

# An Overview of Arkansas Alcohol Laws

*A summary for parents, retailers, and other adults*

## Retailers should know ....

- ◆ It is illegal to sell alcohol to minors (under age 21)
- ◆ It is illegal to sell alcohol to someone who is clearly intoxicated (drunk)
- ◆ It is often illegal to allow a minor to handle or serve alcohol (there are a few exceptions—see explanation to right)
- ◆ Those who knowingly *or accidentally* sell alcohol to minors are subject to criminal charges, punishable by fines, imprisonment, or both

## Anyone who drinks alcohol should know....

- ◆ Anyone who drinks alcohol may be sued for damage to property and injury caused to another person
- ◆ Adults can NOT be sued for injury or property damage caused when:
  - The adult provides alcohol to another adult (over 21) AND
  - The provider does not hold an alcohol vendor's permit

With written permission from a parent or guardian, a person who is **18 or older** may:

- sell and handle beer and cooking wines at grocery stores
- work for a licensed liquor or beer wholesaler, or a licensed native winery, and handle alcohol at these places of business

With written permission from a parent or guardian, a person who is **19 or older** may handle and sell alcohol at a facility that has a license for on-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages (a bar or restaurant, for example)

### MISDEMEANOR:

Class C → Class B → Class A

less serious offenses, lesser punishments



### FELONY:

Class D → Class C → Class B → Class Y

more serious offenses, more substantial punishments

## Parents and other adults over 21 should know...

- ◆ It is illegal to purposely *or accidentally* give alcohol to someone under 21. The only exceptions are:
  - Parents may serve their OWN minor family members
  - Wine may be provided to minors in a religious ceremony or rite in an established church or religion
- ◆ Those who knowingly give alcohol to minors can be found guilty of a:
  - Class A misdemeanor the first time
  - Class D felony if they are convicted a second time within 3 years
- ◆ Those who accidentally give alcohol to someone under 21 are:
  - punished with a fine between \$200 and \$500 on the first offense
  - charged with a Class A misdemeanor the second time
- ◆ Those who knowingly allow minors to consume alcohol on property which they control are subject to a:
  - Class C misdemeanor the first time; a Class A misdemeanor the second time
  - Class D felony the third time

**It is against the law for a person under 21 to purchase alcohol or have alcohol in their possession. Those who break these laws may have to:**

**Pay fines of \$100-\$500 • Write themes or essays about alcohol • Go on probation • Immediately give up their driver's license**

*This document is provided for informational purposes only. Please consult the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board for more information on the laws related to the sale of alcoholic beverages in Arkansas. Arkansas Code can be accessed at the following link: [http://170.94.58.9/data/ar\\_code.asp](http://170.94.58.9/data/ar_code.asp). For more information about substance abuse prevention, contact:*

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention  
305 South Palm Street • Little Rock, AR 72205 • (501) 686-9030

Updated April 2009

