



October 2012

Dear Licensee,

Minors as Agents Program to Monitor Food-Primary Establishments

Restricting minors' access to liquor is a public safety priority for government because of the serious consequences when minors consume alcohol.

As you may be aware, the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch has hired underage youth to assist the branch in monitoring whether licensed establishments and government liquor stores are selling liquor to minors.

While our main focus so far has been licensee retail and government liquor stores, the LCLB recently began testing food-primary establishments. The branch has and will take a risk-based approach in deciding which restaurants to monitor, just as we generally do with other types of inspections. The results of the inspections in restaurants so far have shown that the risk of sale to a minor is very high.

Hiring minors is the most effective way to monitor whether a licensee is selling alcohol to youth who are underage. This same approach has also been used very successfully by the Ministry of Health's Tobacco Control Program for several years.

All of the establishments found selling to minors so far have been assessed a \$7,500 monetary penalty. Those establishments/stores will be tested again. Please note that if an establishment is found to be selling to minors a second time, and the date of the second contravention is within twelve months of the first, the minimum penalty set out in the penalty schedule is a 20 day licence suspension.

To help guard against selling liquor to minors, staff should do an initial assessment of every patron before selling or serving them liquor. When checking ID, properly review both the offered identification and the patron, and ask appropriate questions to test the ID's authenticity.

More information on the Minors as Agents Program is available on our website, under "Current News": <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/index.htm>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Ayers".

Karen Ayers
Assistant Deputy Minister and
General Manager

**Liquor Control and
Licensing Branch**

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