The West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Administration (WVABCA) is a revenue generating state agency under the West Virginia Department of Revenue. The WVABCA’s mission is to regulate and control the manufacture, sale, distribution, transportation, storage and consumption of alcohol while assuring the greatest degree of personal freedom consistent with the health, safety and welfare of every West Virginian. The WVABCA’s core functions are; enforcing the laws and regulations, performing all licensing functions and operating a wholesale Distribution Center in a cost efficient manner.

In 2020, the entire state became "wet" with the passage of House Bill 4525. In West Virginia, the term "wet" applies only to off-premises retail sales of alcoholic liquors. The new law set up guidelines for a county or municipality to remain "dry". At the present time, the Town of Brandonville is the only dry area in the state.

The WVABCA was created in 1935. In 1981, the state privatized wine sales. In 1990, a law was passed to discontinue all retail sales of alcohol by the state, but it retained the distribution of liquor. Two hundred and fourteen state liquor stores were bid out to allow the private sector to purchase retail liquor outlet stores in assigned market zones in 1990 and 1991. Every ten years the Retail Liquor Licensing Board RLLB reviews the market zones and the existing number of retail liquor outlet stores in the state to direct the WVABCA to proceed with the rebid. The 2020-2030 bidding process resulted in the awarding of 182 retail liquor outlet licenses. This generated $53,388,715 for the General Revenue Fund, up nearly $15 M over the 2010-2020 licensing bid total.

The Enforcement Division is committed to enforcing state laws pertaining to the sale, purchase, transportation, manufacture, consumption, and possession of alcoholic beverages. Some of the duties of the Enforcement Division include:

- Initial inspection for licensing purposes
- Background checks on applicants for a WVABCA license
- Inspections of Class A and Class B licensed establishments
- Inspections to ensure that premises are properly licensed
- Responding to complaints received from the public regarding violations
- Underage alcohol compliance checks

WV distributes its net revenue into one avenue:

- General Fund (100%)
The WVABCA Distribution Center is a bailment operation in a 153,000 sq. ft. facility with 2,889 active product codes and 2,053 special order codes (June 2023). Delivery to 182 privately owned retail liquor outlets is done by a third party. In 2022, a staff of 20 picked and assembled 876,499 cases; up 6,316 from the previous year.

Wine reaches the retail market through a network of privately owned suppliers and distributors. Wine label brands and registration are approved by the WVABCA. Farm wineries may self-distribute.

Beer also reaches the retail market through privately owned distributors within a franchise system. The WVABCA approves specific franchise agreements detailing geographic and brand requirements. Resident Brewers have the ability to self-distribute or franchise with a distributor.

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: Sources: 2018 Survey Database, Alcohol Beverages Revenues & Taxes 2020 Report (June 2022), Educational Awards Program Reports for 2020-2021, West Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Administration, Alcohol Policy Information System (APIS), Census.gov

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