



ABC &-NEWS

A weekly newsletter on North Carolina policy and political news relevant to the North Carolina's ABC Boards

House Approves Curbside Mixed Drinks

The House passed its version of a COVID-19 relief bill on Thursday that included alcohol provisions that would likely affect NC ABC Boards.

HB1043 (Pandemic Response Act) was amended in the House Rules Committee earlier that day to allow the ABC Commissioner to authorize mixed beverages to accompany takeout or delivery food purchases.



If the Senate agrees to the proposal, something not yet determined, all mixed drinks sold curbside would be limited to two

drinks per meal or food items and containers would need to be "sealed with a secure lid or cap and in a manner to prevent consumption without removal of the lid or cap."

The NC Association of ABC Boards is officially neutral on the provision, but is monitoring it closely.

The Senate passed companion COVID-19 legislation on Thursday and eschewed a similar amendment offered by Sen. Jay Chaudhuri (D-Wake).

A final vote is expected on Saturday.

Governor Cooper Broadly Outlines Reopen Plan

Governor Roy Cooper announced last Friday his 3-stage plan to reopen North Carolina minutes after telling the media he was extending his executive order requiring North Carolinians to stay at home during the pandemic to May 8.

If North Carolina hits certain metrics – trend-line reduction for 14 days in addition to an expansion of testing and tracing capacity – then the first term governor would implement the first of three phases to reopen the state as follows:



Phase 1 would allow for more freedom for people to leave their homes for commercial activity. Gatherings would be limited to 10 people, parks would have gathering limits, allow more retailers and services to open but with social distancing and cleaning requirements. (Phase length: 2-3 weeks)

Phase 2 would lift the stay at home order (except for vulnerable populations) and would allow the reopening of certain businesses with strict social distancing requirements. Barbershops and salons would probably have to wait longer to reopen. (Phase length 4-6 weeks)

Phase 3 would allow mass gatherings like concerts and sporting events and would lessen restrictions for vulnerable populations.

Governor Cooper did note that if trend-lines spike, the state may have to go back to a previous phase.

"We appreciate everything Governor Roy Cooper, Secretary Mandy Cohen, Emergency Management Director Mike Sprayberry have done to keep North Carolina safe during this pandemic," said NC Association of ABC Boards President Miles Davis. "We know there were some tough choices to make, but they helped our state avoid a health care catastrophe."

Davis said the ABC Boards across North Carolina are committed to partnering with Governor Cooper, the General Assembly, and local governments in helping in the economic recovery.

In 2018, \$323 million in ABC Store sales was transferred into the General Fund for use by the North Carolina General Assembly while \$25 million went to local alcohol law enforcement and local alcohol prevention/treatment/recovery programs while ABC Commissions distributed \$80 million directly to city and county governments.