

April 2, 2020

Governor Signs Law Allowing for Immediate Restaurant Beer/Wine Sales with Takeout Meals

Gov. Charlie Baker signed into law today an act that included a provision allowing restaurants to sell take-out beer and wine, and an official postponement of the income tax filing deadline from April 15th to July 15th. **The law took immediate effect.**

The beer and wine allowance language reads as follows:

SECTION 13. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, during the governor's March 10, 2020 declaration of a state of emergency, an establishment licensed to sell alcoholic beverages or only wines and malt beverages on-premises may sell wine or malt beverages only for off-premises consumption subject to the following conditions: (i) the wine or malt beverage shall not be sold to a person under 21 years of age; provided, however, that any delivery of wine or malt beverages for off-premises consumption shall not be made without verification that the person receiving the order has attained 21 years of age; (ii) the wine shall be sold in its original, sealed container and the malt beverage shall be sold in a sealed container; (iii) the wine or malt beverage shall be sold as part of the same transaction as the purchase of food; provided, however, that any order that includes wine or malt beverages shall be placed not later than the hour of which the establishment is licensed to sell alcohol or 12:00 midnight, whichever time is earlier; and (iv) a customer shall be limited to 192 ounces of malt beverage and 1.5 liters of wine per transaction.

The law also relaxes rules for municipalities on local property tax deadlines. The law did not address the RAM priority of commercial rent relief, yet we remain encouraged as the Legislature continues to work on compromise legislation that would protect tenants and homeowners from evictions due to the COVID-19 crisis. Competing House and Senate bills aim to suspend most residential and commercial evictions and foreclosures for a period of time during the crisis, but the specifics remain fluid.