

HB 1335: Administrative Changes Significantly Affect New Alcohol and Tobacco Applicants

Article
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Recently enacted House Bill 1335 (HB 1335) makes significant administrative changes to the process for obtaining, and maintaining, alcohol and tobacco licenses in Florida.

As of July 1, 2024, all existing alcohol and tobacco licensees, or those applying for a new license or permit, must create and maintain an online account through the Department of Business & Professional Regulation (DBPR). Maintaining up-to-date contact information in this DBPR account portal will be imperative as email will now be the sole means of communication used by the Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (ABT) to contact applicants and licensees.

Further, new applications may only be submitted through this DBPR portal. ABT personnel are now prohibited from processing any application submitted outside of the portal. As a result, applicants will no longer be able to submit application packets in person. **Please be advised, this switch to online-only submissions may significantly increase the turnaround time for alcohol or tobacco license applications.**

Lastly, HB 1335 reduces the look-back period for felon applicants from 15 to 10 years, and increases in the initial corporate surety bond for tobacco applicants from \$1,000 to \$25,000.

If you need assistance setting up your DBPR account portal, submitting an application through the portal, or have any other questions regarding the bill's impact on your alcohol or tobacco business, please contact one of our hospitality attorneys, **Tara Tedrow** (tara.tedrow@lowndes-law.com) or **Alyson Kendust** (alyson.kendust@lowndes-law.com).

*Mariana Monforte, a summer law clerk, assisted with this article.

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