

Minnesota's Laws on Tastings and Samples of Alcohol

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Tastings and sampling of alcoholic beverages are regulated by law in Minnesota. Minnesota Statutes make a distinction between events for the tasting of alcoholic beverages and the provision by vendors of free samples of wine, beer, and liquor.

Alcohol tastings are allowed with certain restrictions

On-sale licensees, nonprofits or charities, and exclusive liquor stores may conduct tastings, but the latter two may do so only as provided by law.

Licensed establishments: A bar, restaurant, taproom, or other holder of an on-sale intoxicating liquor license can hold a tasting as part of the normal operation of the establishment and would presumably charge a fee for either the event or each glass of wine, distilled spirits, or beer served.

Nonprofits or charities: A nonprofit or charity may conduct a tasting of wine or beer only under [Minnesota Statutes, section 340A.418](#), and must either hold a temporary on-sale license or conduct the tasting on the premises of the holder of an existing on-sale license. Further statutes regulate these tasting events.

Exclusive liquor stores: A broader range of tastings and classes may be held by an exclusive liquor store under [Minnesota Statutes, section 340A.419](#). These include tastings of beer, wine, and distilled spirits.

A liquor store may conduct a tasting off-site, provided it is held on the premises of a holder of an on-sale license and otherwise conforms to statutory requirements. Liquor stores may also conduct tastings on-site pursuant to classes offered by the liquor store.

These tastings may not be accompanied by sales of the items, but may include the use of order forms where such items can be later purchased.

Entities licensed to sell alcohol can offer samples

[Minnesota Statutes, section 340A.510](#), allows on- or off-sale licensees to either offer free samples directly or to allow a licensed manufacturer or wholesaler to provide samples on their premises. Sample sizes are limited to 100 milliliters for malt liquors, 50 milliliters for wine, 25 milliliters of liqueur or cordial, and 15 milliliters of distilled spirits. Samples must be of beverages that are otherwise for sale.

A farm winery may also give free samples of its products, including distilled spirits, and may hold other licenses, including on-sale licenses to operate bars or restaurants. Microdistilleries may also provide samples of 15 milliliters per beverage, not to exceed 45 milliliters per visit.

Those with educational-related licenses can offer a limited amount of alcohol

A limited on-sale liquor license may be issued to establishments that conduct culinary classes under [Minnesota Statutes, section 340A.4041](#), and under this license, participants may be served up to six ounces of wine or 12 ounces of intoxicating malt liquor, for consumption on the premises. Wine or malt liquor educators are also allowed to conduct classes and serve alcohol at these classes under statutory requirements provided in [section 340A.4042](#).

The Department of Public Safety regulates alcohol samples

The various laws regarding tastings and samples may cause confusion due to differences in the types of alcoholic beverages allowed to be sampled or tasted, the establishments and organizations that are allowed to conduct these activities in any given set of circumstances, and the rules for conducting these various activities. Persons seeking to offer a tasting or provide samples of alcoholic beverages should contact their local licensing jurisdiction and the Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division of the Department of Public Safety to ensure compliance with all local and state regulations.



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