CHAPTER 3

Alcohol Server Training

**SECTION 61-3-100. Definitions.**

Section effective January 1, 2026.

For the purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Alcohol" means beer, wine, alcoholic liquors, or any other type of alcoholic beverage that contains any amount of alcohol and is used as a beverage for human consumption.

(2) "Alcohol server" means an individual who sells alcohol for on-premises consumption at permitted or licensed premises and may include a permittee, licensee, manager, or other employee of a permittee or licensee. "Alcohol server" does not include an individual employed or volunteering on a temporary basis for a one-time special event, such as a banquet, or at an event that has a temporary permit to sell beer, wine, or alcoholic liquors by the drink and does not include an individual transferring alcohol from one location to another as a distributor, wholesaler, or as otherwise lawfully authorized to transfer alcohol from one location to another by this title; and does not include an individual who cannot lawfully serve or deliver alcohol pursuant to Sections 61-4-90(D) and 61-6-2200.

(3) "Alcohol server certificate" means an authorization issued by the department for an individual to be employed or engaged as an alcohol server for on-premises consumption.

(4) "DBHDD" means the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Office of Substance Abuse.

(5) "Department" means the South Carolina Department of Revenue.

(6) "Division" means the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division.

(7) "Employee" means a person who is employed for at least ten hours a week by a permittee or a licensee.

(8) "Licensee" means a person issued a license by the department pursuant to Title 61 to sell, serve, transfer, or dispense alcoholic liquors or alcoholic liquor by the drink for on-premises consumption.

(9) "Manager" means an individual permittee, an individual licensee, and any person employed by a permittee or licensee who manages, directs, or controls the sale, service, transfer, or dispensing of alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption at the permitted or licensed premises.

(10) "Permittee" means a person issued a permit by the department pursuant to Title 61 to sell, serve, transfer, or dispense beer, wine, ale, porter, or other malted beverages for on-premises consumption.

(11) "Program" means an alcohol server training and education course and examination approved by the department with input from DBHDD and the division that is administered by authorized providers.

(12) "Provider" means an individual, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity authorized by the department that offers and administers a program.

HISTORY: 2025 Act No. 42 (H.3430), § 3.A, eff January 1, 2026.

**SECTION 61-3-110. Alcohol server training required; certificates.**

Section effective January 1, 2026.

(A) An alcohol server or manager must complete alcohol server training and obtain an alcohol server certificate pursuant to the provisions of this chapter. If an alcohol server or manager does not have a current alcohol server certificate at the time of employment in that capacity, then the licensee or permittee must provide alcohol server training within thirty calendar days of employment. An alcohol server shall not be mentally or physically impaired or intoxicated by alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances while serving alcohol on behalf of the licensee.

(B) A permittee or licensee shall maintain at all times on its permitted or licensed premises physical or electronic copies of the alcohol server certificates for its managers and alcohol servers for the duration of employment. Copies of the alcohol server certificate must be made available, upon request, to the department, the division, or the agents and employees of each. For the purposes of enforcement of the provisions of this chapter:

(1) a permittee or licensee must also make available to the department or the division, when requested, the date a manager or alcohol server began employment in the capacity; and

(2) a permittee or licensee shall be excused for the failure to produce the alcohol server certificate if that failure is due to a provider's failure to report the successful completion of training and testing or the department's failure to issue a certificate to an applicant who has met the requirements of Section 61-3-130.

HISTORY: 2025 Act No. 42 (H.3430), § 3.A, eff January 1, 2026.

**SECTION 61-3-120. Alcohol server training programs; curriculum.**

Section effective January 1, 2026.

(A)(1) The department shall approve alcohol server training programs offered by providers that are based on best evidence practice standards. The department may collaborate with DBHDD and the division to determine appropriate providers for the purposes of this chapter. The department shall approve or deny a program within sixty days of application by a provider. A provider may appeal a denial pursuant to Section 61-2-260 and the South Carolina Administrative Procedures Act.

(2) A provider may charge a licensee, permittee, or individual seeking training for the purpose of employment as an alcohol server or manager a fee not to exceed fifty dollars per participant.

(B) The curricula of each program must include the following subjects:

(1) state laws and regulations pertaining to:

(a) the sale and service of alcoholic beverages;

(b) the permitting and licensing of sellers of alcoholic beverages;

(c) impaired driving or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs;

(d) liquor liability issues;

(e) the carrying of concealed weapons by authorized permit holders into businesses selling and serving alcoholic beverages; and

(f) life consequences, such as the loss of education scholarships, to minors relating to the unlawful use, transfer, or sale of alcoholic beverages;

(2) the effect that alcohol has on the body and human behavior including, but not limited to, its effect on an individual's ability to operate a motor vehicle when intoxicated;

(3) information on blood alcohol concentration and factors that change or alter blood alcohol concentration;

(4) the effect that alcohol has on an individual when taken in combination with commonly used prescription or nonprescription drugs or with illegal drugs;

(5) information on recognizing the signs of intoxication and methods for preventing intoxication;

(6) methods of recognizing problem drinkers and techniques for intervening with and refusing to serve problem drinkers;

(7) methods of identifying and refusing to serve or sell alcoholic beverages to individuals under twenty-one years of age and intoxicated individuals;

(8) methods for properly and effectively checking the identification of an individual, for identifying illegal identification, and for handling situations involving individuals who have provided illegal identification;

(9) South Carolina law enforcement information including, but not limited to, the most recently published official statistics on drunk driving accidents, injuries, and deaths in South Carolina; and

(10) other topics related to alcohol server education and training designated by the department, in collaboration with DBHDD and the division, to be included.

(C) The department shall approve only online designed training programs that meet each of the following criteria:

(1) a program must cover the content specified in subsection (B);

(2) the content in a program must clearly identify and focus on the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to responsibly serve alcoholic beverages and must be developed using best practices in instructional design and exam development to ensure that the program is fair and legally defensible;

(3) a program shall be offered online;

(4) online training must be at least four hours, be available in English and Spanish, and include a test;

(5) online or computer based training programs must use linear navigation that requires the completion of a module before the course proceeds to the next module, with no content omitted, be interactive, have audio for content, and include a test;

(6) training and testing must be conducted online. All tests must be monitored by an online proctor. A passing grade for a test, as provided by the program, is required; and

(7) training certificates are issued by the provider only after training is complete and a test has been passed successfully.

(D) Within ten business days after a training is completed, each provider must give to the department a report of all individuals who have successfully completed the training and testing. The provider must also maintain these records for at least five years following the end of the training program for purposes of verifying certification validity by the department or the division.

(E) The department, in collaboration with DBHDD and the division, may suspend or revoke the authorization of a provider that the department determines has violated the provisions of this chapter. If a provider's authorization is suspended or revoked, then that provider must cease operations in this State immediately and refund any money paid to it by individuals enrolled in that provider's program at the time of the suspension or revocation.

HISTORY: 2025 Act No. 42 (H.3430), § 3.A, eff January 1, 2026.

**SECTION 61-3-130. Issuance of certificates.**

Section effective January 1, 2026.

(A)(1) The department must issue an alcohol server certificate to each applicant who completes an approved program or a recertification program and who provides other information as may be required by the department in an application form that is available on the department's website. An individual must apply for an alcohol server certificate within six months of completing a program. The department, if circumstances warrant the issuance of a temporary alcohol server certificate, may issue a temporary alcohol server certificate that is valid for a period of no more than thirty calendar days.

(2) The department, in collaboration with DBHDD and the division, may issue an alcohol server certificate to an individual from outside of the State who applies for an alcohol server certificate if the individual has an alcohol server certificate from a nationally recognized or comparable, state recognized alcohol server certification program that the department, DBHDD, and the division find meets or exceeds the programs offered in this State.

(B) Alcohol server certificates shall not be issued to graduates of programs that are not approved by the department.

(C) An alcohol server certificate is the property of the individual to whom it is issued and is transferrable among employers. An individual must reimburse a licensee or permittee that paid for the cost of alcohol server training if the individual leaves the employment of the licensee or permittee within six months of its issuance.

(D) Alcohol server certificates are valid for a period of three years from the date that the alcohol server certificate was issued. After the three-year period, a new or recertified alcohol server certificate must be obtained pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

(E) Upon expiration of an alcohol server certificate, the individual to whom the alcohol server certificate was issued may obtain recertification in accordance with regulations promulgated by the department.

(F) The department shall not charge a fee to issue and renew alcohol server certificates to qualifying applicants.

(G) An applicant must be deemed to be a qualifying applicant for the purpose of alcohol server certificate issuance and renewal if they have successfully completed all training and testing requirements as found in Section 61-3-120.

HISTORY: 2025 Act No. 42 (H.3430), § 3.A, eff January 1, 2026.

**SECTION 61-3-140. Enforcement.**

Section effective January 1, 2026.

The division and the department are responsible for enforcement of the provisions of this chapter. The department is responsible for bringing administrative actions for violations of the provisions of this chapter or related regulations, and those actions shall proceed according to the provisions of Section 61-2-260 and the South Carolina Administrative Procedures Act.

HISTORY: 2025 Act No. 42 (H.3430), § 3.A, eff January 1, 2026.