

NEWS & INSIGHTS

Philadelphia 250 permit: What Philly liquor license holders need to know

BY: [KENNETH J. MCDERMOTT](#) | [INSIGHTS](#) | [ARTICLE](#)

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Philadelphia's temporary extension of alcohol service hours this summer creates a short-term revenue opportunity for liquor license holders, but only for those who plan ahead and secure the required permit on time.

A new amendment to the Pennsylvania Liquor Code, [Act 8 of 2026](#), will allow restaurants, hotels, retail dispensers, breweries, distilleries, limited distilleries, or limited winery licensees in Philadelphia [to stay open for two additional hours to serve alcohol from June 11 to July 20](#).

Under the special permit, closing times would be:

Philadelphia establishment	Normal M-F closing time	Sunday closing time	June 11-July 20 closing time (with approval)
Bar/restaurant/hotel/retail license	2 a.m.	2 a.m.	4 a.m.
Brewery/distillery	12 a.m.	11 p.m.	2 a.m. (1 a.m. Sundays)
Limited winery	2 a.m.	2 a.m.	4 a.m.

The bill is for license holders only within the Philadelphia city line to take advantage of the millions of visitors poised to descend on the city for soccer's FIFA World Cup and for the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. Major League Baseball's All-Star Game also will be held in Philadelphia during this time.

Application process

These establishments, however, must first apply for the special "Philadelphia 250" permit, which must be filed 30 days prior to the date on which the applicant intends to begin operating under the special permit. That sets the filing deadline for May 12 to take full advantage of the new authorization.

The permit carries a \$500 fee that must be paid at the time of filing. Saxton & Stump attorneys in the [Liquor Licensing and Alcohol Group](#) have extensive experience in working with establishments on state filings for liquor licenses, special permits, and more, and can partner with any eligible establishments on the Philadelphia 250 permit.

The application can be found on the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board's website [here](#).

Staff training

One important, additional qualification to earn the permit is that the licensee must complete a specialized program offered by the city to provide training in nighttime safety for patrons and employees. To receive the training, a licensee must apply for the [Liberty Bell Safe Certification Program by April 14](#), even if the business has not yet applied for or received a Philadelphia 250 permit.

In the training program, licensees will learn how to prevent safety issues before they occur, respond effectively to incidents, and navigate common nighttime operational challenges.

The training costs \$250 per licensee. You can [learn about the application process here](#).

Even without the Philadelphia 250 permit, the Liberty Bell Safe Certification Program provides helpful training for license holders and their employees. It could lower insurance premiums and prevent incidents at the venue before they happen. Our attorneys can help you with the application process or discuss the program's benefits.

IMPORTANT DATES

April 14 Deadline to apply for Liberty Bell Safe Certification Program

May 12

Deadline to apply for the Philadelphia 250 permit and be able to use the permit for its full timing, June 11 through July 20

Sporting Event Permits

In December, the state also approved a permit for a “special sporting event” permit for public venue licensees where alcohol could be sold in an extended area of the grounds of the venue from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m.

The permit was created to allow extended alcohol sales at the unusually large amount of national sporting events held in Pennsylvania in 2026 – with Philadelphia alone hosting the first round of the NCAA Basketball Tournament that happened in March, the World Cup in June and July, the MLB All-Star Game in July, and the PGA Championship in May, and Pittsburgh hosting the NFL Draft in April.

The special permit was meant to be for six days. However, the World Cup runs for more than a month, and Act 8 added a special provision for the permit for public venue licensees in Philadelphia for “an international soccer tournament” that allows it to last 50 days.

Currently, the Philadelphia 250 permit for extended hours applies only to establishments in the city of Philadelphia. There is currently no indication that the special permit will be available anywhere else in the state, such as Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, or Montgomery counties in suburban Philadelphia, but Saxton & Stump attorneys will monitor any action on the law that could extend its geographic reach.

With the Liberty Bell Safe application due April 14 and the Philadelphia 250 permit deadline of May 12, there’s limited time to act. [Contact me today](#) to ensure your application is complete and submitted on time, or contact anyone in the [Saxton & Stump Liquor Licensing and Alcohol Group](#).

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