



Environmental Health ❖ 625 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404 ❖ 707-565-6565 ❖ [EH@sonoma-county.org](mailto:EH@sonoma-county.org)  
<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Environmental-Health-and-Safety/>

## Wine/Beer Tasting Room Exemption Instructions

**All wine/beer tasting rooms must obtain and maintain either a Retail Food Facility Permit or Tasting Room Exemption to legally operate.**

***Locations that have an Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) 02 Winegrowers License or 01 Beer Manufacturer License, are selling/tasting only their own wines/beers, select palate cleansers mentioned below and offer for sale only non-potentially hazardous beverages, such as water or soda.***

Per Senate Bill 241, the requirements for obtaining an exemption for premises set aside for wine/beer tasting has changed as of October 11, 2009 and October 1, 2011. As of this date, charging a fee for wine/beer tasting is no longer a factor in the wine/beer tasting exemption process. (CalCode Section 113789(c)(5)(12))

Please submit the following information to obtain a Wine/Beer Tasting Room Exemption from the County of Sonoma Department of Health Services, Environmental Health and Safety:

1. Complete and sign a Wine/Beer Tasting Room Exemption Application to agree to the conditions, and submit the current (see website for fee current fee schedule). An additional hourly rate may apply after the first hour of review time on the application.
2. Submit a copy of a Wine Growers license (ABC 02) or Beer Manufacturer license (ABC 01) for the tasting room site address. Only the wines/beers produced under this license may be sold with a wine/beer tasting room exemption.

Wine/beer tasting room exemption applications will be reviewed within a maximum of 20 working days of receipt. Wine/beer tasting room exemption applications are reviewed in the order received. If the exemption is not approved, a correction notice will be sent to the applicant detailing additional information needed. Resubmitted wine/beer tasting exemption applications will usually be reviewed within one week. Wine/beer tasting exemption applications may be submitted via mail or in person and must be completely filled out and accompanied by the copy of the corresponding ABC license and required fee. The review process will not begin until all elements are submitted and complete. Once the wine/beer tasting room exemption application is reviewed and approved, a letter of Wine/Beer Tasting Room Exemption will be sent by mail.

The original approved Wine/Beer Tasting Room Exemption letter or a copy must remain at the wine/beer tasting facility and be available for review upon request.

**NOTE:** The wine tasting room exemption shall be void should foods beyond crackers and/or prepackaged non-potentially hazardous beverages be sold. The beer tasting room exemption shall be void should foods beyond crackers, pretzels, prepackaged non-perishable food or beverages be sold. At that time Sonoma County Environmental Health and Safety will require a permit for a retail food facility. A review of building plans and construction final approval will be required prior to issuance of the retail food facility permit.

**Plan Review and Approval** may still be required by the building jurisdiction for construction or remodel of the wine/beer tasting room facility. Please check with your building department for requirements. Standard plan review fees apply for this separate submittal. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 707-565-6565 or [EH@sonoma-county.org](mailto:EH@sonoma-county.org).

**ALSO NOTE:** A temporary food facility permit shall be required for participation in community events that are two or more days in length where additional food(s) beyond crackers and non-potentially hazardous beverages are offered to the public, and therefore, the wine/beer tasting exemption shall not apply. Contact the office at 707-565-6565 to speak to the community events program lead for more information regarding community events or visit our website – <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Environmental-Health/Food-Program/Temporary-Food-Facility-Permit-for-Community-Events/>.