

AGENCY

The **Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC)** is an independent political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. ABC is responsible for wholesale and retail operations of distilled spirits, regulation of the commonwealth’s alcohol-related laws, licensing and alcohol education and prevention. For purposes of working with the executive branch, ABC maintains a direct line of communication with the Secretariat of Public Safety and Homeland Security.

WET and DRY COUNTIES

Effective July 1, 2020, all Virginia jurisdictions are wet.

Qualified voters in a jurisdiction can petition the circuit court to ask that a referendum be held regarding the prohibition of the sale of alcoholic beverages by ABC-licensed restaurants within that jurisdiction.

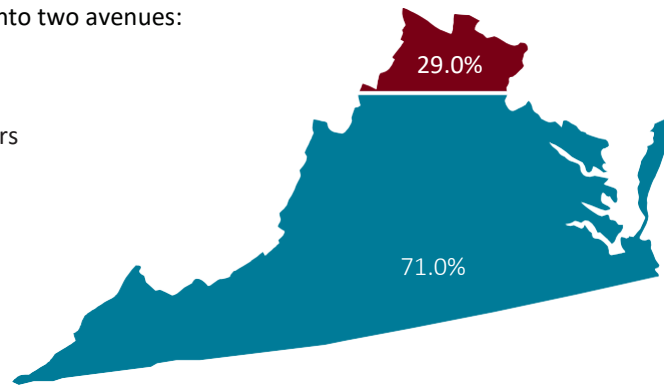
Over 21+ Population- July 2021
(Census.gov)

6,412,892

NET PROFIT

VA distributes its net profit into two avenues:

- General Fund (71.0%)
- Appropriation Act Transfers (29.0%) *Figures from 2023*



HISTORY

Virginia ABC has existed since 1934, when the new state department opened its first four ABC stores in Richmond on May 15. In 1936, the General Assembly granted full police powers to the department’s designated agents to enforce laws against bootlegging and moonshining. Local and federal officials had originally performed those enforcement functions, but more help was needed. In 2018, Virginia ABC transitioned from a traditional state government agency to an authority, which provides more flexibility and efficiency as a retailer, wholesaler and regulator of distilled spirits.

ENFORCEMENT

Virginia ABC’s nearly 90 special agents are alcohol law educators and regulators, working directly with approximately 19,000 licensed businesses to address non-compliance issues and reduce criminal activities involving alcohol. These agents also initiate public safety investigations following incidents at licensed establishments, which involve assisting and cooperating with other law enforcement agencies, civic leagues, residents, businesses and community stakeholders. All ABC special agents are sworn Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services certified law enforcement officers within the bureau, which is accredited through the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission. ABC’s Bureau of Law Enforcement also includes licensing, compliance and records management.

\$243,607,393

FY2022 Net Profit



Since its organization in 1934, Virginia ABC has contributed more than \$12.7 billion to the state in the form of profits and taxes.

Figures are from 2022

DISTRIBUTION

Spirits are only sold in state-operated ABC stores. Spirits, mixers and a selection of Virginia wines are shipped statewide from a 315,000 square-foot distribution center in Hanover County. Virginia ABC ships to its stores where individuals and licensed restaurants may purchase from the store of their choosing. Virginia ABC operates on a bailment system, where the agency is not charged for the product until it is shipped out of the distribution center.

Beer and wine are handled through private distributors who generally deliver products to the retailers. Retail to retail or retail to restaurant sales are not allowed.

Does jurisdiction allow direct shipping of wine?



Tax per standard drink:

SPIRITS: \$0.118

WINE: \$0.059

BEER: \$0.024

OUTLETS AND GROCERY STORES

Virginia has control of spirits at wholesale and retail. It has more than 400 state-operated retail stores.

- Virginia does not have policies that regulate the density of off-premise outlets in a neighborhood/precinct/condensed area.
- Jurisdiction does not allow the sale of spirits in convenience stores.
- Servers must be 18 years old and older to serve beer at on-premise outlets, and employees at off-premise outlets have no minimum age specified to sell beer.
- The sale of beer and wine are permitted in grocery stores.
- Sunday sales are allowed.
- Keg registration is required.
- Beverage service training is voluntary in the state.

VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL AUTHORITY IN ACTION



YOUTH ALCOHOL and DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROJECT

YADAPP is an annual youth leadership program that empowers teens to become involved in keeping their schools and communities alcohol and drug-free through the implementation of youth-led action plans. As many as 200 adults and teens from across the commonwealth participate in the year-long prevention partnership.

HIGHER EDUCATION ALCOHOL & DRUG STRATEGIC UNIFIED PREVENTION

HEADS UP supports substance misuse education and prevention efforts on college campuses by providing resources, online training and materials for college campuses to use to supplement their current prevention initiatives on campus, or to build a strong foundation for campuses looking to jump-start their prevention and education programming. By utilizing both information dissemination and prevention education strategies through its materials, and by providing these resources free-of-charge, HEADS UP supports campuses in their goals to reduce student alcohol misuse and abuse by educating both students as well as faculty and staff. During fiscal year 2023, more than a quarter of all campuses across the Commonwealth engaged in this program, and over 10,000 educational and promotional resources were distributed on those campuses.

RESPONSIBLE SELLERS and SERVERS: VIRGINIA'S PROGRAM (RSVP) and MANAGER'S ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY TRAINING (MART)

Virginia ABC is dedicated to educating our licensees. Licensee trainings are offered in person or online to help managers, sellers and servers understand alcohol safety and responsibility as well as ABC laws, rules and regulations. During fiscal year 2022, Virginia ABC conducted 12 in-person licensee training programs with 152 participants. Our online courses touched more than 4,500 people— 3,549 completed the RSVP training and 960 participated in MART. With the addition of the Responsible Alcohol Delivery Driver (RADD) online course, 4,484 delivery personnel were also trained. Overall, Virginia ABC's licensee training programs educated 9,145 Virginians.

DEFINITIONS

Control systems -- jurisdictions that directly control the distribution and sale of beverage alcohol in 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, Alcohol Beverages Revenues & Taxes 2020 Report (June 2022), Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority, Alcohol Policy Information System (APIS), Census.gov