

## **What is a Liquor Vendor (a company that owns/produces the product)?**

A liquor vendor (vendor) refers to any vendor, an individual or a partnership, association, or corporation, that sells liquor to the department.

## **What is a Montana Liquor Vendor Representative (a person representing the product)?**

Any vendor seeking to promote distilled spirits within Montana must hire a registered liquor vendor representative (Vendor Rep). A vendor rep is an individual who works for a company to sell its distilled spirits and serves as the main point of contact for customers (such as licensees or agency liquor stores, also known as clients). They communicate with clients about products, services, contracts, and/or order processing and customer support. These vendor reps are typically contracted and not employees of an out-of-state supplier or distillery. However, vendor reps are usually employees of a licensed Montana distillery.

### **Liquor Vendors:**

- Must obtain a vendor permit from the Department
- May have a maximum of five (5) contracted Vendor Reps (unless they are the employees of the vendor, then there is no maximum)
- Must register their Vendor Rep(s):
  - The annual registration fee for each applicant is \$50
  - The fee must be paid when the applicant first seeks approval to represent a vendor
  - Renew the registration every year on or before September 1 of each year
- May be denied, suspended, or revoked if the vendor or their representative violated any provision of the Montana Alcoholic Beverage Code
- If the vendor or vendor rep permit has been denied or revoked, the vendor or vendor rep is ineligible to hold any permit relating to liquor for up to three (3) years from the date the permit was denied or revoked

### **Vendor Reps MUST:**

- Be 21 years or older
- Be a resident of Montana
- Submit an electronic application on the [TransActionPortal \(TAP\)](#)
- Submit the registration fee
- Have no ownership interest in any Montana alcoholic beverage retail license or an agency liquor store
- Be current with the Responsible Alcohol Sales and Service Act, provided in [16-4-1005, MCA](#), before serving alcohol

## Promotion of Vendor Products:

- May provide product information
- May conduct tasting and sampling events for customers
- Each vendor is subject to an annual sample limitation of 200 liters per product

## Distribution of Samples & Tasting Events

The distribution of samples in Montana may only be conducted as follows:

- Vendor must hold a current vendor permit
- Vendor must be registered
- Vendor must ship the samples to the state liquor warehouse at no charge to the department
- An agency liquor store may only sell samples to a Vendor Rep
- Only registered Vendor Reps may provide samples

## Vendor Reps may only provide samples as follows:

- Provide samples only to licensed all-beverages retailers or agency liquor store agents
- No more than three (3) liters of a product may be provided to a retailer or agency liquor store
- Samples may not be provided to an all-beverages retailer or agency liquor store that purchased the product within the previous 12 months
- Samples may not be consumed on the premises of an agency liquor store
- Maintain a permanent sample log containing:
  - a listing of all sample purchases
  - the name and location of each recipient
  - date the sample was received

## Vendor Reps may provide samples at public tasting events:

- On an all-beverages licensed premises with the licensee's consent
- A special event, catered by a licensee with a valid catering endorsement
  - **ONLY if the vendor is invited** by the licensee who holds the catering endorsement; otherwise, the Vendor Rep may not attend the tasting event

## Vendor reps may provide samples at private tasting events:

- On an all-beverages licensed premises with the licensee's consent
- A special event, catered by a licensee with a valid catering endorsement

## Tasting events MAY NOT occur:

- At a non-licensed establishment, such as a home, in the street during a race or festival, or anywhere else not on a licensed premises or catered event
- At an off-premises licensed premises
- At an agency's liquor store premises

## How to apply for a Liquor Vendor Representative Permit

Go to the [TransActionPortal \(TAP\)](https://tap.dor.mt.gov/) - <https://tap.dor.mt.gov/>

- Scroll down to "Alcoholic Beverage Control" and click on "Apply for an Alcoholic Beverage License for Permit"
- Scroll down to "Miscellaneous Licenses" and click on "Apply for a Vendor Representative Permit"

**Questions?** Email ABC at [DORAlcoholicBeverageControl@mt.gov](mailto:DORAlcoholicBeverageControl@mt.gov)

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All licensees and permit holders must comply with all Federal and Montana alcoholic beverage laws and rules.

SECTIONS [16-3-107](#), [16-4-311](#), [16-4-1005](#), MCA and ARM [42.11.105](#), [42.11.211](#), [42.11.213](#), [42.11.243](#), [42.11.244](#), [42.11.245](#), [42.11.251](#), [42.11.252](#), 27 CFR § [6.81\(b\)](#), 27 CFR § [6.91](#), and 27 CFR § [6.95](#)

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