

# Alcohol Management for Fairs and Festivals

Increase Your Profits.  
Decrease Your Problems.  
Prevent Underage Drinking.



"An ounce of prevention is worth a  
pound of cure."

- Benjamin Franklin





This booklet helps fair and festival planning groups develop successful alcohol policies that can be implemented to increase profits while decreasing problems. The cost of irresponsible alcohol service is high. It can include fights, arrests, increased waste management costs, property damage, increased insurance premiums, additional security costs, negative public image, liability law suits and lost patronage. Responsible alcohol management can help make your fair or festival the well attended, successful event that you envision!

Within these few pages are many considerations for alcohol management and suggestions for creating custom policies for your fair or festival. This booklet in no way can answer all your questions or foresee all incidences and is not intended to provide legal advice.

Please contact Helping Services for Northeast Iowa with any questions regarding the information in this booklet or if you would like a free, individual consultation with one of our Community Prevention Specialists. Helping Services also provides a range of free Responsible Beverage Server Training options.

We wish you the best in planning a successful event

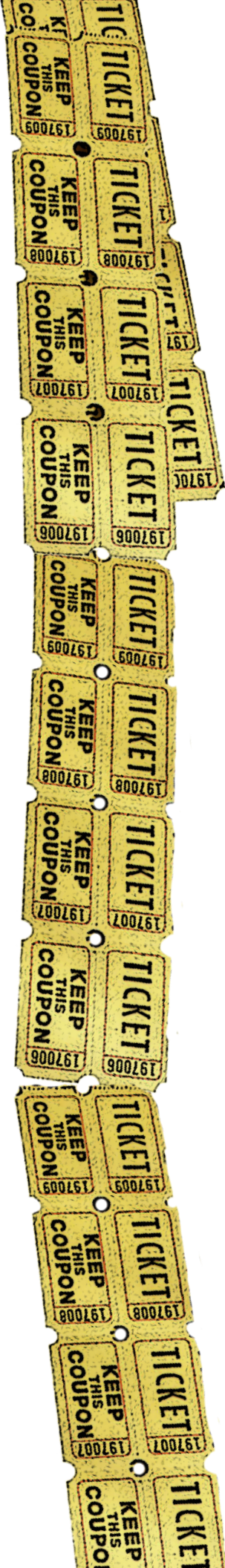
## **Helping Services for Northeast Iowa**

Dubuque Office: 563-582-5317

Decorah Office: 563-387-1720

**[www.helpingservices.org](http://www.helpingservices.org)**





As the alcohol license holder, you carry the primary legal responsibility for compliance with alcohol laws. However, your staff members and volunteers can be individually charged and convicted if they violate these laws. Every licensee should take specific actions to reduce liability. Staff members and volunteers also have steps they can take to reduce liability for themselves and the alcohol outlet.

## Steps in Successful Alcohol Management

1. Create an alcohol policy manual.
2. Train everyone involved with the event on your policies and procedures.
3. Provide a Responsible Beverage Server Training.
4. Closely monitor your event to ensure all policies and procedures are being followed.
5. Meet after the event to discuss what worked well and what can be improved for next year.

## Create an Alcohol Policy Manual.

An alcohol policy manual is a written guide of rules and procedures for your event concerning the purchasing, selling and distributing of alcohol. No two events are alike, and you will need to tailor your manual to fit your specific event. The next few pages pose questions to consider and the correlating Best Practice Policy Statements that can be adapted for your manual.

### Where will the alcohol be located?

Alcohol will be served in only one area. Access to this area will be limited.

The event will be contained by a fence, or other visible barrier, with designated entrances and exits.

Adequate signage will be posted regarding the area designated for alcohol sales and ID checking policies.

### Who will sell alcohol at the event?

All staff and volunteers will be trained in alcohol policies and procedures.

All staff will sign a statement that they have received and read the policy manual.

All sellers and ID checkers will attend Responsible Beverage Server Training.

All sellers and ID checkers must be at least 21.

Alcohol servers and ID checkers may not have alcohol in their systems, or consume alcohol, while working.

### What will the hours of alcohol sales be?

Alcohol sales will cease \_\_\_\_ minutes prior to the end of the event.

Festival management/law enforcement/security will do a walkthrough at \_\_\_\_time to ensure a safe closing.

## **What will we do to ensure that those under 21 do not consume alcohol at our event?**

No one under 21 will be allowed to purchase, possess or consume alcohol at this event.

Anyone under 21 who attempts to purchase, possess or consume alcohol will be reported to law enforcement.

All staff and volunteers will be trained in alcohol policies and procedures.

All staff and volunteers will sign a statement that they have received and read the policy manual.

All sellers and ID checkers will attend Responsible Beverage Server Training.

ID check booths will be located near all entrances.

A permanent, visual approval, such as stamps or non-transferable wristbands, will be given to those over 21.

ID scanners will be used to check IDs.

Law enforcement/security, will be visible at entrances, ID booths and alcohol selling areas.

Clearly distinguishable cups will be used for non-alcoholic beverages.

## **What will you do to ensure that intoxicated individuals are not served alcohol?**

It is against the law in Iowa to serve alcohol to an intoxicated individual. Anyone who is clearly intoxicated, who attempts to purchase, possess or consume alcohol, will be reported to law enforcement.

All staff and volunteers will be trained in alcohol policies and procedures.

All staff will sign a statement that they have received and read the policy manual.

All sellers and ID checkers will attend Responsible Beverage Server Training.

## What will you do to ensure that adults are not over consuming alcohol?

Alcohol purchases will be limited to \_\_\_ per person per event.

Cups for alcohol will be limited to \_\_\_ oz.

Drink promotions will not be allowed.

## What are the steps for reporting underage drinking or intoxicated customers?

All concerns regarding alcohol sales, will be reported immediately to management/law enforcement/security.

An incident report form will be filled out for all alcohol related concerns. This form will document the time, persons involved, concern, and action taken.

A member of festival management/law enforcement/security will always be available to address alcohol related issues.

## Resources

### For Creating an Alcohol Policy Manual

**I-Alert:** The state of Iowa's interactive, online policy tool to help you develop a policy manual that is compliant with Iowa Liquor Laws and assists with the responsible sale of alcohol. [ialert.iowa.gov](http://ialert.iowa.gov)

**University Of Minnesota, Alcohol Epidemiology Program:** Sample policies as well as tip sheets for planning and enforcing policies. [www.epi.umn.edu/alcohol/festivals](http://www.epi.umn.edu/alcohol/festivals)  
[www.epi.umn.edu/alcohol/sample/pdfs/policies\\_short.pdf](http://www.epi.umn.edu/alcohol/sample/pdfs/policies_short.pdf)





## Train everyone involved with your event on your policies and procedures.

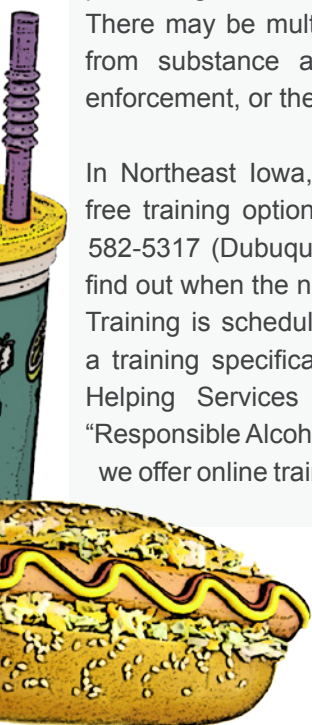
One way to ensure that everyone will follow the policies and procedures that you have agreed on, is to hold a pre-event training. You can use this opportunity to provide everyone with a manual, review your policies and procedures, and answer any questions your staff and volunteers may have. At the end of the training, have them sign a statement that they have received training and agree to abide by the policies you have set forth.

## Provide a Responsible Beverage Server Training

You may be aware that it is illegal to sell alcohol to someone who is under 21. But, did you also know that, “No licensee shall sell, dispense, or give an intoxicated person or any one simulating intoxication any liquor wine or beer” (Iowa Code Sec. 123.49 (1))?

It is important to provide training to all alcohol servers/sellers, ID checkers, and event management staff. This training should include information on both prohibiting the sale of alcohol to minors, as well as, prohibiting sales to those who appear intoxicated. There may be multiple training options in your area from substance abuse prevention agencies, law enforcement, or the Alcoholic Beverages Division.

In Northeast Iowa, Helping Services offers several free training options. Call Helping Services at 563-582-5317 (Dubuque) or 563-387-1720 (Decorah) to find out when the next Responsible Beverage Server Training is scheduled, or to inquire about arranging a training specifically for your staff and volunteers. Helping Services can also provide you with a “Responsible Alcohol Sales in Iowa” DVD. In addition, we offer online training at [www.helpingservices.org](http://www.helpingservices.org).



## Step 4

### Closely monitor your event.

Designate who will be responsible for monitoring your event. During the event, monitor the entire area, including the parking lot, ID check booths, and area where alcohol is being sold or consumed. Ensure that all policies and procedures are being followed. Immediately address any issues.

## Step 5

### Meet after the event to discuss what worked well and what can be improved for next year.

Provide an opportunity to hear feedback on how the event went. What worked well? What could be improved for next year? Were there scenarios that happened that you didn't anticipate? Review your policy manual and procedures. Are there any changes that you want to make before your next event?



## Resources

Resources used in creating this booklet:

Iowa Code 123

I-Alert Under 21 Can't Be Done: <http://ialert.iowa.gov>

University Of Minnesota, Alcohol Epidemiology Program:  
<http://www.epi.umn.edu/alcohol/festivals/index.shtm>

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## A few more things to think about


Work with your insurance agent to determine the amount of liability insurance needed if you are selling alcohol. Ask that your entity be named as additionally insured, if you are providing this event in collaboration with another organization or agency. Also, ask about reductions in Dram Shop insurance for having written alcohol policies and training event staff in Responsible Beverage Server Training.

Consider not allowing alcohol company sponsorship of your event, especially if your event is attended by youth.

Consider the qualities you want to look for in those selling alcohol or checking IDs. Will they provide the level of customer service you want? Will they be able to confidently refuse sale to a minor or intoxicated person?



Many local law enforcement agencies and substance abuse coalitions have ID scanners that can be loaned out for events. Helping Services may be able to help you locate an ID scanner for use in your area.



Remember each year to go through each of the five steps. All staff and volunteers should review your policies and procedures and be trained on any changes every year.

## Final Thoughts

Our mission at Helping Services is to support and promote the health of children and adults living in Northeast Iowa. We focus our resources in the areas of substance abuse, domestic violence, and sexual abuse. We reach out to individuals, families, and communities through prevention, intervention, support, and advocacy.

We want to thank you for your time and investment in creating an event that places importance on responsible alcohol management. Please contact us for additional information or to share your experience in planning a successful event!



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SERVICES  
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