

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5272

C 6 L 21

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning temporarily waiving certain liquor and cannabis board annual licensing fees.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes, Frockt, Conway, Das, Dhingra, Keiser, Lovelett, Mullet, Nguyen, Nobles, Randall, Saldaña, Stanford, Wilson, C. and Wilson, J.).

Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Tribal Affairs
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Liquor licenses for the manufacture, distribution, and retail sale of beer, wine, and spirits are issued by the Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB). LCB issues liquor licenses and permits for more than 16,500 qualified businesses, such as breweries, wineries, grocery stores, restaurants, and nightclubs. A qualifying business or licensee may also obtain certain license endorsements or special occasion licenses that allow the license holder to serve alcohol for on premise consumption, or at certain specified events, such as banquets or tasting rooms.

License fees range in cost from \$20 to \$2,500, depending on the license type, and are generally renewed annually.

Summary: The fees for the following liquor licenses are waived for 12 months:

- distillers, distill/rectify, fruit/wine distillery, craft distillery;
- distillery/craft distillery tasting room;
- domestic wineries;
- domestic breweries;
- microbreweries;
- beer/wine restaurant;
- tavern;
- snack bar;

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- spirits/beer/wine restaurant;
- nonprofit arts;
- motel;
- sports entertainment facility;
- public house;
- hotel;
- spirits/beer/wine nightclub;
- beer/wine theater;
- spirits/beer/wine theater;
- senior center; and
- caterers.

The 12-month waiver period begins one month after the effective date of this act. The waiver applies to:

- renewals of licenses that expire during the 12-month waiver period; and
- new licenses issued to persons who were previously licensed at any point in the year immediately preceding the 12-month waiver period.

The waiver does not apply to any licensee that:

- had their license suspended by LCB for health and safety violations of state COVID-19 guidelines; or
- received an order of restraint or citation from the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) for allowing an employee to work where business activity was prohibited in violation of an emergency proclamation by the Governor.

LCB and L&I must both provide the Department of Revenue a list of persons they have determined ineligible for a fee waiver. The list must be provided within 15 days following a request, unless agreed otherwise.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	1
House	93	4

Effective: February 28, 2021