

ASIP

Alcohol Server Intervention Program

Presented by:

MORALE, WELL-BEING, AND RECREATION



Coast Guard Community Services Command

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INTRODUCTION

The Coast Guard continues its firm commitment to reduce alcohol-related problems of all types. MWR activities help make this commitment a reality by promoting the responsible use of alcohol, offering alternatives to alcohol, and providing well-rounded programs that include families and physical activity.

Managers of MWR activities that serve alcohol play an important role and responsibility in this effort, particularly regarding reducing the problems from drinking and driving. Employees of activities that serve alcohol, who do the day-to-day selling, forearmed with the knowledge of what to do and how, are the first line of defense in efforts to promote responsible use of alcohol.

MWR managers must ensure that alcohol beverage servers understand the vital role they play in reducing alcohol-related incidents. The Alcohol Server Intervention Program (ASIP) has been designed and should assist MWR Managers in providing a standard approach to server training. It focuses on the techniques of preventing intoxication, how to “cut off” a customer, and what the server can do to handle “difficult” situations. Although the scope of beverage operations varies among MWR activities, the training methods and basic teaching points contained in this pamphlet are applicable regardless of whether the server is employed by the food and beverage activity or the bowling center. In the final analysis, the alcohol server may also be the last line of defense in preventing a drinking and driving incident.

The use of alcohol is an enigma. On one hand, it is a widely accepted legal beverage that has a long-standing foundation in the social structure of the military and society. On the other hand, the abuse of alcohol by patrons, particularly when military personnel are involved, may cause disruption of military efficiency that can jeopardize the basic military mission or even result in injury or death. Additionally, alcohol use may result in potential liability claims against the Coast Guard. Prior claims have proven to be financially substantial. This Alcohol Server Intervention Program is meant to provide guidance to commands in the responsible serving of alcohol.

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TRAINING BASICS

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU TRAIN

Ensure your overall command and individual activity policies and procedures are up-to-date and sensible for encouraging the responsible use of alcohol. It won't do any good to train your staff on policies that don't fit your needs or that are contrary to responsible serving of alcohol to your patrons.

WHAT TRAINING SHOULD BE

Training should be uniquely suited to your situation and your employees. Although it might be similar in many ways to that of other MWR activities in the area, it should also be different in those ways that make your activity unique.

And even within your training, you may need to have variations for different people or different shifts depending on what they already know and can do well or the type of alcohol sales occurring (bar sales, glasses of wine with dinner, etc.). Just as no two MWR activities are exactly alike, no two adults are exactly alike either.

WHEN TRAINING SHOULD TAKE PLACE

Current employees should be trained as soon as your Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) have been reviewed and updated and your training plans made. The need for a concerted emphasis on encouraging the responsible use of alcohol won't go away, so there is nothing gained by delay.

Current Coast Guard policy, as contained in the Coast Guard Morale, Well-Being, and Recreation Manual, COMDTINST M1710.13 (series), requires that MWR food and beverage activity managers, bartenders, and wait staff serving alcoholic beverage receive certified training in preventing alcohol abuse. Recognized training programs such as Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) and Controlling Alcohol Risks Effectively (CARE) would meet this training requirement. No employee shall be assigned responsibilities that include the serving of alcohol beverages until such training is complete.

WHY DOESN'T THE CIVILIAN SECTOR REQUIRE SERVER TRAINING?

They do. Many states have mandatory server training laws for sellers in both on and/or off premise facilities. Some states have voluntary server training laws and others have Responsible Vendor Laws, which includes server training. One state provides that municipalities may require server training.

Many chain and individual facilities that serve alcohol in other states have adopted server-training requirements to assist in lowering their potential for liability under what are commonly called Dram Shop Laws. Dram Shop Laws, the common law of negligence, and the concept of reasonable care hold alcohol serving establishments and their employees liable if they serve alcoholic beverages to a guest who leaves the establishment intoxicated and then injures another person. The Coast Guard is not immune from these lawsuits. Extreme care must be exercised by those MWR activities serving alcoholic beverages to ensure responsible service. Every server should know the DRAM Shop Law for your state or territory.

WHERE TRAINING SHOULD TAKE PLACE

Because adults learn best when they are most comfortable, the ideal training setting may be in your operation where everything is familiar. You'll have to select a time that is most convenient to the greatest number of employees and you may have to run several sessions to ensure everyone is trained. If training occurs during the normal duty day, offering several sessions will avoid a negative impact on daily operations. Other locations may include any of the command's conference or meeting rooms. The shorter, annual refresher training may be accomplished in smaller groups in an office setting.



HOW YOU'LL KNOW THE TRAINING "WORKED"

Immediately after training you should see specific behavior that lets you know your employees are trying to practice what they learned. (If you praise that behavior as you see it occurring, you'll increase the chances that it will continue when you are not present.)

After a reasonable time (a month, maybe), call a staff meeting and ask employees to tell you what's working well and what isn't (it's important that they tell you not the other way around). Then, ask for their ideas on what else can be done to reach the pre-training goals. Once adopted, make changes to any local policies and procedures and let everyone know what these changes are.

At least once every quarter, spot check everything that was taught to make sure nothing has "slipped through the cracks." Continue to praise appropriate ASIP behavior as it occurs and coach improved behavior where it is needed. If you do all this, there's almost no way the training won't "work."

WHAT ABOUT RETRAINING

The MWR Manual requires refresher training. If you have set your program up properly, annual retraining will consist only of review, communicating any changes you've had to make to your local policies, and practicing any new skills needed.

WHERE IS THE QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARD FOR EACH LOCATION?

Copies are in personnel files but management should also maintain records. The MWR Manual requires that certification of the completion of training be included in each employee's personnel file. Keep a record of the date of each training session, what was covered in the session, and names of those who attended. Put a reminder on your calendar for 11 months after the first training session so you won't forget the annual refresher and will have time to do the necessary policy review before training day rolls around.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP's)

Involve everyone you can when developing or revising your SOP's on the sale of alcoholic beverages, including actions to avoid potential problems. Include your assistant managers and wait staff and circulate up the chain of command for final approval. When new situations arise, update your SOP and ensure that everyone gets a copy of the update. In this manner, you can be assured that each employee is fully aware of all the new and improved procedures that can help protect not only your employees and the Coast Guard, but your customers as well.

One of the dichotomies in accepting ASIP is that when implemented it will likely reduce your alcohol sales. This goes against the grain of most everything business managers and servers have been taught: greater sales mean greater profits. However, a reduction in alcohol sales does not mean your overall profits will decrease, because part of the ASIP effort is to increase food and non-alcoholic beverage sales to customers who would otherwise order the extra alcoholic drink. The profit margin on these other items can be just as attractive as for alcohol and with careful planning, promotion, and selling by servers, you may even see an increase in overall sales and profits.

Listed below are some areas to be covered in your SOP. As you go through the rest of this guide, you will find others that can be added. The goal is to have a document that covers as many expected situations as possible, with clearly delineated lines of responsibility.

Does your SOP cover the following situations:

- a. Who should be notified if a server has difficulty with a patron?
- b. What actions may/should a night manager or other people in authority take (free food or non-alcoholic beverages, ride home, (give examples))?
- c. When and who should log incidents, and what information should be included (date, time, description of parties involved, summary of incident, outcome)?
- d. When should the Police or Security be called?
- e. When should unit staff duty personnel be called?

Do I need to offer more activities independent of alcohol:

- a. Games requiring motor coordination (darts, pool, etc.)
- b. Contests requiring mental alertness (cards, trivia, TV game spin-offs, etc.)
- c. Family events (cartoons, dance lessons, pre-holiday parties, etc.)
- d. Spouse programs (card tournaments, couples' community work, etc.)
- e. Gentle leisure (conversation rooms, computer corner, VCR theater, reading or listening collections, etc.)

Have I made food service available at the bar at night (not just nuts and popcorn)?



Are my menu items selected, planned, and priced to provide good value while returning enough profit to make up for lower alcohol sales?

Have I developed a coordinated publicity/marketing program to let my current patrons, and the new ones I hope to draw, know of great new things I'm planning for them?

BASIC SERVER TRAINING

Training Outline

1. Manager preparation. Decide what you want servers to know and do from day one on the job. These are the basics, and you will be arranging opportunities for them to practice skills that encourage responsible use of alcohol in these areas:

- taking alcoholic beverage orders
- suggesting non-alcoholic drinks and food
- deciding when a patron should not have another drink
- how to “cut off” patrons successfully
- how to keep potentially impaired or intoxicated patrons from driving

As each activity selling alcohol is unique (a bowling center snack bar that sells bottled and pitcher beer would have different requirements than a high-energy club setting), you will need to determine the specifics to be taught in each of these areas. Later sections of this ASIP Guide provide specific information that will get you started with much of what your servers need to know. You’ll have to adjust training to fit each activity, accordingly.

Duplicate as many copies of the training materials as there are employees to be trained. Give employees a chance to read the material prior to the training date. Ask employees to think of all their successful methods of deciding when a patron should not have another drink or “cut off” techniques that work. Much of this input will probably be incorporated into your SOP.

2. Employee participation. Your sessions should not be longer than two (2) hours. They should be a mixture of your talking, their reading, writing, or role playing, and discussing situations that have arisen or might arise.

3. Employee testing. Generally, it is better and faster to set up realistic situations and ask the trainees to show you what they would do and say with real patrons. Your best servers can be a big help to you by setting up these situations and taking typical patrons’ roles.

Remember that your servers have the right AND the responsibility to refuse service to ANY patron who is:

- **OBVIOUSLY INTOXICATED**
- **IN DANGER OF BEING A DRUNK DRIVER**
- **BELOW LEGAL DRINKING AGE**

GETTING SERVERS’ COOPERATION

Most servers see having to “cut off” patrons as embarrassing or difficult, exactly the opposite of what they are paid to do. For your training to be effective, you’ll need to help them see that there can be real advantages to them in aiding responsible use of alcohol.

We suggest that you give employees the list of disadvantages below and ask them to add any others to it. Then discuss with them things you and they can do together to mitigate the disadvantages. You must also emphasize with your servers that you will support them

in these decisions. Without total support from management, employees will be less likely to assume these responsibilities. The bottom line remains, however, that employees **MUST** follow approved SOP's.

DISADVANTAGES OF CUTTING OFF A CUSTOMER

- Potential loss of tips
- Manager overrules me
- Against my nature
- Not humanly possible—it's too crowded, dark, etc.
- Potential loss of customer
- Fear of being wrong about need for cut off
- Makes people mad
- Fear of violence
- Might lose my job

ADVANTAGES OF CUTTING OFF A CUSTOMER

- Acting responsibly
- Intoxicated patrons can scare other customers away
- Tips increase from those who appreciate your help
- Offering non-alcoholic drinks and good times will attract new customers
- Stopping drunk driving, keeps everybody safer
- Lowers server's risk of being sued
- Decreases drunken hassles or advances
- Decreases risks to command



ALCOHOL KNOWLEDGE TEST

Answers for many of the questions in the true-false test on the next two pages can be found in the basic and refresher server materials in this package.

The tests are True and False, and Multiple Choice. Some are easy and some are hard. Managers may want to give the test as a pre-test, before training, and then after training, to gauge its success.

Feel free to add any other questions to the test. The more questions the better, and as training levels and experience in ASIP increases, you can make the tests more complicated. The object is to serve alcohol responsibly. Knowledge of what to do, when to do it, and how to do it, are key to a successful ASIP program.

Also, you may borrow training materials from other sources. Installations have partnered with many local organizations or companies to complement ASIP training or to implement other programs that will assist in reducing alcohol abuse or driving while intoxicated. Some of these organizations are Mother's Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), and Bartender's Against Drunk Driving (BADD). Commercial or State/local ASIP-type programs may also be available for use instead of this guide.

ALCOHOL KNOWLEDGE TEST

1	Drinking different kinds of alcohol the same evening increases the effect of alcohol (you'll become intoxicated sooner than if you stick with just one type).	T	F
2	The average five-ounce drink of wine is less intoxicating than the average 1.25-ounce straight shot of (80°) liquor.	T	F
3	Drinking a 6-pack of beer is less intoxicating than drinking two of those tall mixed specialty drinks, each having about 2.0 ounces of 151° rum.	T	F
4	Drinking a glass of milk coats the stomach and protects you from getting intoxicated for moderate amounts of alcohol.	T	F
5	A person can be drunk (legally intoxicated) and not stagger or slur his or her speech.	T	F
6	It is easy to tell if people are drunk, even if you don't know them well.	T	F
7	A person drinking on an empty stomach will get drunk faster.	T	F
8	People's moods help determine how they are affected by alcohol.	T	F
9	A woman and a man both weigh 146 pounds. They each drink 4 beers over a 3-hour period. At the end of the 3-hour period, the intoxication level (BAC) will be: A) Higher for the man B) Almost the same C) Higher for the woman D) Zero, as the alcohol will process out of both drinkers by that time	A B C D	
10	A person who weighs less becomes intoxicated faster than a heavier person.	T	F
11	Alcohol is involved in 31% of all fatal traffic accidents.	T	F
12	The only sure way to tell if a person is legally intoxicated is by measuring their blood alcohol content (BAC) via a quality breathalyzer or actual blood test.	T	F
13	People who are drunk cannot compensate for it when they drive.	F	F
14	In a fatal drunk driving accident, the drunk is usually not the one killed.	T	F
15	Drinking black coffee can help sober up a person.	T	F

16	Alcoholic beverages are a stimulant.	T	F
17	A "drink" can warm you up on cold days.	T	F
18	Alternating among different types of beverages during an evening of drinking: A) Will make you sick B) Is OK if you are male because of higher normal body weight, body water content, and higher level of stomach enzymes that break down alcohol C) Is no different to the body than drinking the same type of alcohol D) Will get you intoxicated quicker than sticking with one type of alcoholic beverage	A B C D	
19	A cold shower will sober up an intoxicated individual.	T	F
20	An alcoholic can be someone who: A) Drinks every day B) Drinks only several times a week C) Drinks only once a month D) All of the above	A B C D	
21	It is estimated that alcohol is the leading contributor to deaths in: A) Automobile accidents B) Boating accidents C) Household fires D) All of the above	A B C D	
22	Servers have the right and the responsibility to refuse service to any patron who is: A) Obviously intoxicated B) In danger of being a drunk driver C) Below the legal drinking age D) All of the above	A B C D	
23	Which of the following do better on tests of motor coordination, sensory perception, and intellectual function?: A) Experienced drinkers B) Less experienced drinkers C) Drinkers age 62 and over D) All of the above do poorly on the tests	A B C D	
24	If you advise a customer that she has been "cut off" from being served additional alcoholic beverages, you should do all the following except: A) Advise a manager that you have cut off a customer B) If she argues, raise your voice so she knows who's in charge C) Attempt to keep her in your activity and have her eat some substantial food and/or drink non-alcoholic beverages D) Ask for her car keys so she can't drive home	A B C D	
25	Dram Shop laws can hold which of the following people financially responsible for injuries an intoxicated patron causes to third party individuals: A) Server B) Installation Commander C) Patron D) Patron's insurance company	A B C D	

ANSWER KEY FOR ALCOHOL KNOWLEDGE TEST

1	<p>Drinking different kinds of alcohol the same evening increases the effect of alcohol (you'll become intoxicated sooner than if you stick with just one type).</p> <p>FALSE. Alcohol is alcohol. If you remove the alcohol from a can of beer, a glass of wine, and a liquor drink, you would have the SAME amount of alcohol from each. If you have two beers and a glass of wine, that's three drinks with about 0.5 ounces of pure alcohol in each for a total of 1.5 oz of pure alcohol. Consuming one of each type of beverage still totals to 1.5 oz. of alcohol. It is the alcohol that reacts with the body, not the other ingredients in the beverage.</p>
2	<p>The average five-ounce drink of wine is less intoxicating than the average 1.25-ounce straight shot of (80°) liquor.</p> <p>FALSE. The alcohol content of both drinks is the same (about 0.5 ounces). The only variable is what the alcohol is diluted with (water, juice, etc.) and the amount of the dilution.</p>
3	<p>Drinking a 6-pack of beer is less intoxicating than drinking two of those tall mixed specialty drinks, each having about 2.5 ounces of 151° rum.</p> <p>FALSE. A six-pack of beer contains approximately 3 ounces of pure alcohol. The high-proof mixed specialty rum drinks each contain about 1.5 ounces of pure alcohol for a total of 3 ounces for both drinks. As both have the same amount of alcohol, a drinker would normally become equally intoxicated whichever is consumed.</p>
4	<p>Drinking a glass of milk coats the stomach and protects you from getting intoxicated for moderate amounts of alcohol.</p> <p>FALSE. Milk does briefly coat your stomach, but as about 95% of the alcohol is absorbed into the blood stream after the alcohol leaves the stomach, coating the stomach with anything does not prevent or reduce your intoxication level.</p>
5	<p>A person can be drunk (legally intoxicated) and not stagger or slur his or her speech.</p> <p>TRUE. Remember that in many states, a BAC of 0.08% qualifies as legally intoxicated for the purpose of driving. A 160-pound customer (or less) may have had "only" three drinks over a two-hour period, but that is enough for a majority of them to hit the 0.08% standard. None of these customers may show signs of slurred speech or difficulty walking.</p>
6	<p>It is easy to tell if people are drunk, even if you don't know them well.</p> <p>FALSE. The reason this is false is that not everyone who is drunk (intoxicated for purposes of driving) shows obvious signs, particularly unfamiliar customers. Customers that are "falling down" drunk are easy to identify, and hopefully, did not get that way in your facility. Most customers just hitting the 0.08% BAC level, or the 0.10% level, may appear perfectly normal. These are the people that are of concern, because it is NOT obvious that they are intoxicated, even though they are.</p>
7	<p>A person drinking on an empty stomach will get drunk faster.</p>

TRUE. Alcohol is released from the stomach directly into the intestines, and then into the blood stream (from which BAC readings can be taken) very rapidly, on an empty stomach. Food in the stomach slows down the release of anything in the stomach to the intestines. The more food, the slower the release, including the release of alcohol. Therefore, a person having 2 or 3 drinks on a full stomach, will have a little bit of alcohol released into their system over a long period and potentially never reaching an intoxicated level. A customer, who hasn't eaten, can hit the legally intoxicated BAC level in a very short time after finishing the last drink.

8	People's moods help determine how they are affected by alcohol.
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TRUE. There is some debate about whether this is caused by the body or the brain, but a customer who comes in mad about something is likely to react as if intoxicated substantially sooner than someone who is coming to a dinner party.

9	A woman and man both weight 146 pounds. They each have 4 beers over a 3-hour period. At the end of the 3 hour period, the intoxication level (BAC) will be:
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C. Higher for the woman.

There are other factors affecting BAC levels besides body weight. They include the amount of water in the body (women generally have less than men of equal weight) and women normally have fewer stomach enzymes that process alcohol.

10	A person, who weighs less, becomes intoxicated faster than a heavier person.
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TRUE. The reason for this is simple dilution. A 200-pound person has more "body" than a 100-pound person, hence more water, blood, etc. It is like taking an ounce of pure alcohol and pouring it into a half-gallon container of water, and another ounce into a one-gallon container of water. Which container has the higher concentration of alcohol? The half-gallon container.

11	Alcohol is involved in 31% of all fatal traffic accidents
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TRUE. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration reported in 2014 that of all fatal traffic crashes, 31% had alcohol as a contributor to the accident. This resulted in over 9,967 deaths.

12	The only sure way to tell if a person is legally intoxicated is by measuring their blood alcohol content (BAC) via a quality breathalyzer or actual blood test.
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TRUE. One may be reasonably certain that someone is legally intoxicated if the person they observe is at the 0.15% or higher BAC level (based on their actions) but there are other conditions that can cause such results. Some people, on medication, can appear to be way over the limit, with as little as one drink. It is almost impossible to tell if someone is at the 0.08% BAC level, the DWI level in many states. Only evidential quality breathalyzers (or actual blood tests) used by experienced personnel can make an actual determination of legal intoxication. This does not preclude a server from making a judgment call, based on the ASIP training (weight, sex, etc) that a customer should be cut-off and not served additional alcoholic beverages.

13	People who are drunk cannot compensate for it when they drive.
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TRUE. Rolling down the window to have cold air blowing on the face; loosening clothes; or even trying to pay "extra" attention will not overcome the slowed reaction time and decreased judgment that comes from being intoxicated. In driving, quick recognition of dangerous situations and quick reactions to avoid them are sometimes necessary. As alcohol slows down reaction time and reduces the ability to make quick (reasonable) decisions, you cannot successfully learn to drive drunk.

14	In a fatal drunk driving accident, the drunk is usually not the one killed. FALSE. This seems the case from many newspaper accounts, but most drunk drivers in accidents where there are fatalities, are in fact killed. Many of these are where the only fatality is the drunk driver (running into a tree, embankment, etc).
15	Drinking black coffee can help sober up a person. FALSE. Only time will sober up a drinker. Coffee, generally containing caffeine, can act as a stimulant thereby creating a wide-awake drunk, but it won't sober you up.
16	Alcoholic beverages are a stimulant. FALSE. Alcohol is actually a depressant. One of the first things alcohol does when it goes through the body is to depress certain nerves. This can cause people to become relaxed (from which some people become more open, talkative, loud, etc). It is the suppressing of the nerves that causes this reaction, not a stimulation of them. When the alcohol works its way out of the body, the nerves return to normal.
17	A "drink" can warm you up on cold days. FALSE. The feeling of warmth comes from the dilation of blood vessels near the skin surface. However, the blood in those dilated vessels loses its heat very quickly, leaving the body temperature much lower than it was prior to drinking. Those with very high alcohol BAC levels are much more prone to getting hypothermia on frigid days than others.
18	Alternating among different types of beverages during an evening of drinking: C. Is no different to the body than drinking the same type of alcohol. Alcohol is alcohol no matter what the source is. Therefore alternating alcoholic beverages or not, is merely a matter of taste as the body and intoxication level is solely dependent on the quantity consumed over a period of time. It won't make you sick; sex, weight, etc., doesn't matter, and you won't become more or less intoxicated.
19	A cold shower will sober up an intoxicated individual. FALSE. Only time will rid the body of alcohol. A cold shower may wake up the individual, and they may feel more alert, but they aren't. You just end up with a wide-awake drunk, who pretends to be alert and cold!
20	An alcoholic can be someone who: D. All of the above. There are many formal definitions of an alcoholic. An informal one is someone who once they start drinking, has trouble stopping. You don't have to drink every day to be an alcoholic. Some will only drink once a month. But that individual is unable to stop drinking and will continue until they pass out from a high level of intoxication. Once that session is over, they may wait for some time before doing it again.
21	It is estimated that alcohol is the leading contributor to deaths in: D. All of the above. Besides the thousands of deaths from auto accidents caused by drunk drivers, thousands more are reported every year from boating accidents, household fires, swimming, and even simple falls. The majority of the deaths are traceable to the consumption of alcohol and then engaging in an activity where judgment, coordination, and concentration are required. Many of the deaths are underage people, which can be prevented by ALWAYS asking for proof of age before serving alcohol.
22	Servers have the right and the responsibility to refuse service to any patron who is:

D. All of the above.

Your SOP should specifically provide for this as a responsibility and right of a server and your customers should be advised that the servers are there to assist them in helping themselves. Management must fully support any server decision to refuse service to any customer that is intoxicated, is going to drive, or that is below the legal drinking age.

23	Which of the following do better on tests of motor coordination, sensory perception, and intellectual function:
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A. Experienced drinkers.

A number of studies have been done on specialized skill areas such as pilots. When given small quantities of alcohol, with the resulting BAC ranges from 0.01% to 0.09%, experienced drinkers showed less impairment than any other group. However, it should be noted that impairment was evidenced among even experienced drinkers, it was just LESS than inexperienced drinkers. Since some impairment is shown, this is why flight rules prohibit ANY alcohol consumption for a certain period of time prior to flying (12-24 hours).

24	If you advise a customer that she has been “cut off” from being served additional alcoholic beverages, you should do all of the following except:
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B. If she argues, raise your voice so she knows who’s in charge.

Remember, there is a difference between being firm and raising your voice to a customer. Servers should always advise the manager when a customer has been cut off and all attempts should be made to reduce the intoxication level or potential for driving.

25	Dram Shop laws can hold which of the following people financially responsible for injuries an intoxicated patron causes to third party individuals:
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A. Server.

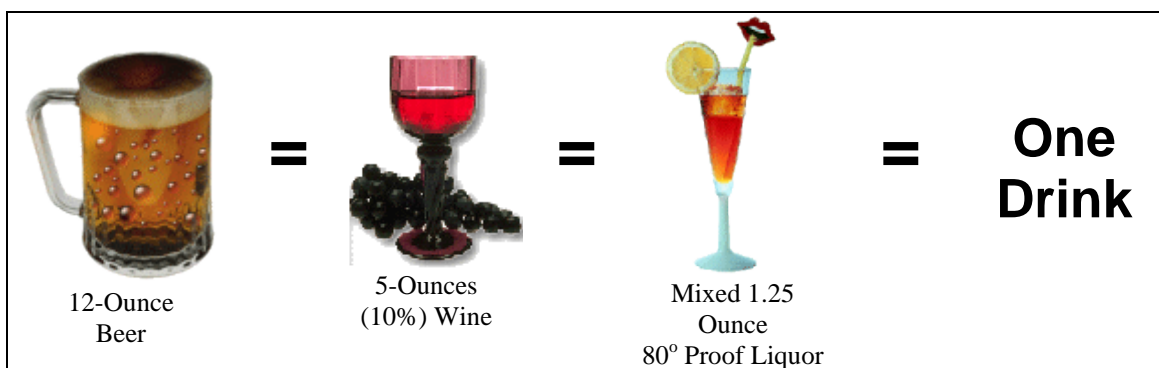
Servers HAVE been held financially liable to injuries caused by their customer who have been served alcohol to the point of intoxication, and who then injured an innocent party. It is generally a drunk-driving situation. This is why it is important to remember that the server is the first line of offense and defense in efforts to reduce the abuse of alcohol and the injuries that can result.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ALCOHOL

C₂H₅OH, ethyl alcohol (EToH), beverage alcohol, booze, or by any other name, is a chemical that affects the central nervous system when taken into the body. The effect and duration can be minor and short with small amounts of alcohol, or major and long with large quantities, but there is always some effect no matter the quantity consumed. This section cannot be overemphasized! Knowing the amount of alcohol in a standard drink can decrease heavy consumption and reduce high risk choices.

Alcohol is available in many forms, including many unsuspecting ones. It is a component of many over the counter medicines such as cough syrup and nighttime liquid cold medicines and is also found in cooking supplies such as some vinegar and pickles, and in some flavor extracts (vanilla extract can be 35% alcohol by volume). Alcohol in beverages normally ranges as a percent of the liquid from 4% for beer (though some specialized beers can hit 11% or more alcohol by volume) to 43% for scotch and whiskey. Certain rums are available with 80% of the liquid being pure alcohol. Proof, as a measure of alcohol, is usually restricted to liquor items, and is simply twice the percentage of alcohol (an 80° liquor item is 40% alcohol). Malt beverages and wines are usually measured as a percentage of liquid content. Alcohol sold for consumption is usually a mixture of alcohol and something: water, fruit or vegetable juice, or flavorings. Even 101 proof “straight” shots are in themselves mixtures (as it is only 50.5% alcohol, the rest water, etc). Here are some equivalents for you:

The illustration below shows that it does not matter in what form you consume a product that contains alcohol, it’s how much alcohol you consume that counts. Each drink below contains approximately 0.5 ounces (12 grams) of pure alcohol.



DRINK EQUIVALENCE

The chart below illustrates why each of the above is the equivalent of one drink (you will likely be challenged on this many times. Having the correct information and passing it along will do a lot for improving your chances of successfully reducing abuse.

EXAMPLES OF DRINK EQUIVALENCY			
TYPE OF BEVERAGE	FORMULA	ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL	NO. OF “DRINKS” EQUIVALENT
12 Ounces of 4% Beer	$12 \times .04 = 0.48$	0.48 oz.	1
5 Ounces of 10% Wine	$5 \times .10 = 0.50$	0.50 oz.	1
1.25 Ounces of 80° Liquor	$1.25 \times .40 = 0.50$	0.50 oz.	1
1.25 Ounces of 86° Liquor	$1.25 \times .43 = 0.52$	0.52 oz.	1
NOTE: ALL THE ABOVE SERVINGS HAVE APPROXIMATELY 0.50% OUNCES OF ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL AND ARE THEREFORE “EQUIVALENT” DRINKS.			

Many “drinks” are not equivalent, primarily large sizes, unusual mixtures, “tall” drinks, etc. Some examples of those include the number of “equivalent drinks” each contained are in the chart below

EXAMPLES OF DRINK EQUIVALENCY			
TYPE OF BEVERAGE	FORMULA	DIVIDE BY	NO. OF “DRINK” EQUIVALENT
40 Oz. 8% Malt Liquor	$40 \times .08 = 3.20 \text{ Oz.}$	0.50	6.4
12 Oz. 2.5% low alcohol beer	$12 \times .025 = 0.30 \text{ Oz.}$	0.50	0.6
1.25 Oz. of 151° Rum	$1.25 \times .755 = 0.94 \text{ Oz.}$	0.50	1.9
12.5 Oz . 20% Fortified Wine	$12.5 \times .20 = 2.50 \text{ Oz.}$	0.50	5.0
NOTE: YOU CAN CALCULATE THE NUMBER OF EQUIVALENT DRINKS BY KNOWING JUST THE QUANTITY TO BE SERVED AND THE ALCOHOL CONTENT.			

To help you convert shots, and bottles to ounces, the following chart is provided:

CONVERTING VARIOUS MEASUREMENTS TO OUNCES, BOTTLES, OR LITERS			
Pony Shot	0.5 Jigger	0.75 Oz.	
Shot	0.666 Jigger	1.00 Oz.	
Large Shot		1.25 Oz	
Jigger	1.5 Shots	1.50 Oz	
Pint	16 Shots	16.0 Oz	
Fifth	25.6 Shots	25.6 Oz	0.75706 liters
Quart	32.0 Shots	32.0 Oz	
Magnum		2.0 Quarts	2.5 Wine Bottles
Bottle of Wine		0.8 Quarts	0.7577 Liters

Alcohol’s Effect on the Body

Alcohol first sedates the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord), then irritates it. This sedation effect can result in people becoming relaxed or even hostile as certain portions of the nervous system are suppressed. The classic hangover that can occur is the irritation phase resulting in headaches, muscle aches, and other problems. The degree of each experienced will vary depending on the amount consumed, the drinking time, and the drinker’s body weight.

The liver is the body organ that breaks down 95% of the alcohol consumed. Though several steps are involved, it is eventually broken down into carbon dioxide and water for removal from the body. However, the purpose of the liver is to regulate the body’s blood sugar level, not to break down alcohol. When presented with both jobs, it chooses to work on the unnatural chemical first (the alcohol). What it can’t get rid of immediately continues to circulate in the body, passing through the liver time and again, until all the alcohol is processed out.

It can take the body two hours to return to an alcohol-free state after only one drink and approximately seven hours to rid itself of all effects of alcohol when only four drinks are consumed in less than two hours. An important point to remember is that alcohol peaks in the blood 30 to 45 minutes after each drink, so customers who drops in for “a few” on their way home, will have a peak BAC level after he departs your facility. As little as two drinks can put your customer into the DUI category, an hour later....

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

Any intake of alcohol over the amount the body can immediately process is detectable and known as the blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Generally, only three factors affect one's BAC - the number of drinks, body weight, and time. A standard BAC chart on page 26 illustrates the BAC level for different body weights for various numbers of drinks over a two-hour period.

This chart is useful as a guide for "typical" customers; however, it must be remembered that it is just a guide. Other factors can influence the real BAC of a customer, and may include:

- 1. Eating before or while drinking**
- 2. Eating high fat content foods vs. low fat.**
- 3. Quantity of food eaten**
- 4. Medications being taken**
- 5. Age of customer**
- 6. Medical condition of customer (circulatory problems, liver condition)**
- 7. Individual uniqueness (some people's systems process more efficiently than others).**

In most states, the BAC level at which you will be arrested for Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) is 0.08%. A reading of 0.05% or above may still get you arrested for Driving Under the Influence (DUI) under a presumption of intoxication. Erratic driving or other behavior with ANY BAC reading can still get you arrested for driving under the influence. Lastly, virtually all states now have "zero tolerance" laws in effect for minors: ANY alcohol reading will result in an automatic suspension or revocation of their drivers' license....

The following shows the general effects on people of different BAC levels of alcohol:

No. Of "Drinks"	BAC Level	Effects on Feeling & Behavior	Effects on Driving Ability
1	0.02	No observable effects. Mild alteration of feelings, slight intensification of moods.	Mild Changes. Most drivers seem a bit moody. Bad driving habits slightly pronounced.
2-3	0.05	Feeling of relaxation. Mild sedation. Exaggerated emotions and behavior. Slight impairment of motor skills.	Drivers take too long to decide and act. Motor skills (such as braking) impaired.
5-6	0.10	Difficulty performing gross motor skills. Uncoordinated behavior. Impairment of mental abilities, judgment & memory.	Judgment seriously affected. Physical and mental coordination impaired. Physical difficulty in driving a vehicle.
7-8	0.15	Major impairment of physical and mental functions. Irresponsible behavior. Euphoria. Some difficulty standing, walking and talking.	Distortion of perception and judgment. Driving erratic. Driver in a daze.
10	0.30	Completely impaired physical and mental functions. Likely unable to stand, walk or talk.	Can perform simple routine functions like starting car and using pedals. Unable to react to any stimulus in a timely fashion (braking, turning, etc).
15-20	0.40	Most people have passed out.	Driver passes out.. Accident results.

Although the effects on driving are illustrated, no customer should be encouraged to drive. Determining BAC level by observation of actions is almost impossible at or below 0.10%. Highly trained servers who know their customers have a good chance (based on experience with the individual and knowing when change occurs). ASIP training will give your servers a better chance of detecting changes in a customer but in the real world, customers can easily reach 0.10% without being detected as intoxicated particularly as it takes 30 to 45 minutes for the BAC to peak after drinking. Estimating weight, watching the clock, and counting drinks served to a customer is the only reliable way of estimating BAC and knowing when to slow down or cut-off a customer.

Food and Alcohol

Alcohol, unlike food, is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream. Only a minor amount is broken down in the stomach during digestion (+/- 5%). Most of the alcohol will reach the bloodstream by being absorbed through the small intestine (+/- 95%).

There is a small muscle that joins the stomach and small intestine that regulates the amount of food and liquids that enter the small intestines. If the stomach has no food in it, the muscle generally remains fully open, allowing liquids, including alcohol, to quickly pass directly into the intestines. When the stomach is full of undigested food, this muscle closes some, reducing the size of the opening, to regulate the amount of food entering the small intestine (allowing time for stomach acids to break down the food). If your customer is also drinking alcohol (with a full stomach), the muscle remains partially closed, which substantially slows down the entry of alcohol into the small intestine, delaying entry into the bloodstream, and keeping the BAC at a lower level.

Please note that a heavy drinker who has eaten a big meal is not protected against intoxication, as the sheer quantity of alcohol, even if its entry to the blood stream is

slowed, will still reach the blood stream. The level of intoxication (BAC) would be lower with a full meal than on an empty stomach and/or it would take longer for the BAC to peak. But, the difference for a heavy drinker between hitting a 0.15% BAC on an empty stomach and say 0.12% on a full stomach still results in the individual being legally intoxicated and not safe to drive.

Intoxication

A person becomes intoxicated when alcohol in the body is more than what the body can get rid of. The key point is that for most people, intoxication will occur to some degree if more than one drink is consumed over less than one-hour period (sipping the drink).

As mentioned, many factors contribute to how a person reacts to alcohol. Some of the factors are:

- Speed of intake
- Digestion (full or empty stomach)
- Total alcohol content of drink/Size of Drink
- Body weight/Sex
- Other chemicals in the system (medication)
- Body chemistry (diabetes or other medical conditions)
- Tolerance
- Psychological factors (depression); Circumstantial factors (lost job); or Environmental factors (sleazy establishment vs. fancy restaurant)

Tolerance

With constant drinking, some people may appear to function normally even after drinking above-average amounts of alcohol. Routine actions may appear normal (walking and talking), but precise control of body parts and clear judgment will, nevertheless, be impaired. Because these people may appear to others to be immune from the effects of alcohol, they often attempt, or are permitted to attempt, to do things that require unimpaired physical skills and decision making capabilities, such as driving. Many individual “skills” such as walking and talking “normally”, can be “learned” in an intoxicated state (with lots of practice). However, this ability does not transfer to other areas, like walking heel to toe.

There are two reasons for the body’s apparent tolerance to alcohol in some long-time, heavy drinkers. First, metabolic tolerance, where the liver begins to break down alcohol more efficiently. To achieve a “happy” state, the drinker must now consume more alcohol than in the beginning. Second, the brain and spinal cord become “use” to the alcohol, and even more alcohol is needed to achieve the same effects. Alcoholics often build up both kinds of tolerances with even more becoming necessary to achieve the desired goal (feelings). It should be remembered that despite increase liver processing, the decrease in BAC is only minor. An inexperienced drinker might have a 0.15% while an experienced drinker would show 0.13% with all other conditions being equal. Both are not safe to drive.

This tolerance increase is not permanent, however. Those who drink large amounts over a long period of time, find their tolerance level becoming less and less, because certain body organs eventually become damaged. The brain becomes damaged by having more and more cells destroyed, so less alcohol is needed for the desired effect. When liver damage occurs, the liver can no longer process out alcohol as it did. Those who for now “hold their liquor” well, won’t be able to do so for long.

Substance Use Disorder Severe (Alcoholism)

Alcoholism has many definitions. Some are simple, while others are more complex. A few of the common definitions are:

- **Any use of alcohol that causes continued damage to the individual, society, or both.**
- **A chronic disease manifested by repeated implicative drinking so as to cause injury to drinker's health or to his social or economic functioning.**
- **A disease in which the person's use of alcohol continues despite the problems it causes in any area of the drinker's life.**
- **Compulsive use or abuse of alcohol involving psychological dependence, with or without physical dependence.**

As you recall, alcohol first depresses, then irritates the body's central nervous system. One of the causes of alcoholism may result from those affects. Every time the irritation phrase happens, another drink is required to re-depress the system, which is followed by another irritation phrase that requires another drink, and so on.

Women vs. Men

A great deal of research has shown that there is more difference between women and men in consuming alcohol than just body weight. The most significant additional factor that creates quicker intoxication levels for women is the difference in body water content. Women have less body water content than men so that if a woman and a man of the same weight consumed the identical amount of alcohol, the woman's BAC reading can be 30% to 60% higher than the man's. A man's reading for the same amount of alcohol may be slightly below 0.05%, while the woman's reading could be slightly above 0.08%, legally intoxicated in many states! Also, men have a substantially greater number of enzymes in their stomachs than women that assist in breaking down alcohol (though the liver still does about 95% of the work). Therefore, more alcohol will go from a woman's stomach directly into the blood stream.

When using the charts or generalizations in this guide, please remember that the intoxication levels for women may be less than what is listed in the various charts and examples. The charts are useful as a guideline; they are not meant to be the final authority on intoxication levels.

HOW YOUR FACILITY AFFECTS DRINKING BEHAVIOR

Almost everything about your facility from its size, the décor package, type of music, and types and sizes of drinks offered will determine who your customers are. Setting the atmosphere is critical to patron conduct expected. Once you know who your customers are, you can then generally predict the drinking behaviors that you will experience and determine the level of controls and number of people you need to maximize the benefits of ASIP. Consider adding responsible consumption material to your facility.

Facilities with activities for customers such as darts, pool, video games, computer TV games, etc., will generally experience less drinking problems than those without, as many of the customers will come for the activities with alcoholic beverages being secondary.

The type of beverages you promote with your menu or signboard also affects the drinking patterns of your customers. If you promote or list beverages such as Zombies, Sliders, Slammers, Poppers, “large” drinks, etc., you may set a certain tone that will attract a certain type of customer, versus listing regular type drinks. Pitchers of beer, margarites, etc., almost always produce the effect of customers having to finish the pitcher, though they may have stopped with just one or two beers, if they ordered “by the glass.” This does not mean you shouldn’t offer pitchers of beer, just that you need to recognize the potential problems you may have as a result of having them available. You can (and should) serve whatever beverages are ordered, but as mentioned, promoting certain types of beverages creates an image to your customers. Is the image your customers have the one you want?

A variety of non-alcoholic beverages prominently displayed can also reduce alcohol-related problems. Customers who have already had several alcoholic drinks may switch to a non-alcoholic beverage if they know it’s available and reasonably priced. This may include the normal offerings of soft drinks, but specialty coffees, teas (hot or iced), or even a variety of fruit juices can reduce your problems.

Offering substantial food service (it doesn’t mean steak dinners), as discussed in several places in this guide, probably has the greatest benefit in reducing the effects of alcohol on your patrons. Burgers, sandwiches, fries, rolls, or any other high fat food items will lower the number of potential problems you might have. If you don’t already offer food items, there are many simple, inexpensive kitchen equipment items that will allow you to produce a wide-variety of food items. Besides, adding food sales may also increase your overall sales volume.

Even the size of your serving glass will affect your customer’s perception of your facility and the quantity they will consume. Beer mugs tend to come in 10-ounce to 16-ounce sizes. “Rocks Glasses”, typically used for liquor on the rocks, come in 5 to 12 oz. sizes. These are also used for chilled shooter drinks. If you have the larger size glasses and use them for shooter drinks, you are probably using a double or triple recipe, where one beverage may be the equivalent of three or four “regular” drinks.

The bottom line is to have a good and solid reason for doing what you do regarding alcohol in your facility. If it is defensible to your command structure, it’s most likely OK.

LIABILITY

Continuing pressure from the public over the years resulted in a drastic increase in the number of states that hold owners and sellers of alcohol responsible for injuries to customers or others as a result of selling alcohol to intoxicated persons, those who are impaired, or minors. This area is commonly referred to as “Dram Shop Laws.” Settlements in the millions of dollars are not uncommon. **Again, every server should know the DRAM Shop Law for your state or territory!**

Dram Shop laws were originally created to penalize a bar owner from profiting by continuing to knowingly serve an individual that may be intoxicated. When the intoxicated individual then caused injury to other people (or himself/herself) the injured party or the impaired persons’ family would sue the owner for damages caused by the owner continuing to sell the alcohol past the point of intoxication.

Although each state has a different approach to liability and some still retain the old common law that those impaired by alcohol are responsible for their own actions, this area is of sufficient concern that all activities that serve alcohol should be aware of the applicable laws and any legal ramifications.

This area should also be of specific concern to bartenders, waitresses, or other people selling alcohol as it is possible that they could be held personally liable for injuries suffered by the customer or a third party, should those customers be under age or intoxicated. As most servers are unaware that they could be personally sued, a discussion of this area will add an additional reason for servers to exercise caution.

It is suggested that a legal representative spend about 15 minutes explaining these and other related areas to your servers and management staff. The discussion should be in non-legal terms and highlight the area. The intent isn’t to turn servers into legal experts, but to familiarize them with dangers to the activity, the Coast Guard, and themselves from serving alcoholic beverages to those who shouldn’t be drinking. Servers should also receive guidance on the local laws in your State and area.



MYTHS OR TALES ABOUT ALCOHOL

It never hurts to be able to “tell it like it is” if the situation arises. Here are some tales about alcohol, followed by the “straight scoop.” Be prepared to set people straight (in a nice way) when you hear these statements:

1. Hangovers are caused by: a. red wine; b. switching drinks; c. cheap liquor.

Hangovers occur because the liver can't do its job of keeping the body's blood sugar level regulated while it's trying to rid the body of alcohol. A hangover is a toxic hypoglycemic attack brought about by drinking too much alcohol.

2. Beer drinkers don't become alcoholics.

Americans drink about 10 times as much beer as liquor. But since the effects of one beer are similar to the effects of one shot of liquor, there's as much as a 10 to 1 chance that an alcoholic is primarily a beer drinker.

3. Alcoholics have to drink every day.

Alcoholics are people who can't stop drinking once they start. Their drinking episodes can occur daily, weekly, or even once or twice a year. The test is not when or how often one drink, but whether one can stop once he or she starts.

4. Beer drinkers get fat; wine and liquor drinkers don't.

Alcohol (and it doesn't matter if from beer, wine or liquor) contains calories in a form that is converted into energy quickly. The body uses those calories first, and stores the calories from nutritious food as fat to be used later. All alcohol contains “empty” (non-nutritious) calories that encourage weight gain.

5. Alcohol is a stimulant—that's how the “life of the party” gets that way.

Alcohol is a depressant. But one of the first things it deadens is part of one's brain that controls inhibitions. That's why some people can turn ugly (or giddy) very quickly, as the effect of the alcohol deepens.

6. Alcohol makes a good “warm-up” when it's cold.

The feeling of warmth comes from dilated blood vessels near the skin surface (those dilated vessels produce the “rosy glow”) but blood in dilated vessels loses its body heat very quickly, leaving the body temperature much lower than it was before.

7. Black coffee or a cold shower will sober you up quickly.

The only way to get rid of the effect of alcohol is to wait for the body's natural processes to break it down into waste products. Black coffee or cold showers may make sleepy person seem more alert, but does nothing to counteract alcohol's depressive effects on the brain that make driving so dangerous. Time is the only remedy.

INTOXICATION

The first thing a server must learn is the observable symptoms of alcohol intoxication. A person who exhibits these symptoms is almost always unfit to drive, since they ordinarily do not appear at the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) levels below .08 (A blood Alcohol Concentration chart is shown on page 26.)

Occasionally, the symptoms will be caused by a physical or emotional condition, or medication unrelated to alcohol; but, for your sake and the patron's, it's better to be safe than sorry. Alcohol or a combination of prescription drugs and alcohol worsen many physical conditions. In extreme cases, death may result.

ALCOHOL AFFECTS THE BODY IN THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE:

1. Inhibitions are relaxed
2. Judgment is impaired
3. Reactions are slowed
4. Coordination decreases markedly

Anytime you see behaviors like the ones listed below, be alert that you might need to take action. Check with the person named in your SOP if you're not sure how serious the situation is or how to handle it.

FIRST STAGE - INHIBITIONS

- Being overly friendly
- Speaking loudly
- Annoying other customers
- Drinking alone
- Acting big
- Changing from loud to quiet or vice versa

SECOND STAGE - JUDGMENT

- Complaining about strength of drink
- Ordering doubles
- Using foul language
- Buying rounds for strangers or for the house
- Being belligerent
- Changing consumption rate
- Arguing
- Being careless with money
- Making irrational statements

THIRD STAGE - REACTIONS

- Lighting more than one cigarette at a time (Outside in smoking area!)
- Eyes glassy
- Loss of train of thought
- Unable to light a cigarette
- Eyes not focused

FOURTH STAGE - COORDINATION

- Unable to pick up change
- Can't find the mouth with glass
- Stumbling
- Bumps into things
- Swaying, falling
- Spills drink
- Unable to sit straight on chair or bar stool
- Drowsing

RECOGNIZING SYMPTOMS OF INTOXICATION

This page lists many kinds of behavior you might find among your patrons. Using your experience and the material on pages 20 and 21, decide whether each behavior is usually a symptom of intoxication and (if it is) which stage it belongs in.

FUMBLING

EXCESSIVE PROFANITY

SLURRED SPEECH

DROOPY EYELIDS

CRYING

LEG JIGGLING

NOT ANSWERING

LOSING BALANCE

WEAVING

GULPING DRINKS

DAYDREAMING

VERY DELIBERATE SPEECH

TREMBLING

EXCESSIVE TOUCHING

DANCING

FAULTY THINKING

STUTTERING

TELLING JOKES

NAUSEA

YAWNING

STAGGERING

MOOD CHANGE

WHINING

HOSTILITY

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION (BAC) CHART

Frequently, patrons have blood alcohol levels high enough to make them risky drivers before they show symptoms. To help you spot these times, use the following chart. The better you get at estimating people's weight, the more accurate your decisions based on the chart will be.

Weight	Number of Drinks Consumed Over a Two Hour Period								
100	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
120	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
140	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
160	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
180	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
200	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
220	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
240	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rating	Probably OK to Drive BAC up to 0.05% Reaction Time Slowed				Avoid Driving Ability Impaired BAC 0.05% - 0.07%			Don't Drive Intoxicated BAC 0.08% +	

This chart reflects the approximate BAC level based on weight and number of drinks. Some people find this one easier to use. Both charts show the same basic information.

APPROXIMATE BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT PERCENTAGE								
Drinks	Body Weight in pounds							
	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
1	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02
2	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03
3	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05
4	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06
5	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08
6	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.1	.09
7	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11
8	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13
9	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14
10	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16

PREVENTION OF INTOXICATION

Most of the time, a server can't do anything to stop the patron who intends to become drunk, because he or she will go somewhere else to get alcohol.

But sometimes servers CAN make the difference for:

- social patrons who accidentally drink too much
- bored or lonely patrons who can't think of anything else to do but drink alcohol
- inexperienced drinkers who don't know alcohol's effects
- Knowing the drinking patterns of "regulars."

On the next page are some tips (the play-on words are intentional).... All three groups of patrons listed above will be grateful for your concern, and may well show it in gratuities they leave for you. Use them in an "I Can Make A Difference" approach to your patrons.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ALCOHOL USE OR ABUSE

1. Think ahead for your patrons. Alcohol's effects begin within minutes after it is ingested, but the patron won't notice anything for 15 or 20 minutes. That's why it's important for you to know when the next drink you serve will probably be the one that causes trouble. Here are some rough guidelines to help you decide:
 - On the average a person weighing 100 pounds can handle 1 drink an hour
 - On the average, a 120-200 pound person can handle 2 drinks an hour
 - After 2 hours, the safe number of drinks per hour goes down, as the body gets behind at getting rid of the alcohol
 - After more than 3 hours of drinking at these levels, any person will probably NOT be a safe driver
2. Delay service when there is more than one drink per person on the table or bar. Try not to serve a patron previously served by one of your co-workers without checking with other employees for how much and what has been served.
3. When a patron arrives, chat with him or her for a few minutes before taking an order. This give you time to make sure he or she hasn't already had enough alcohol someplace else.
4. Do not serve a new drink without taking away the glass from the old drink.
5. Particularly with large groups, check to see that the number of drinks ordered at one time doesn't add up to more than one per person.

6. Discourage the ordering of “rounds.” The members of a group probably can’t all handle the same number of drinks.

7. Keep in mind these additional risks patrons face:
 - Time of day (is it close to when your customer may have eaten a meal?)
 - Experience with alcohol (the less one has drunk alcohol, the greater the chance of over-indulgence will be)
 - Social setting (business meetings are least risky; couples socializing, slightly more so; “night out with the boys, (or girls)” are riskier yet).
 - Physical condition (although you can’t always know this, you should be able to spot signs of colds and allergies, a patron who takes a pill or capsule with his or her drink, injuries, and other clues that the patron isn’t in top shape and probably can’t handle as much alcohol as usual)

8. Try to keep track of the number of drinks you serve each patron and how much time has elapsed since the last one was served. For average-sized patrons, one drink an hour are probably OK. For short or extremely thin patrons, less is safer.

Remember that you have the right AND the responsibility to refuse service of alcohol to any person who is:

- obviously intoxicated
- in danger of becoming a drunk driver
- below legal drinking age

LIGHT, LOW, AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

We have seen the development and marketing of alcoholic beverages with reduced alcohol content since the 1970's. A key point to remember with these beverages is that you still need to watch your customers. If they believe that because it is a reduced alcohol content beverage, that they can then drink twice as much, your customer will become just as intoxicated as with say half the number of regular content alcohol (assuming the light alcohol beverage is 50% of the regular alcohol content). Please also remember that the percentage of alcohol can vary between manufacturers, so that one company's "light" beverage may have the same alcohol content as another's "low" alcohol content product.

Non-alcoholic beverages are generally limited to beer though non-alcoholic wines have been around for years. Taste tests have shown mixed reactions: some praise them and others do not. Each facility should consider offering at least one non-alcoholic beer.

Facilities with larger bar operations, high volume bars, or those with extensive open/cash bar party business, should include a section on their menus that include all their standard drinks made with light alcohol. Your menu can simply read:

For your convenience, all vodka, gin, bourbon, and scotch items are available in light alcohol versions that only contain 60% to 80% of the alcohol in our regular beverages. Please ask your server for a "light" drink.

Something this simple can greatly assist your efforts to reduce the effects of alcohol on your customers.

CUT-OFF TECHNIQUES

For many servers, it's easier to tell when someone should be cut off than to know how to do it. Here are some tips from other servers to practice among staff:

1. Use a non-judgmental approach. Don't use words like "drunk" or "had too much." Don't seem to blame him or her. Say something like, "I'm sorry, but if I served you it might mean my job," or "I don't want to see you get in trouble with the police."
2. Be firm. Once you've decided to cut a patron off, he or she is cut off, period. Don't bargain. After the initial "I'm sorry..." remarks, don't get drawn into explanations, defenses, or arguments. By all means, don't back down.
3. Minimize the confrontation. Try to tell the patron privately if possible. Always offer a non-alcoholic or food choice, so the patron is in a group, see if you can get somebody in the group to handle the situation for you. If the patron's rank troubles you, see if there's anybody around of equal rank who might be able to help.
4. Alert a backup. Even if you feel completely comfortable about cutting somebody off, be sure the manager knows what's happening and keeps an eye on you and the situation. You never know what could happen and you may be glad for help or even a witness later.

WHAT TO DO AFTER CUT OFF

Knowing when and how to cut off patrons isn't enough. You need to be able to help them stay out from behind the wheel of an automobile. Here are some ways to do that:

1. Find a sober buddy who will take matters in hand. Use the Designated Driver program, but be aware that designated driver programs are not a license for all others in the vehicle to over drink as this may cause an entirely new set of unsafe situations.
2. Offer food or a non-alcoholic drink. Coffee and food won't sober anybody up, but the time it takes to consume occupies time while the body does its work.
3. Arrange alternate transportation. Call a friend or a local volunteer safe-ride group; call a cab, call Security, or other types of transportation that might be available. At a minimum, have the phone numbers handy of available transportation.
4. Help them get a room for the night. Staying at billeting, guesthouse, or motel may be the best way out of driving. At least have the phone numbers handy.
5. Try to make sure your patron leaves with all his or her personal possessions, especially wallets or purses.
6. Call the police or security if it looks like things will get out of hand. Better to risk the patron's displeasure than his or her life or that of others.
7. Get the patron's keys if he or she tries to drive. Call the police/security with the vehicle description if you can't get the keys. Again, better to risk the patron's displeasure than his or her life or that of others.

SITUATIONS

On the next pages you will find situations that offer opportunities for your employees to practice what they have learned so far. There are no “right” answers, as no single approach is necessarily right or wrong. The action taken must be acceptable and in accordance with your SOP. Ensure your SOP is consistent with the action taken!

What you consider to be “acceptable” depends on your SOP, the climate inside and outside the gates, your employees’ ideas of what you want (which may be different from yours), and many other things.

These situations were created to cause lots of discussion between you and your employees. Be sure to have employees tell you any assumptions they made to support their decisions as the facts they use in making their decision will support that decision. And encourage lots of “what if?” alternatives for each situation.

DON’T assume that these are necessarily all “cut-off” situations – or “serve” situations. Your good judgment and healthy respect for safety of your patrons should be your guide.

ROLE PLAYING

Instead of just reading the situations to employees, ask your employees to volunteer to act out each of the situations. Provide as much latitude as possible. Employees can become all the “actors” in the situation, including the customers, wait staff, management, etc. This method can produce substantially greater returns in understanding, as it allows for many natural variations to occur.

SAMPLE SITUATIONS

Read the following situations and decide whether you should serve the drink(s) requested. Be prepared to explain any additional information you’d ask for and why you made your decisions.

* * *

It’s about 4:30 in the afternoon. A Coastie hurries in, chooses the second bar stool from the right, away from a group of others from his unit standing around the left side of the bar, and calls out, “Chivas and water,” in a loud voice, banging his palm down on the bar for emphasis. (Will he get the Chivas?)

The Captain has been with a party of four for about two hours. They each had three beers, and now the Captain is ordering another for herself and one other at the table. The Captain is about 5’4 and slender. The other beer will go to a man in civilian clothes who looks like as if he might have been a fullback in college. (You need to make two decisions, one for each beer ordered.)

Your table has a party of six: three couples about 45 years old. All are in civilian clothes, but one is known to you as a real hard-nosed Chief Petty Officer who doesn't take no for an answer. Since he's been your customer lots of times before, you know he drinks a lot more than average, but never seems to show signs of intoxication. He calls you over and orders drinks all around, but three women and one other man shake their heads "no." The remaining man doesn't give any response. The women have each had two pina coladas. The other men have each had two beers. The Chief who called you over had two 'rusty nails.' It's just about noon, and they have been there an hour. The Chief repeats the request "another round for everyone." (Who, if anybody, gets another drink?)

The gray haired woman was down at the end of the bar when you came on duty at three. She is rhythmically stabbing the tip of a cocktail pick into her crumpled napkin. You guessed that she must have asked for extra olives, since there are four on the pick in her nearly empty martini. You smile and speak, and when she looks up with a half smile, you notice what might be tears in her eyes, but she is not actually crying. She pushes the glass towards you and nods. (Does she get the drink?)

An officer in uniform and two men in civilian work clothes occupy one of your tables. All three have had two beers, and the civilians have each nearly finished your special club sandwich with coleslaw and potato salad on the side. You checked twice, and the officer said both times that he didn't want anything else. Now he has called you over and asked for another beer for each of them.

You have successfully cut off a party of two couples. They even thanked you for looking out for them. As they get up to leave, you hear one of them say "OK Jan, you two follow us home." (What, if anything, will you do?)

NOTE: Make up your own realistic situations based on actual happenings in your own activity for additional practice.

REFRESHER SERVER TRAINING

Training Outline

- 1. Manager Preparation.** As you did for Basic Server Training, decide what training your servers need. Duplicate enough copies of any printed materials for those who will use them. Give employees advance notice of training times and topics.
- 2. Employee participation.** This part of the training reviews what was taught in basic server training and builds on your employees' experiences since then. Mix activities and keep each session no longer than an hour. Involve your best servers. Your emphasis should be on "The Way We Do Things Here". This builds team spirit and avoids patronizing employees who are new but have a lot of hospitality experience.

NOTE: Advanced training attempts to create greater skill at determining "threshold conditions" – when one or more drinks will cause problems after it is consumed. This is difficult for two reasons; different patrons tolerate alcohol differently at different times and every server has his or her own attitude towards alcohol. Experts say that in any group of people, one either is or will be an alcoholic, two have problems related to alcohol, and four have felt the adverse effects of alcohol on someone else's life. Your employees are no different. So, keep focusing on the benefits to all by creating a place that is fun to work in and to frequent, no matter how one feels personally about alcohol.

- 3. Employee Testing.** As in basic server training, the most effective test is a simulation of things as they may happen on the job. Use the servers who did the best job in basic training as role players and models in this section. You will find situations on pages 32 and 33. By all means, modify them to make them more realistic for your situation.
- 4. Training future hires.** Because almost all the learning activities in this package are designed for group interaction, we recommend that (after the initial session) you defer refresher training until you have a minimum of four who have been trained. You can ask your best servers to work closely with those waiting refresher training to take up any slack.

SITUATIONS

You've been serving a table with five males. They've been there a while, but you're not sure how long. They're drinking beer, and when you clear the table you find a full warm bottle of beer among the empties. As usual, the big guy has something smart to say, and you think, "This guy's getting to be a pain." Just as you're leaving, he gives you the backhand on your upper arm and says, "Bring us five more."

Two couples have come in for dinner, and you've served them all one cocktail each. They've been sitting quietly, but now there seems to be some kind of argument brewing. You go over to tell one of the women that the chef is out of king crab legs, and the other woman's husband breaks in to complain that his martini glass was dirty, service is lousy, and he doesn't know why he comes to "this place" at all.

There's a country-western band and it's been a good but busy night. You've particularly enjoyed one mixed group that has been poking fun at each other all evening. They've even tried to get outrageous bets. They're pushing and shoving each other, but all in good humor. Now while taking orders, you overhear one of them say, "I SAID that's enough. That isn't funny any more."

The retired Admiral and his wife have just been seated at one of your tables. You walk up and notice that he's kind of bleary-eyed and has just pulled his fork off the table while picking up his napkin. You see keys on the floor beside the fork. This couple comes in a lot, and you know his wife will want one (that's as many as she ever orders) whiskey sour. You also know that she's pretty influential so far as the manager's concerned.

A group of young Coasties and dates have come in and picked a large table over in the far, dark corner. As you approach, one gets up quickly and heads for the ladies' room. When you take the orders, one orders for himself and the one who's in the ladies' room, and one other can't seem to make up his mind what he wants until he's prompted by somebody else in the group.

This couple has obviously been arguing when they come in. You bring them the beers they order (after she changes her brand from what he asked for) and they hardly look up. Their voices get louder until she gets up and flounces out. He waves and points to the empty mug.