

Alcohol in Parks and on Beaches

Events where alcohol is made available to the public must follow additional steps to meet permitting as service requirements as dictated by the City of Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Santa Barbara County health department and State of California Alcohol Beverage Control board (ABC).

Alcohol Served in City Parks and Beaches:

Alcohol is prohibited at some locations while it is allowed at others “by permit only.” Check with the Special Events Coordinator for the list of sites where alcohol service is allowed.

The Parks and Recreation Department allows public events to serve only beer and wine in City parks and beaches. Hard liquor is not permitted.

Alcoholic beverages other than those provided by the permittee or approved event vendors will not be allowed within the venue.

Glass containers are not allowed in parks or on beaches.

Event organizers may be required to provide an Alcohol Management Plan.

ABC Permitting Process:

If you propose to sell or furnish alcoholic beverages at your event, you will be required to obtain a permit from the State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC).

Before submitting an ABC Permit Application to the State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control Office, event organizers must first apply for an “ABC Endorsement” from the City of Santa Barbara Police Department. To obtain a letter of endorsement, an ABC Endorsement Application from the Santa Barbara Police Department must be completed and submitted. There is a charge for endorsement. The ABC Endorsement Application can be found at <https://www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/depts/parksrec/recreation/events/plan.asp>.

Within this endorsement letter the Police Department will list requirements that will apply to the beer garden such as use of wristbands, beverage container size, the length of time that alcohol can be served and if security personnel or officers will be needed onsite.

This endorsement letter must accompany your ABC Application.

The ABC Application must also be signed by the City of Santa Barbara Special Event Coordinator as the “property owner”. The ABC office will not process the ABC application without a signature from a City representative.

Please visit the State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control website for more information or to download an ABC application: <https://www.abc.ca.gov/licensing/>

Barrier Requirements for Alcohol Service Area (Beer Gardens)

An area enclosed within a barrier for the purpose of alcohol service is generally referred to as a “beer garden”.

The State of California Alcoholic Beverage Control Board requires that event areas where alcohol is sold, served and/or consumed be surrounded by a barrier of a specific height. This requirement applies to all public events where alcohol is served, regardless of size or number of attendees.

The City has two types of beer gardens. The following criteria will determine which type can be hosted at a special event:

- Event is held on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday
- Alcohol is served after 6:30 p.m.
- Anticipated attendance is greater than 2,000 per day
- Event features more than one event location
- Simultaneous events being held in the City, which may affect available police resources

If your event meets less than three of the above criteria, you will be allowed to have a Type 1 beer garden. If your event meets three or more of the above criteria, you will be required to have a Type 2 beer garden. See chart below for the rules pertaining to each type of beer garden:

	Type 1 Beer Garden	Type 2 Beer Garden
Only beer and/or wine allowed. Hard liquor prohibited in City parks and on beaches.	•	•
Alcohol may be served within entire event area as long as the perimeter has a barrier. No separation between those 21 years of age drinking and those under 21 years of age not drinking	•	N/A
Only those 21 years and older allowed within beer garden.	N/A	•
Beer garden to be enclosed within either a 6-foot tall single barrier or a 4-foot double barrier with a “moat” of 4 or 5 feet between the interior and exterior barriers. Barriers may not contain openings that would allow items to be passed through. Both styles of barrier to include the appropriate number of emergency exits as determined by SBF. Chain link or vinyl fencing are examples of acceptable barriers.	Barrier around perimeter of event	Barrier around beer garden area
IDs checked and wristbands issued to designate those 21 years and older prior to being served alcohol.	•	•
“No alcohol allowed beyond this point” signage.	Placed at beer garden exits	Placed at beer garden exits
Use of glass beverage bottles and cups not permitted.	•	•
Cup size not to exceed 12 ounces.	•	•
Alcohol service to stop 30 minutes before the end of an event.	•	•
Assembly Permit required by the Santa Barbara Fire Department to determine the number of emergency exits needed and the maximum occupancy of the enclosed beer garden.	•	•
Temporary Food Facility Permit or Mobile Food Facility Permit from Santa Barbara County Environmental Health required for each vendor serving alcohol	•	•

To assist people working in the beer garden, or with any event related alcohol service, State of California Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) offers a free Responsible Beverage Service Training (LEAD Training) in-person and online at <https://www.abc.ca.gov/education/lead-training>. Please speak to the Police Special Events Coordinator in the Police Department for any additional questions.

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