EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alcoholic Beverage Code authorizes the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission to regulate the sales, taxation, importation, manufacturing, transporting and advertising of alcoholic beverages. The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) is the state agency that regulates all phases of the alcoholic beverage industry in Texas. The Commission is divided into five (5) Districts, with each serving particular areas throughout the State. The Houston District or “District 3” serves the areas of Beaumont, Bryan, Galveston, Houston and the surrounding areas. Though “District 3” is the smallest of the five Districts geographically, this region holds one-fourth of the State’s issued alcoholic beverage permits.

The laws regulating the alcoholic beverage industry are consistent statewide, however the Alcoholic Beverage Code allows local determination of the types of alcoholic beverages which may be sold and how they can be sold within the County or City. Within the State of Texas, there are counties that remain “dry”, prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages, counties that are fully and partly “wet” permitting the sale of alcoholic beverages within the county. “Wet”/“Dry” spreadsheets and maps are available on the TABC website.

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission will issue an Alcoholic Beverage License to those who qualify. However, the applicant must apply for a Food Establishment Permit with Harris County. Additional applications, permits and licenses may be required from the City of Houston before an Alcoholic Beverage License can be issued by the Commission. Once an Alcoholic Beverage License is issued, it is the responsibility of the Licensee to provide a copy of the license, as well as any conditions to the County and the City.

In general, there are two (2) types of liquor license classes; “On-Premise” and “Off-Premise”. An “On-Premise” license permits the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages at the licensed establishment, while an “Off-Premise” license allows for the sale, but not consumption of alcoholic beverages at the licensed establishment.

The approximate timeframe to obtain a liquor license is 45 to 60 days. However, timeframes vary dependent on license types, and City and County certifications and requirements. The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission advises an applicant to start the process as early as possible to meet establishment opening deadlines.

The fees for an alcoholic beverage license vary dependent on the application and requests for additional permits/certifications in conjunction with the alcoholic beverage license. All fee information and schedules are enclosed herewith.

All of the applications and documentation can be found on the TABC website. Applications can be viewed, completed and printed via Adobe Acrobat Reader. It is recommended for an applicant to contact or visit the local District 3 Office for further information.
Flow chart

1. Obtain Food Establishment Permit
2. Apply for Alcoholic Beverage License in 45-60 days
3. Send Copies of Application to Municipalities
4. Location Gets Inspected & Interview Conducted
5. Obtain Liquor License

For further assistance with obtaining an Alcoholic Beverage License, please contact Joanna Rizzo (jrizzo@bohlereng.com) or James Powers (jpowers@bohlereng.com).

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DISCLAIMER: The information provided is for informational purposes only and is only as accurate as the information available at the time of the last update. Tenants, Tenant’s Design Team, and General Contractor are responsible for verifying all information as required for permitting and opening of the Tenant’s business.