

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
[INSERT AGENCY NAME]



**Open Government Report 2014**

To institutionalize a culture of transparent and open government, accountability, and to expand opportunities for resident participation and collaboration, this report describes how the Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) has and will continue to develop and enhance transparency, public participation, and collaboration. In accordance with Mayor's Order 2014-170, this report addresses the following topics:

1) **Transparency**

ABRA is committed to providing transparent administrative practices and decisions to the public. As part of this effort, the agency makes information readily available to the public through a multi-pronged approach that includes utilizing the [agency's website](#), [email update function](#) (listserv), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages, [D.C. Register site](#), and providing timely responses to public information requests via [FOIAXpress](#).

- ABRA's website provides a host of [documents](#) that detail agency activities and decisions regarding licensees, the majority of which are posted and archived online on a weekly basis. This includes the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board's (Board) [weekly calendar and agenda items](#), Board issued decisions, Board orders, Board hearing transcripts as well as public hearing notices. In addition, lists of current [alcoholic beverage license holders](#), District of Columbia Court of Appeals decisions, Board rulemakings, data resulting from Noise Task Force compliance checks, and settlement agreements are also updated regularly. [Media releases and newsletters](#) are posted and disseminated in a timely fashion, keeping the public informed of the latest alcoholic beverage licensing news in the District. ABRA's [opt-in email updates service](#) is another beneficial tool for communicating with the public and licensees. As part of this initiative, individuals can sign up to receive weekly Board calendar, agenda and disposition notices; ABRA media releases and newsletters; training information; and other information pertinent to ABC licensees. In addition, ABRA utilizes its Twitter and Facebook pages to inform licensees and the public of events, decisions and the wealth of information that is available on its website.
- The Board regularly issues rulemakings regarding regulations and moratorium zones. Prior to issuing these decisions, the Board seeks input from the public. ABRA provides notice to the public regarding these opportunities through public hearings notices, web calendar posts, and online media releases and newsletter articles. Notifications are also emailed through the listserv, posted on the D.C. Register, tweeted and messaged on Facebook.
- ABRA utilizes FOIAXpress to comply with all District FOIA-related requirements.

- ABRA is always looking at new and innovative ways to communicate and provide information to the public. As part of this effort, the agency listens to the public to learn the types of information they need readily available and to find the best way to provide it to them in an efficient fashion. In addition, ABRA is looking at new ways to improve the [records search function](#) provided on its website as a means to make finding documents as simple and efficient as possible.
- The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board Hearing Room has been equipped with cameras and microphones that allow for the recording and webcasting of Board hearings. ABRA is in the process of assessing resources needed to make Board hearings available online and to ensure compliance with accessibility requirements.
- ABRA is working closely with the Office of the City Administrator (OCA) and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to identify a significant number of datasets that OCA and OCTO expect to publish online later this year. If no dataset from ABRA is selected to be included in this 2014 release, we will continue to work with OCA and OCTO to identify datasets appropriate to publish in 2015. In the future, requirements for open data reporting will be provided by the Chief Data Officer.

## 2) **Public Engagement and Participation**

There are a variety of ways members of the public can participate in the alcoholic beverage licensing process. This includes providing input at Board rulemakings; filing a protest against an application for a license, a substantial change to a license or the renewal of a license; or entering into a settlement agreement with an establishment, which becomes part of the terms of an operating alcoholic beverage license. In addition, ABRA provides a number of training opportunities to licensees, community groups and members of the public aimed at educating them on District alcoholic beverage laws, regulations and tips for best practices.

- ABRA posts [proposed rules and regulations](#) on its website as well as the [D.C. Register](#) in advance of any public hearings. In addition, the [calendar](#) feature on ABRA's website lists all public hearings and notices seeking public input. These items are also disseminated to members of the public that have opted-in to ABRA's email updates. [ABRA news releases and newsletters](#) provide these notices more widely to members of the media and public. In addition, hearings that solicit public input are posted on ABRA's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages. Members of the public are able to provide testimony either in person or in writing, which may be either emailed or mailed. All testimony is made a part of the Board's official record. Copies of these records are provided to the public upon request.
- ABRA posts Board calendar and agenda notices as well as [notices of public hearings](#) on its website and the [D.C. Register](#) on a weekly basis as a means of informing the public of upcoming hearings, which are open to the public. Public hearing notices inform the public of an application to issue, change or

renew an alcoholic beverage license. Members of the public may protest the issuance, change or renewal of a license pursuant to Section 601 of D.C. Official Code, Title 25. Notices of public hearings also provide the dates and steps required to protest a license application. Physical copies of these notices are also posted in the form of placards on applicant establishments. In addition to these hearings, members of the public are also welcome to provide input to the agency via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Ask the Director](#) forums. Members of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) and community groups can also direct inquiries to [ABRA's Community Resource Advisor](#).

- Since alcoholic beverage licensing can draw interest from a variety of stakeholders, including District residents, business owners and community groups, ABRA welcomes all stakeholders to participate in the process. ABRA provides [educational opportunities](#) to all stakeholders throughout the year and aims to build constructive, lasting relationships between ABC licensees and members of the community. The agency holds five licensee orientation classes annually that are open to the public as well as licensees. Past attendees have included members of ANCs and community associations, D.C. government employees, prospective and current licensees, and interested District residents. Other trainings held multiple times each year include ID Compliance training and Books and Records training. Information about all trainings is provided to the public through the agency's website, listserv, flyers and social media posts.
- ABRA will continue to look at new and innovative ways and tools that will allow the public to participate in ABC trainings, hearings and to provide feedback on ABRA processes.

### 3) **Collaboration**

ABRA works closely with the Executive Office of the Mayor, the District of Columbia Council, other District agencies, community associations, ANCs and local colleges and universities to promote the health, safety and welfare of citizens patronizing more than 1,900 ABC establishments in the District.

- Since 2009, ABRA has collaborated with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), the National Capital Coalition to Prevent Underage Drinking (NCCPUD), Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration (APRA), American University, Catholic University, Gallaudet University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, Howard University, Trinity Washington University and the University of the District of Columbia on the D.C. Double Check 101 program, which utilizes a dynamic approach to prevent underage drinking in the District. ABRA is also a member of the [Noise Task Force](#), a partnership with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) and Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). The Noise Task Force conducts checks at D.C. businesses to ensure compliance with District noise laws and also responds to noise complaints.

- ABRA works closely with the Executive Office of the Mayor and the District of Columbia Council each year to implement new alcoholic beverage laws and regulations.
- ABRA will continue to collaborate with these groups to provide the best in public service to licensees and the community.