

WAC 314-12-027 Financial interest and ownership. Pursuant to the exceptions in chapter 66.28 RCW:

(1) An industry member or affiliate may have a financial interest in another industry member or a retailer, and a retailer or affiliate may have financial interest in an industry member unless such interest has resulted or is more likely than not to result in:

- (a) Undue influence over the retailer or the industry member; or
- (b) An adverse impact on public health and safety.

(2) The structure of any such financial interest must be consistent with the following:

(a) An industry member in whose name a license or COA has been issued pursuant to this title may wholly own or hold a financial interest in a separate legal entity licensed pursuant to RCW 66.24.320 through 66.24.570, but the industry member must form a separate legal entity to apply for the retail liquor license.

Example: ABC Inc. is the liquor licensee for ABC Winery. ABC Inc. has two officers and stockholders; John Doe, President and 50% stockholder, and Mary Smith, Secretary and 50% stockholder. ABC Inc. wants to purchase stock in a retail restaurant. ABC Inc. is not required to form a separate legal entity if the amount of stock purchased is 10% or less. If the amount of stock purchased is more than 10%, ABC Inc. must form a separate legal entity to purchase the stock. John Doe and/or Mary Smith as a sole proprietor, could purchase any amount of stock in a retail restaurant;

(b) A retailer in whose name a license has been issued pursuant to this title may wholly own or hold a financial interest in manufacturer, importer, or distributor licensed under RCW 66.24.170, 66.24.206, 66.24.240, 66.24.244, 66.24.270(2), 66.24.200, or 66.24.250, but the retailer must form a separate legal entity to apply for the nonretail liquor license.

Example: Joe and Jane Smith own a grocery store and hold a grocery store liquor license under a sole proprietor legal entity. They want to purchase stock in a local winery. Joe and Jane Smith are not required to form a separate legal entity if the amount of stock purchased is 10% or less. If the amount of stock purchased is more than 10%, Joe and Jane Smith must form a separate legal entity (such as a corporation or limited liability company) to purchase the stock in the winery;

(c) A supplier in whose name a license or certificate of approval has been issued pursuant to this title may wholly own or hold a financial interest in a separate legal entity licensed as a distributor or importer under this title, but such supplier may not have a license as a distributor or importer issued in its own name.

Example: ABC Inc. is the liquor licensee for ABC Winery. ABC Inc. has two officers and stockholders; John Doe, President and 50% stockholder, and Mary Smith, Secretary and 50% stockholder. ABC Inc. wants to purchase stock in a distributor. ABC Inc. is not required to form a separate legal entity if the amount of stock purchased is 10% or less. If the amount of stock purchased is more than 10%, ABC Inc. must form a separate legal entity to purchase the stock. John Doe and/or Mary Smith as a sole-proprietor, could purchase any amount of stock in a distributor;

(d) A distributor or importer in whose name a license has been issued pursuant to this title may wholly own or hold a financial interest in a separate legal entity licensed or holding a certificate of approval as a supplier under this title, but such distributor or im-

porter may not have a license or certificate of approval as a supplier issued in its own name.

Example: B&W Distributing, LLC is the liquor licensee for BW Distributing. B&W Distributing, LLC wants to purchase stock in ABC Winery. B&W Distributing, LLC is not required to form a separate legal entity if the amount of stock purchased is 10% or less. If the amount of stock purchased is more than 10%, B&W Distributing, LLC must form a separate legal entity to purchase the stock in the winery.

(3) Any person may request a determination by the board as to whether a proposed or existing financial interest has resulted or is more likely than not to result in undue influence or has resulted or is more likely than not to result in an adverse impact on public health and safety by filing a complaint or request for determination with the board.

(a) The board may conduct an investigation as it deems appropriate in the circumstances.

(b) If the investigation reveals the financial interest has resulted or is more likely than not to result in undue influence or an adverse impact on public health or safety, the board may issue an administrative violation notice or a notice of intent to deny the license to the industry member, the retailer, or both.

The recipient of the administrative violation notice or notice of intent to deny the license may request an administrative hearing under chapter 34.05 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 66.08.030 and 66.28.320. WSR 10-01-090, § 314-12-027, filed 12/16/09, effective 1/16/10.]