

Know your liquor laws

There are three types of liquor licenses in BC, two of which are applicable in Revelstoke:

A food primary license :

- the liquor control and licensing branch issues food-primary licenses to businesses (restaurants) where the service of food, as opposed to liquor, is the primary focus of the business.
- Licensed restaurants may serve any kind of liquor. However, a full range of appetizers and main courses must be available and being served, whenever liquor is available. (Restaurants with 50 or more seats only may apply to have a small, separate lounge area where they can serve liquor without food.)
- Minors are allowed in all food-primary establishments.

Liquor-primary licence

- any business in the hospitality, entertainment or beverage industry - including bars, pubs, lounges, nightclubs, stadiums, theatres, recreation and convention centres - may apply for a liquor-primary license.
- Minors are generally not allowed in liquor-primary establishments, unless they are working as entertainers

There is a 3rd type of license which permits minors in a liquor primary located in a downhill ski resort area

A liquor-primary licensed establishment located in a downhill ski resort area. To be eligible the resort must:

- provide amenities for skiers;
- be located at a ski hill developed for downhill skiing; and
- The liquor-primary establishment must be located in the ski resort area.
- The general manager may permit minors in a liquor-primary licensed establishment that is located in the ski resort area

Policy

Provided the following conditions are met:

- Minors are accompanied by an adult parent or guardian;
- Minors leave the premises no later than 8:00 p.m.;
- Signage is placed in a prominent place within the establishment that reads "minors are permitted until 8:00 p.m. When accompanied by a parent or guardian"; and
- Adult entertainment, if offered, is not provided until after 8:00 p.m.

At this point, the city of Revelstoke is not seen to be in "the ski resort area" by the liquor control branch of BC

At the Last Drop we made the change from a liquor primary to a food primary license when we took over in 2008 so that we could welcome your families, minors included into the establishment in an effort to carry on the traditional British theme (families dining together in a pub atmosphere). Generally, the community was in great support of our change, from what was Speeders a liquor primary establishment. We received many positive comments and support for our youth open mic, the high school jazz band playing and other minor driven events we hosted. We were very happy with the success we had in response to our efforts to attract the whole community to enjoy our pub.

Subsequently, we faced a 10 day closure of the Last Drop in November 2010 as we were seen to have contravened our food primary license in February 2010 by selling more alcohol than food on a Wednesday night, a night that had become extremely popular for our open mike. (We were not seen as contravening for serving minors, intoxication or any other reason that may have been rumoured)

Out of sheer frustration for the contravention we were made to serve, we began to see if there was a way that we could operate legally under the liquor laws while being able give the patrons and the community what they wanted and expected.

We determined that Revelstoke is unique in that it is situated in very close proximity to the base of our ski mountain, Revelstoke is in a "ski resort area."

The city of Revelstoke naturally serves as a place where day and stay skiers alike use our town as the "village" of our ski mountain, shopping for supplies and equipment and services as well as eating and drinking.

With the inception of the mountain concept, we as citizens collectively wanted to be sure the mountain did not create a separate city at the base of the resort but that we offer our town as the village combined with the base of the resort. This was our goal and it is proving great for all of our businesses and has great potential.

We feel as an extension of this we should be recognized for what Revelstoke is, "in a resort area, " at the liquor control branch.

This would allow suitable liquor primary establishments such as the regent pub, and the Last Drop, as well as a few others, if they wished, to apply for

A Resort license

Tourists from Canada, US, and abroad could enjoy our resort as they wished without odd restrictions that don't make any sense and merely limit their choices.

We as a community cater to these guests and they are our bread and butter.

The resort license would not only benefit liquor and food establishments but would contribute to the whole experience for our visitors here in Revelstoke and create a welcoming more international appeal

It would lend to creating a better economic situation for all businesses in our town.

Canadian perspective on liquor laws, by province

Newfoundland/Labrador: minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment until 830 or 9pm.

PEI: minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment until 10pm.

New Brunswick: minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment until 10pm

Nova Scotia: minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment until 9pm.

Ontario: minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment at the discretion of the proprietor.

Quebec: no minors allowed in pubs however they can use the patios until evening hours at some establishments.

Manitoba: minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment.

Saskatchewan: you may apply to have minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment

Alberta: you may apply to have minors permitted with parents in pub type establishment until 9 pm.

(There are regulations around the above noted policies and most of those are that food service must be available. More detail can be obtained through each province's liquor authority. The general information provided was obtained from those provincial authorities.)

If you feel strongly about liquor licencing as it relates to Revelstoke please send a letter to Emma Kirkland PO Box 530, Revelstoke, fax: 250-837-5111 or e-mail: manager.powersprings@revelstoke.net and address it to the Minister of Tourism stating that you support an application to request the liquor license branch to reconsider Revelstoke being a ski resort area.