail alcohol license is a grocery store that is at least five thousand square feet.

e. Class “F”.

(1) A class “F” retail alcohol license may be issued to a club and shall authorize the holder to sell alcoholic beverages to bona fide members and their guests by the individual drink for consumption on the premises only.

(2) The holder of a class “F” retail alcohol license shall be authorized to purchase alcoholic beverages as follows:

(a) Alcoholic liquors in original unopened containers from class “E” retail alcohol licensees only.

(b) Wine from class “A” wine permittees.

(c) Wine from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of less than one case of any wine brand in a twenty-four-hour period, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period.

(d) Beer from class “A” beer permittees.

(e) Beer from class “B” retail alcohol licensees or class “E” retail alcohol licensees in quantities of not more than five cases of beer, high alcoholic content beer, and canned cocktails, but not more than one such purchase shall be made by the licensee in a twenty-four-hour period. A class “A” beer permittee shall be held harmless concerning any beer resold as authorized by this subparagraph division.

4. Notwithstanding any provision of [this chapter](#) to the contrary, a person holding a retail alcohol license to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption on the licensed premises may permit a customer to remove one unsealed bottle of wine for consumption off the premises if the customer has purchased and consumed a portion of the bottle of wine on the licensed premises. The licensee or the licensee’s agent shall securely reseal such bottle in a bag designed so that it is visibly apparent that the resealed bottle of wine has not been tampered with and provide a dated receipt for the resealed bottle of wine to the customer. A wine bottle resealed pursuant to the requirements of [this subsection](#) is subject to the requirements of [sections 321.284 and 321.284A](#).

5. a. Notwithstanding any provision of [this chapter](#) to the contrary, a person holding a retail alcohol license to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption on the licensed premises may permit a customer to carry an alcoholic beverage in an open container from the licensed premises to any of the following immediately adjacent locations:

(1) A licensed premises authorized to sell the same type of alcoholic beverage for consumption on the licensed premises.

(2) A temporarily closed public right-of-way.

(3) A private place.

b. The licensee of the immediately adjacent licensed premises, or owner of the immediately adjacent private place, may refuse to allow the customer to enter the licensed premises or private place with an alcoholic beverage in an open container.

[C35, §1921-f27; C39, §1921.027; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §123.27; C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §123.30]

85 Acts, ch 32, §22; 86 Acts, ch 1246, §741, 742; 87 Acts, ch 22, §4 – 6; 88 Acts, ch 1088, §2, 3; 88 Acts, ch 1241, §6, 7; 90 Acts, ch 1175, §6; 91 Acts, ch 203, §1; 93 Acts, ch 91, §7, 8; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §263; 2009 Acts, ch 74, §1; 2010 Acts, ch 1193, §111, 140; 2011 Acts, ch 17, §6; 2013 Acts, ch 30, §22; 2014 Acts, ch 1092, §28; 2016 Acts, ch 1008, §3; 2017 Acts, ch 29, §38, 39; 2017 Acts, ch 119, §5, 19, 40; 2018 Acts, ch 1060, §12; 2018 Acts, ch 1172, §54 – 60; 2019 Acts, ch 113, §11 – 13; 2020 Acts, ch 1114, §10, 11, 16; 2021 Acts, ch 155, §2; 2022 Acts, ch 1099, §1, 6; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1875, 2380, 2381; 2023 Acts, ch 48, §1; 2023 Acts, ch 157, §2 – 4; 2025 Acts, ch 30, §17, 18; 2025 Acts, ch 31, §2 – 5, 15

Referred to in §12.43, 123.31, 123.33, 123.36, 123.43, 123.43A, 123.45, 123.95, 123.127, 123.138, 123.173C, 123.175, 123.176

Subsection 1, paragraph a amended

Subsection 3, paragraph a, subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (c) amended

Subsection 3, paragraph b, subparagraph (2), subparagraph division (c) amended

Subsection 3, paragraph d, subparagraph (4) amended

Subsection 4 amended
NEW subsection 5