

AGENCY

The mission of **Montgomery County Alcohol Beverage Services** is to provide efficient and quality wholesale and retail sales of beverage alcohol products while promoting moderation and responsible behavior in all phases of distribution and consumption. As a control jurisdiction, ABS facilitates the wholesale distribution of beer, wine and spirits to over 1,000 licensed establishments in the county. Along with the sale and distribution of a controlled substance comes a responsibility to educate and support the establishments served to ensure the safety of Montgomery County residents and the vitality of licensed businesses.

WET and DRY COUNTIES

Montgomery County is a wet county.

Population 21 and over
(Estimate 2017-18)

829,302

NET REVENUE

Montgomery County distributes its net revenue into one category:

- General Fund (100%)



HISTORY

On December 5, 1933, the Liquor Control Board for Montgomery County was established by law. For the next 18 years, the Liquor Control Board controlled the sale and distribution of beverage alcohol in Montgomery County. On July 1, 1951, the Department of Liquor Control was created by Section 159 of Article 2B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, and the Board of License Commissioners became a separate entity. The Office of the Board of License Commissioners was integrated into the Division of Licensure Regulation and Education of DLC in 2006. In 2016 the department underwent a reorganization and in early 2017 Bob Dorfman was appointed as the director.

On July 1, 2019, with the enactment of an amendment in state law, the department officially changed its name to Alcohol Beverage Services (ABS) with the tagline, A Business of Montgomery County Government. The change was part of a comprehensive rebranding effort that followed the implementation of steadily applied operational advancements and a newly formed marketing department.

ENFORCEMENT

Alcohol Inspectors and Police work in partnership to conduct compliance checks, delivering both an administrative violation against the liquor licensee and a criminal citation to the individual seller/server for failed compliance.

A compliance check involves youth under the age of 21 who attempt to purchase alcohol at a licensed establishment with their own vertical ID.

\$30,029,824

FY 2018 Net Profit



From 2003 through 2018,
**Montgomery County Alcohol Beverage
Services contributed about \$347
million to the County General Fund.**

DISTRIBUTION

Montgomery County operates a central 240,000 square foot climate controlled warehouse. The warehouse typically contains over 390,000 cases of wine, beer and distilled spirits. The warehouse normally stocks over 6,500 products and sells and delivers over 200,000 cases of special order products. The warehouse delivers five days per week to about 1,100 privately owned licensees via a fleet of 41 trucks owned by Montgomery County. On an average week, the warehouse delivers 72,000 cases of beer, 30,000 cases of wine and spirits and 1,500 kegs of beer.

Does jurisdiction allow direct shipping of wine?



Montgomery County does not tax spirits, wine and beer. Taxes are collected by the state of Maryland.

OUTLETS AND GROCERY STORES

Alcohol licensed businesses are the first line of defense in reducing the availability of alcohol to youth under 21 years of age, and/or intoxicated individuals.

Montgomery County has control of spirits, beer and wine at wholesale. Montgomery County operates 25 retail Wine & Liquor Stores. An average of over 4,000 wines are stocked in each store with a wide selection of bourbons and single malt scotches. The County stores are the only off premise spirits within the County. Beer is also sold but provisions do not allow for beer to be chilled as to not compete with privately owned beer and wine stores.

- Montgomery County does not have policies that regulate the density of off-premise outlets in a neighborhood/precinct/condensed area
- Servers must be 18 years old and older to sell or serve alcohol at an on or off-premise outlet
- Maryland state law prohibits the sale of beer and wine in super markets and chain stores.
- Sunday sales are allowed
- Keg registration is required
- For every 100,000 residents ages 21 and older, there are 3 spirits outlets
- Beverage service training is mandatory in the state. One employee must be on premise with state approved alcohol awareness training at all times.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ALCOHOL BEVERAGE SERVICES IN ACTION:



ABS runs a public safety campaign titled "I Take It Personally." Aiming to reduce over service and drunk driving, messaging is placed on licensee tools. Additionally, ads were created for a social media campaign and placed on 30 ABS delivery trucks.

ABS offers free trainings including the Alcohol Law Education and Regulatory Training (ALERT) which is offered twice a month and geared towards Montgomery County servers, sellers, managers and owners on alcohol beverage regulatory compliance.

DEFINITIONS

Control systems -- jurisdictions that directly control the distribution and sale of beverage alcohol within their borders.

Three-tier system -- the method of alcohol distribution developed after Prohibition in the United States. Producers/manufacturers (first tier) can sell products only to wholesalers/distributors (second tier) who then sell to retailers (third tier).

Revenue Per Capita -- revenue per person.

Wet and dry counties -- Wet jurisdictions are those that permit the sale of spirits, wine, or beer for on-premise and off-premise consumption. Dry jurisdictions prohibit some or all alcohol sales, whether on- or off-premise.

Sources: 2018 Survey Database, State Alcohol Tax Rates (July 2017), Educational Awards Program Reports for 2017-2018, Montgomery County Alcohol Beverage Services, The Beverage Information Group's 2017 Fact Book, The Beverage Information Group 2016, Alcohol Policy Information System (APIS)