



Liquor License Renewal 2012: Are you ready?

by Chris Baker

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All liquor licenses issued by the State of Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC), including all on premises, off premises, manufacturer, wholesaler, and importer licenses, are effective for periods of one year each, and expire April 30th of each licensing year. Exceptions exist only for certain sales representative and vendor permits, which are valid for terms of three years.

In order for restaurants, hotels, retail stores and other liquor licensed operators to retain their licensed status with the ability to furnish and/or sell alcoholic beverages - whether at retail or wholesale - each Michigan licensee must renew their existing licenses on or prior to April 30th. The failure of an active licensee to timely renew a license is a violation of the Michigan Liquor Control Code.

For those with licenses currently in escrow, different rules for renewal apply, but these licenses must also be renewed, despite the non-active nature of the license. Finally, **no exceptions** to the renewal rules exist for recently issued licenses: liquor licenses issued in the 2011 - 2012 licensing year must be renewed by May 1 as well.

Typically, the administrative staff of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission will mail renewal packages in the middle of March. The members of Varnum's Hospitality and Beverage Control Law Practice Group are currently responding to these requests and are handling the renewal of the licenses for a number of our clients. In the event that you would like to obtain our assistance in this regard, please contact us. We would be happy to review and submit the appropriate documentation to the State of Michigan in order to assure that your license is properly renewed and delivered to you on a timely basis to avoid any suspensions of your license.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Hospitality and Beverage Control Law Practice Group, including Christopher P. Baker, 248/567-7400, cpbaker@varnumlaw.com, or Mary Kay Shaver, 616/336-6000, mkshaver@varnumlaw.com.

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