



ARLINGTON
VIRGINIA



BEST PRACTICES for RESTAURANTS and NIGHTLIFE



In partnership with:



ARLINGTON ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



Introduction

Arlington County features some of the most unique restaurants and nightlife destinations in the Washington D.C. metro region. Areas such as Clarendon, Crystal City, Shirlington, and Ballston are growing every year. These neighborhoods feature restaurants that cater to families, professionals, and young singles.

Restaurants that hold Virginia ABC licenses and serve alcohol have an increased level of liability. Adhering to laws and regulations set forth by the Virginia Department of Alcohol Beverage Control and Arlington County is necessary for restaurants to be successful and economically viable.

This guide will assist restaurants that serve alcohol by giving owners, management, and staff the tools they need to be successful. With access to resources, education, and training from Arlington County, establishments have an opportunity to improve their standards.

The Arlington County Police Department evaluated the national restaurant accreditation program *Best Bar None*, which was established in the United Kingdom, Scotland, and Canada. *Best Bar None* was designed to increase safety for patrons and staff while expanding the economic viability of nightlife areas. Creating a safe environment makes businesses more profitable, lessens the draw on county resources, and improves community relations.

Arlington County evaluated best practices related to restaurants that serve alcohol with the goal of providing increased access to guidance from county and state officials. The following agencies collaborated to create the best practices and standards:

- Arlington County Police Department
- Arlington County Fire Marshal's Office
- Arlington Office of Emergency Management
- Arlington County Zoning Office
- Arlington County Department of Human Services – Environmental Health Office
- Arlington County Department of Human Services – Project Peace
- Virginia Department of Alcohol Beverage Control

Arlington County established a partnership with the George Mason University Center for Evidence Based Policy, which assessed the short and long term challenges faced by businesses that serve alcohol. Areas analyzed by the research seminar include underage drinking, environmental design, and pedestrian safety as well as evidenced based recommendations and strategies for restaurant owners to implement best practices.

Arlington County has partnered with the Arlington Economic Development Office and the Arlington Chamber of Commerce to promote businesses that participate successfully in the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI). These organizations will recognize restaurants that reduce alcohol related harm and make patron safety a priority.

Best Practices

Arlington County Restaurant Initiative (ARI)

The Arlington County Restaurant Initiative (ARI) was developed in a collaborative effort to raise best practices for restaurants that serve alcohol. Although many best practices are applied in most establishments, they are not standardized or verifiable. Adopting standardized best practices into an establishment's existing policies or employee handbooks will help employees comply with the law and reduce liability.

The voluntary accreditation program details best practices including alcohol service, public safety, fire code/safety, food safety, and zoning compliance with policies and practices tailored to the size of the establishment.

What are the benefits of participating in an accreditation program?

- Arlington County provides training and resources to assist in running a successful restaurant
- Demonstrates to staff and patrons that a restaurant is committed to safety
- Improves communication with county and state officials
- Lessens liability with enhanced employee training
- Recognition from Arlington County as an establishment known to demonstrate best practices and safety
- Increases economic viability
- Reduces alcohol related harm
- Raises public awareness in the community

Training

Police officers, fire marshals, and employees of Arlington County will train staff to implement best practices.

Types of training include:

- TiPS (Training for Intervention ProcedureS) – Responsible alcohol service
- Fake identification detection and deterrence
- De-escalation techniques for staff
- Public safety expectations and procedures if a crime occurs at a restaurant
- Fire safety and occupancy
- First aid/CPR
- Bar Bystander Program – Intervention training to reduce sexual and domestic assault related to alcohol
- Compliance with food safety regulations
- Assistance meeting zoning ordinances
- Reduction of alcohol related harm through environmental design
- Active shooter training

Community Engagement

Attending civic association meetings and outreach events demonstrate investment in the community. Establishing contacts with other business owners and residents to control issues and lessen complaints is helpful in establishing trust. Using social media to promote a partnership with Arlington County is further confirmation of an establishment's commitment to community safety.

Conclusion

This innovative partnership between the restaurants that serve alcohol, Arlington County agencies, and the community to reduce alcohol related harm will serve as a model for other communities. Other restaurants and surrounding neighborhoods will recognize and appreciate an establishment's dedication to the increased safety of patrons and staff. Participating in the Arlington County Restaurant Initiative (ARI) demonstrates to the community, government agencies, and the larger restaurant industry that a restaurant holds itself to high standards. Arlington County is committed to giving restaurant owners who serve alcohol all the resources, education, and guidance necessary to be successful and economically viable.

Below is a list of useful numbers from Arlington County and Virginia State:

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| Police/Fire/Emergency..... | 911 |
| Arlington County Police Non-Emergency Number..... | 703-558-2222 |
| Arlington County Police Restaurant Liaison Unit..... | 703-228-7423 |
| Arlington County Fire Prevention Office..... | 703-228-4644 |
| Arlington County Environmental Health..... | 703-228-7400 |
| Arlington County Zoning Office..... | 703-228-3883 |
| Department of Human Services – Project Peace..... | 703-228-1678 |
| Arlington County Office of the Commonwealth Attorney..... | 703-228-4410 |
| Arlington Victim-Witness Program..... | 703-228-4410 |
| Arlington Economic Development Office..... | 703-228-0808 |
| Arlington Chamber of Commerce..... | 703-525-2400 |
| Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control..... | 703-313-4432 |

In cooperation with **Best Bar None UK**

