

## FAQs on "happy hour" changes

Below are frequently asked questions regarding **Public Act 99-0046** which went into effect on **July 15, 2015**:

**Q: Will I be able to offer "happy hour" specials by temporarily reducing the price of drinks at my establishment?**

A: **Yes.** This legislation permits licensees to offer discounted drinks for up to **4 hours per day**, and not more than **15 hours per week**. The specified drink promotional period does not have to be for 4 consecutive hours.

**Q: What are the additional rules and restrictions on price reductions?**

A: Licensees must adhere to the following stipulations on price reductions on drinks:

- Licensee must give notice of the discount of alcohol drinks on the licensee's premises or on their website **7 days prior to the specified drink promotion period**.
- Licensee shall not offer a specified drink promotion period between the hours of **10:00 p.m. and the licensed premise's closing hour**.
- Licensee shall not change the price of an alcoholic drink during a single drink promotion period.

**Q: When can I start reducing prices as part of happy hour?**

A: No earlier than 7 days after the license holder has given notice of the discount of alcohol drinks at its licensed location or on its website.

**Q: Can I provide unlimited drinks for a single price?**

A: No. Drink limits are required unless the drinks are part of a meal/party package or private function.

**Q: Am I allowed to sell "meal packages" with food and alcohol? What does that entail?**

A: **Yes.** "Meal package" means a food & beverage package, which may or may not include entertainment, where the service of alcoholic liquor is an accompaniment to the food, including, but not limited to: **a meal, tour, tasting, or any combination thereof for a fixed price by a retail licensee** or any other licensee operating within a sports facility, restaurant, winery, brewery, or distillery.

**Q: Is there a limit on the number of drinks which may be served with a meal package?**

A: No. There is no limit to the number of drinks included with a meal package.

**Q: What is considered "food" for purposes of a meal package?**

A: Any food, including snacks and other so-called "finger food," that is available on the licensed premises as long as the food and alcoholic drinks are sold as a package for a fixed price.

**Q: Am I allowed to sell "party packages," such as wristband deals for a private event? What are the regulations?**

A: **Yes.** "Party package" means a private party, function, or event for a specific social or business occasion, either arranged by invitation or reservation for a defined number of individuals, that is **not open to the general public and where attendees are served both food and alcohol for a fixed price in a DEDICATED EVENT space**. In order to sell a party package, a business must:

- Offer food in the dedicated event space.
- Limit the party package to no more than 3 hours.
- Distribute wristbands, lanyards, or shirts that designate party package attendees.
- Exclude individuals not participating in the party package from the dedicated event space.

**Q: Is there a limit on the number of drinks which may be served with a party package?**

A: No. There is no limit on the number of drinks allowed to be included with a party package.

**Q: What is considered “food” for purposes of a party package?**

A: Any food, including snacks and other so-called “finger food,” that is available on the licensed premises.

**Q: Private functions as defined in the Liquor Control Act (235 ILCS 5/1-3.36) have always been an exception to the prohibition on unlimited drinks; are private functions now limited to 3 hours?**

A: No. Private functions such as weddings, private parties, fund-raising functions, etc., where “guests in attendance are served in a room or rooms designated and used exclusively for the private party, function or event” (235 ILCS 5/1-3.36) are not subjected to a time limit.

**Q: How can alcoholic drinks be sold and served to a customer?**

A: 1) You may serve two or more drinks to one customer at one time;  
2) You may not sell two or more drinks for the price of one drink;  
3) You must increase the price of a drink proportionately to an increase in the volume of the same drink (Example: The price of a 24 ounce draft of Brand X beer must cost twice as much as a 12 ounce draft of Brand X beer).

**Q: Can I sell or serve a pitcher, bottle, carafe, bucket, flight, or similar container to one person?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How does proportionate pricing apply to prices of a pitcher, bottle, carafe, bucket, flight, or similar container?**

A: Proportionate pricing applies to individual drinks, not to pitchers, bottles, carafes, buckets, flight or similar containers. As long as a price reduction is not equal to selling 2 or more alcoholic drinks for the price of one, a retailer is free to set any price for a pitcher, bottle, carafe, bucket, flight or similar container.

**Q: Can I permit or encourage drinking games or contests at my licensed premises?**

A: No.

**Q: Can I still offer daily drink specials?**

A: Yes, as long as the price of the drink special is listed on the mandatory schedule of drink prices.

**Q: May I advertise happy hour, meal packages, and party packages?**

A: Yes. Events permitted under the Liquor Control Act may be legally advertised.

**Q. May I advertise events and drink specials permitted under the Happy Hour law on social media?**

A: Yes. Social media advertising is allowed.

**Q. Does the new law mandate that all servers in Illinois be trained and certified?**

A: Yes. All alcohol servers and those checking ID’s for alcohol service in on-premise establishments (ie, bars, restaurants, banquet halls) will be required to successfully complete BASSET by a pre-determined date cited in the law. **See following page for the schedule.**

## Required training date for alcohol servers

The signing of **Public Act 99-0046** on **July 15, 2015** requires on-premise servers (and those checking ID's for alcohol service) to successfully complete a Beverage Alcohol Sellers/Servers Education & Training (BASSET) class by a certain date based upon county population. NOTE: Some local jurisdictions may already require BASSET. Please visit [www.illinois.gov/ILCC/SitePages/Survey.aspx](http://www.illinois.gov/ILCC/SitePages/Survey.aspx) for ordinances in your community). Below is the list of Illinois counties by the date in which servers are required to be BASSET-certified (based on 2010 US Census data):

### BASSET certification currently required (as of July 1, 2015)

Cook County

### Certification required by July 1, 2016 (in counties with 200,000+ people)

Champaign County  
DuPage County  
Kane County  
Lake County  
Madison County

McHenry County  
St. Clair County  
Will County  
Winnebago County

### Certification required by July 1, 2017 (counties between 30,000-200,000 people)

Adams County  
Boone County  
Bureau County  
Christian County  
Clinton County  
Coles County  
DeKalb County  
Effingham County  
Franklin County  
Fulton County  
Grundy County  
Henry County  
Jackson County

Jefferson County  
Kankakee County  
Kendall County  
Knox County  
LaSalle County  
Lee County  
Livingston County  
Logan County  
Macon County  
Macoupin County  
Marion County  
McDonough County  
McLean County  
Monroe County

Montgomery County  
Morgan County  
Ogle County  
Peoria County  
Randolph County  
Rock Island County  
Sangamon County  
Stephenson County  
Tazewell County  
Vermilion County  
Whiteside County  
Williamson County  
Woodford County

### Certification required by July 1, 2018 (counties with 30,000 people or less)

Alexander County  
Bond County  
Brown County  
Calhoun County  
Carroll County  
Cass County  
Clark County  
Clay County  
Crawford County  
Cumberland County  
De Witt County  
Douglas County  
Edgar County

Edwards County  
Fayette County  
Ford County  
Gallatin County  
Greene County  
Hamilton County  
Hancock County  
Hardin County  
Henderson County  
Iroquois County  
Jasper County  
Jersey County  
Jo Daviess County

Johnson County  
Lawrence County  
Marshall County  
Mason County  
Massac County  
Menard County  
Mercer County  
Moultrie County  
Perry County  
Piatt County  
Pike County  
Pope County  
Pulaski County

Putnam County  
Richland County  
Saline County  
Schuyler County  
Scott County  
Shelby County  
Stark County  
Union County  
Wabash County  
Warren County  
Washington County  
Wayne County  
White County