

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §60-4-3C

§60-4-3c. License required for sale and shipment of liquor by a distillery, mini-distillery or micro-distillery; shipment of limited quantities of liquor permitted by a private direct shipper; requirements; license fee, and penalties.

(a) *Authorization.* — Except for the commissioner, no person may offer for sale liquor, sell liquor, or offer liquor for shipment in this state, except for a licensed private direct shipper. A distillery, mini-distillery, or micro-distillery, whose licensed premises is located in this state or whose licensed premises is located and licensed out of this state, who desires to engage in the sale and shipment of liquor produced by the distillery, mini-distillery, or micro-distillery on its licensed premises, shall ship directly from the licensee's primary place of distilling by mail, using a mail shipping carrier to a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older, for personal use, and not for resale under this article. The distillery, mini-distillery, or micro distillery shall obtain a private direct shipper license. Shipments to a purchasing person shall only be to a retail liquor outlet in the market zone in which the purchasing person resides. A private direct shipper may ship liquor subject to the requirements in this chapter in and throughout West Virginia, except for those local option areas designated as "dry" areas under §60-5-1 *et seq.* of this code. A private direct shipper may also sell, and ship liquor out of this state directly from its primary place of distilling by mail, using a mail shipping carrier to a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older subject to the recipient state's or country's requirements, laws, and international laws.

(b) *License requirements.* — Before sending any shipment of liquor to a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older, the private direct shipper must first:

- (1) File a license application with the commissioner with the appropriate background check information, using forms required by the commissioner. Criminal background checks will not be required of applicants licensed in their state of domicile who can provide a certificate of good standing from their state of domicile;
- (2) Pay to the commissioner the \$250 non-prorated and nonrefundable annual license fee to ship and sell only liquor;
- (3) Obtain a business registration number from the Tax Commissioner;
- (4) Register with the office of the Secretary of State;
- (5) Provide the commissioner a true copy of its current active license issued in the state of domicile, proving that the private direct shipper is licensed in its state of domicile as a distillery, is authorized by such state to ship liquor;
- (6) Obtain from the commissioner a private direct shipper's license;

(7) Submit to the commissioner a list of all brands of liquor to be shipped to West Virginia and attest that all liquor brands are manufactured by the distillery on its licensed premises seeking licensure and are not counterfeit or adulterated liquor;

(8) Attest that the distillery, mini-distillery, or micro-distillery distills less than 50,000 gallons of liquor each calendar year and provide documentary evidence along with the attestation; and

(9) Meet all other licensing requirements of this chapter and provide any other information that the commissioner may reasonably require.

(c) *Shipping Requirements.* — All private direct shipper licensees shall:

(1) Not ship more than two bottles of liquor per month to a retail liquor outlet for pickup by a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older for his or her personal use and consumption, and not for resale. The combined fluid volume of both bottles shall not exceed three liters;

(2) Not ship to any address in an area identified by the commissioner as a “dry” or local option area where it is unlawful to sell liquor under §60-5-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(3) Not ship to any licensed suppliers, brokers, distributors, retailers, private clubs, or other licensees licensed under this chapter or §11-16-1 *et seq.* of this code;

(4) Not ship liquor from overseas or internationally;

(5) Ensure that all containers of liquor shipped to a retail liquor outlet for pickup by a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older, are clearly and conspicuously labeled with the words “CONTAINS ALCOHOL: SIGNATURE OF PERSON 21 OR OLDER REQUIRED FOR DELIVERY”;

(6) Require a retail liquor outlet to obtain a written or electronic signature upon delivery to a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older when picking up a sealed liquor delivery order; and

(7) Utilize a licensed and bonded shipping carrier who has obtained a transportation permit as specified in §60-6-12 of the code.

(d) *Payment of Fees and Taxes.* —

(1) Any private direct shipper licensee on all sales of liquor must collect and remit the entire wholesale markup percentage and any handling fees, in full, as set forth in §60-3A-17 of the code and by rule of the commissioner to the commissioner at the close of each month and file a monthly report, on a form provided by the commissioner.

(2) Further, the private direct shipper licensee on all sales of liquor shall collect and remit

all state sales tax, municipal tax, and local sales tax to the Tax Commissioner at the close of each month and file a monthly return, on a form provided by the Tax Commissioner, reflecting the taxes paid for all sales and shipments.

(3) The payment of fees to the commissioner and taxes to the Tax Commissioner may be in addition to fees and taxes levied by the private direct shipper's domicile state.

(4) No private direct shipper will be required to pay any fees to the commissioner or taxes to the Tax Commissioner more than once.

(5) A retail liquor outlet which has entered a written agreement with a private direct shipper to accept a liquor shipment under this section may charge an additional fee not less than ten percent fee based on the total price of the liquor shipment, excluding the shipping charges, to a lawful purchaser.

(e) *Jurisdiction.* — By obtaining a private direct shipper licensee be deemed to have agreed and consented to the jurisdiction of the commissioner, which is Charleston, West Virginia and the Kanawha County circuit court, concerning enforcement of this chapter and any other related laws or rules.

(f) *Records and reports.* —

(1) Licensed private direct shippers and retail liquor outlets must maintain accurate records of all shipments sent to West Virginia.

(2) Provide proof or records to the commissioner, upon request, that all direct shipments of liquor were purchased and delivered to a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older.

(g) The private direct shipper may annually renew its license with the commissioner by application, paying the private direct shipper license fee and providing the commissioner with a true copy of a current distillery license from the private direct shipper's domicile state.

(h) The commissioner may promulgate legislative rules to effectuate the purposes of this law.

(i) *Penalties.* —

(1) The commissioner may enforce the requirements of this chapter by administrative proceedings as set forth in §60-7-13 and §60-7-13a of this code to suspend or revoke a private direct shipper's license or retail liquor outlet's license, and the commissioner may accept payment of a penalties as set forth in §60-7-13 and §60-7-13a of this code or an offer in compromise in lieu of suspension, at the commissioner's discretion. Hearings and appeals on such notices may be had in the same manner as in the case of revocations of licenses set forth in §60-7-13 and §60-7-13a of this code.

(2) If any such distillery violates the provisions of this chapter, the commissioner may

determine to suspend the privileges of the distillery to sell, ship, or deliver liquor to a purchasing person who is 21 years of age or older or to the commissioner, or otherwise engage in the liquor business in this state for a period of one year from the date a notice is mailed to such person by the commissioner of the fact that such person has violated the provisions of this article. During such one-year period, it shall be unlawful for any person within this state to buy or receive liquor from such person or to have any dealings with such person with respect thereto.

(k) *Criminal Penalties.* — A shipment of liquor directly to citizens in West Virginia from persons who do not possess a valid private direct shipper's license is prohibited. Any person who knowingly makes, participates in, transports, imports, or receives such an unlicensed and unauthorized direct shipment is guilty of a felony and, shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 per violation. Without limitation on any punishment or remedy, criminal or civil, any person who knowingly makes, participates in, transports, imports, or receives such a direct shipment constitutes an act that is an unfair trade practice.