

SPECIAL OCCASION PERMIT

Please be advised that it is the Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement (BLCE), and not the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB), which enforces the liquor laws in Pennsylvania. Further, information provided below is not binding on the BLCE and is offered for information and guidance only.

An [eligible entity](#) may apply for a special occasion permit (SOP). The holder of an SOP is authorized to sell liquor and/or malt or brewed beverages to persons twenty-one years of age or older who are not visibly intoxicated. 47 P.S. §§ 4-408.4, 4-493(1). SOP holders may sell any type of alcohol for consumption either on or off the licensed premises. 47 P.S. § 4-408.4(k). SOPs are generally issued for a period of not more than six non-consecutive or ten consecutive days during a calendar year. 47 P.S. § 4-408.4(i). The SOP is to be used as a means of raising funds for the holder, but can be used in conjunction with activities or events involving other entities. 47 P.S. § 4-408.4(m). The holder of an SOP may sell alcoholic beverages during the same hours that a restaurant licensee may sell alcoholic beverages. 47 P.S. § 4-408.4(k).

The Bureau of Licensing makes the ultimate determination as to whether a particular entity qualifies for such a permit. In the event that the entity cannot establish that it is an eligible entity, it could partner with an eligible entity that could obtain an SOP. The purpose of an SOP is to provide the eligible entity with a means of raising funds for itself. 47 P.S. § 4-408.4(m). This office has interpreted this provision to require that all proceeds from the sale of alcohol pursuant to an SOP must be collected by the holder of the SOP. However, nothing would prohibit the holder of an SOP from subsequently making a voluntary contribution to a third party. Therefore, as an example, an eligible entity could acquire an SOP, use it to acquire and sell or auction the wine at a benefit, retain the proceeds from the sale of alcohol, and subsequently make a voluntary contribution of a portion of the proceeds to nonprofit groups, which do not qualify as eligible entities on their own.

For additional information on eligible entities, you may contact the PLCB's Bureau of Licensing at (717) 783-8250 or ra-lblicensing@pa.gov. Also, eligible entities may apply for an SOP by using the PLCB's online regulatory system, [PLCB+](#).