

Ohio Extends Filing Deadline To Pay Liquor Permit Renewal Fees

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Government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have had an adverse impact on many individuals and businesses. Among the businesses affected, the restaurant and bar industry has taken a particularly hard hit. The “stay at home” orders across the country have shut down restaurants and bars from in-person service and have forced them to either adapt or close their doors.

Due to the hardship many restaurants and bars are currently facing, the Ohio Department of Commerce’s [Division of Liquor Control](#) (“DOLC”) announced in [a press release](#) on April 24, 2020 that it is extending the May 18, 2020 filing deadline for permit holders to renew their class C and D permits. The DOLC noted in its press release that a new filing deadline would be announced once the Ohio Department of Health lifts the Director’s Order allowing permit holders to resume on-premises consumption.

In making this decision, the DOLC noted that Superintendent Jim Canepa had “heard from a number of permit holders about the need for additional relief” and stated that “we are listening and recognize the financial strain of permit renewal fees to businesses at this time. Extending the deadline will provide economic relief to permit holders by giving them some breathing room for renewal submissions.”

Pursuant to ORC 4303.27, most liquor permits are renewed annually, while class C and D permits (i.e. retail liquor permits for on and off premise consumption) are renewed annually on a staggered trimester basis by county.

Permits located in Adams, Allen, Auglaize, Brown, Butler, Campaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Drake, Defiance, Fayette, Fulton, Green, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Highland, Logan, Lucas, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Ottawa, Paulding, Preble, Putnam, Sandusky, Shelby, Van Wert, Warren, Williams, and Wood counties [expire on June 1, 2020](#).

Renewal applications are mailed to permit holders 60 days prior to the expiration of the

permit and the applications must be received by the DOLC at least 15 days prior to the expiration of the permit, or the permit holder must pay an additional 10% penalty fee pursuant to ORC 4303.271. This means that if the DOLC had not extended the filing deadline, the holders of D-Class and C-Class permits located in the counties mentioned above would have been required to submit their permit renewal applications and pay their renewal fees by May 18, 2020.

For the typical bar or restaurant owner, this would have meant an upcoming payment of close to \$3,000. Thankfully, in light of the current situation, the deadline for D-Class and C-Class permits has been extended until further notice from the DOLC.

We are continuously monitoring this issue and will provide updated guidance once the DOLC establishes a new deadline and if anything changes. For further questions, please reach out to Graydon attorney James G. Niekamp.