

Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverage Sales & Distribution Law

Practical tips for navigating the three-tier system from vine to table

Massachusetts has a complex body of statutes, regulations, and case law governing the production, distribution, and sale of alcoholic beverages. The laws that govern the relationship between manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers of alcoholic beverages—known as the “three-tier system,” a construct developed during Prohibition—are often the subject of lawsuits and disputes. In the highly-regulated alcoholic beverages industry, it is vital that businesses in each “tier” understand their rights and obligations with respect to others in the distribution chain. This is particularly so in Massachusetts, where wholesaler franchise protections limit the ability of suppliers to terminate their wholesaler relationships.

Join us as our experienced panel discusses the current state of the three-tier system in Massachusetts, including the legally required separations between manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers. Our faculty discuss both historical and modern-day aspects of Massachusetts alcoholic beverage sales and distribution law, including: the format of the three-tier system, the scope of franchise protections afforded to Massachusetts wholesalers and how those protections have recently evolved, and the MA Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission’s recent decisions on pay-to-play issues and unlawful inducements. The panelists also discuss industry trends and common business concerns along with best practices for companies doing business in Massachusetts to avoid running afoul of Massachusetts laws. This new program concludes with a question and answer session with our panelists, who collectively have experience representing manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers.

Agenda

- The Three-Tier System and Why It Is Important
- The Legal Rights and Obligations of Manufacturers, Wholesalers, and Retailers of Alcoholic Beverages with Respect to Others in the Chain of Distribution
- Franchise Protections Available to Massachusetts Wholesalers and How Those Protections Are Enforced
- Recent Enforcement Actions by the MA ABCC Concerning Violations of the Three-Tier System
- Common Business Conflicts Caused by the Three-Tier System
- Current Issues and Trends in the Laws Governing the Sale and Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages in Massachusetts
- Best Practices for Operating within the Three-Tier System
- “Ask the Experts” Q&A Session

Faculty

Michael J. Rossi, Esq., *Conn Kavanaugh Rosenthal Peisch & Ford LLP, Boston*, Chair

Anthony V. Bova, Esq., *Conn Kavanaugh Rosenthal Peisch & Ford LLP, Boston*

J. Mark Dickison, Esq., *Lawson & Weitzen LLP, Boston*

Elizabeth A. Lashway, Esq., *Lashway Law LLC, Wellesley Hills*



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Dates & Location

LIVE WEBCAST

Tuesday, February 2, 2021
2:00 pm–5:00 pm

Register at www.mcle.org
Program Number: 2210241WBC

RECORDED WEBCAST

Tuesday, February 16, 2021
9:00 am–12:00 noon

Register at www.mcle.org
Program Number: 2210241RBC

Tuition *(includes written materials)*

- \$245
- \$220.50 MCLE Sponsor Members
- \$183.75 New Lawyers admitted to law practice after 2018, Pending Admittees, Law Students, and Paralegals

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Materials

The materials for this program are available *online only* and can be downloaded via the link emailed to you upon registration.

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