

WAC 314-02-108 Responsible vendor program. (1) **What is the purpose of this chapter?** The purpose of this section is to establish standards and procedures for a responsible vendor program for spirits retail and beer and wine retail licensees selling alcohol for off-premises consumption.

(2) **What is the responsible vendor program for spirits retail licensees?** This program is free, voluntary, and self-monitoring. Spirits retail licensees who hold a responsible vendor certificate and maintain all requirements are eligible for reduced sanctions on their first single violation within any period of 12 calendar months.

(3) **How does a spirits retail licensee become a responsible vendor?** Any spirits retail licensee who meets the program standards may participate. To apply for a responsible vendor certificate, the licensee must have no public safety violations within the last two years and must complete and submit a board-provided application form. Board staff will review the application for completeness, and will:

(a) Certify the completed application clearly indicates the licensee has all program standards in place and send a certificate to the licensee; or

(b) Return an incomplete application that does not clearly indicate the licensee has all program standards in place. Staff will notify the licensee of the reason(s) the application is being returned.

(4) **To qualify as a responsible vendor, a spirits retail licensee must:**

(a) Post their responsible vendor program certificate for public viewing at the main entrance of the premises;

(b) Train each employee supervising or selling alcohol in responsible liquor sales. Licensees may require employees to obtain a mandatory alcohol server training permit from a board certified provider or train employees themselves using the training criteria specified in subsection (5) of this section; and

(c) In an area visible to employees, post the house policies on alcohol sales and checking identification. The licensee must have each employee read and sign the house policies which must include at a minimum:

(i) A list of acceptable forms of identification which are accepted at the premises;

(ii) Directions for checking identification for customers; and

(iii) The consequences for selling spirits to a minor or apparently intoxicated person.

(d) In an area visible to patrons, post signs to deter illegal purchases of alcohol. Examples of information include, it is illegal to purchase alcohol under 21 years of age or while apparently intoxicated. Other information may include acceptable forms of identification at the premises;

(e) Have an on-going training plan for employees, to include annual training at a minimum. Examples of training include computer based training, video training, classroom instruction, and meetings. The training may be done individually or in a group. At a minimum, training must cover the topics listed in subsection (5) of this section; and

(f) Retain employee training records and signed house policies for three years and must be able to present employee training records upon request.

(5) **What are the program standards, program content, and other requirements for the responsible vendor program?** All training must include, at a minimum, the following:

(a) Guidelines for recognizing minors and apparently intoxicated persons;

(b) Forms of identification for purchasing alcohol;

(c) How to check identification and how to recognize false or altered identification;

(d) A requirement to check identification in accordance with house policies;

(e) Recommended actions for refusing sales of alcohol to minors or apparently intoxicated persons;

(f) A review of the consequences for selling to minors, and the importance of not selling alcohol to minors or apparently intoxicated persons;

(g) A review of house policies on alcohol sales. Each licensee must ensure that their employees receive training that covers the licensee's own house policies; and

(h) The standards and requirements for the mandatory alcohol server training stipulated in WAC 314-17-060 are deemed sufficient for employee's initial training for the responsible vendor training.

(6) What are the sanctions when a licensee violates liquor laws or regulations? For violations, as outlined in WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040, involving the sales of spirits, the prescribed penalty is doubled. If a licensee has a certified responsible vendor program having all program standards in place, the board will impose the standard penalty detailed in WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040 for that violation. Any subsequent violation involving spirits within any period of 12 calendar months will be double the standard penalties. Regardless of the type of alcohol sold; beer, wine, or spirits, WAC 314-29-020 through 314-29-040 are applicable.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 66.08.030. WSR 24-23-002, s 314-02-108, filed 11/6/24, effective 12/7/24; WSR 14-15-075, § 314-02-108, filed 7/16/14, effective 8/16/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 66.08.030, 66.24.630. WSR 12-11-008, § 314-02-108, filed 5/3/12, effective 6/3/12.]