



# So you want to perform Taste Testing Events



## 1. Qualifications for wine, malt & spirits events:

- **Do you have at least 100 different wine codes?** If yes, you can apply for taste testing events of products that fall under a wine license
- **Do you have at least 100 different malt codes?** If yes, you can apply for taste testing events of products that fall under a malt license
- **Do you have at least 100 different spirit codes?** If yes, you can apply for taste testing events of products that fall under an Agency liquor store license

## 2. Who can pour the samples?

- An owner or employee of the retail store or agency liquor store may pour who is at least 17 years of age as long as a supervisor who is of at least 21 years of age is present;
- A licensed sales representative who has completed an alcohol server education course may pour and is at least 21 years of age;
- The owner of the company who is participating in the event (no sales representative license needed).

## 3. Process in applying for taste testing events:

- Applications should be submitted by the Retail Store or Agency Liquor Store and can be obtained from our website [www.maine.gov/dafs/bablo](http://www.maine.gov/dafs/bablo). Under the Liquor Licensing tab you will want to select License and Permit Applications and then scroll down to Section 5 – Form 2. Retail Off Premise and Agency Liquor Store Taste-Testing Event Application. Complete and then email to the email address provided on the form.
- A liquor inspector will need to verify the number of codes at an establishment interested in performing taste testing events who has not previously been approved.
- Once verified they will go over the requirements with the licensee or employee
- The inspector will either give the ok or will indicate the reasoning as to why they cannot participate in tastings and what steps need to be taken to meet those requirements
- If the inspector gives the ok, it must be documented either on an inspection report or on a special report form and provided to the office as future reference that the premises met the qualifications for taste testing events.
- Taste testing event forms must be approved by the department prior to the taste testing event being conducted.

## 4. Conditions during a tasting event:

- Advertising of the tasting event on the entrance of the store indicating the date and time must be displayed no less than 24 hours prior to the event

- All product that is being poured at the event must be from the inventory of that licensed premises.
  - **Spirits** must be provided by the agency liquor store's on hand inventory -OR- purchased at retail price from the agency store's inventory by a licensed sales representative who is participating in pouring at the event. All opened bottles must be removed from premises at the end of the tasting event.
  - **Malt and Wine** products are to only be provided by the licensed premises from their on-hand inventory. A representative pouring at the event should NOT purchase the product to pour at the tasting from the licensed premise to pour at the licensed premise tasting event. Representatives should NOT bring or supply sample products to be poured at a tasting event. All opened bottles must be removed from premises at the end of the tasting event.
  - Tasting events can be invitation only with prior approval from the bureau. This event can be in place of or can coincide with a tasting event that is open to the public. Invitation only tastings do not need to display signage of the date and time as required by public tasting events.
- No fee shall be charged to attend a tasting event
- Minors and visibly intoxicated individuals may not be served
- A designated tasting area must be conducted in a limited area – preferably to not interfere with normal customer retail sales

## 5. Sample Sizes:

- **Wine Sampling:**
  - Wine samples should not exceed a total of 5 ounces total to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is 14% or less;
  - Malt samples may not exceed a total of 3 ounces total to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is great than 14%;
- **Malt Sampling:**
  - Malt samples should not exceed a total of 12 ounces total to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is 6% or less;
  - Malt samples may not exceed a total of 6 ounces total to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is great than 6% but less than 12%;
  - Malt samples should not exceed a total of 3 ounces total to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is 12% or higher;
- **Spirits Sampling:**
  - Spirits samples may not exceed a total of 1 1/2 ounces total to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is 80 proof or less and must be dispensed using a standard measuring device;
  - Spirits samples should not exceed a total of 3/4 of an ounce total of 1/4 ounce servings to an individual during the tasting event if the alcohol content is 80 proof or higher and must be dispensed using a standard measuring device.

