

What is a bottle club?

A bottle club is a term that defines an illegal operation that can be a place or business open to the public where a person visits and is offered alcohol or is allowed to bring their own alcohol for a fee or other consideration that is not licensed to sell alcoholic beverages.

Consideration includes, but is not limited to, a cover charge, the sale of food, ice, mixers, or any other liquids for alcoholic beverages, the furnishing of glassware or other containers for use in the consumption of alcoholic beverages, or the expectation of a purchase of a good or service.

Examples of Bottle Clubs

- Alcohol given to patrons of any business
 - Champagne at a bridal shop
 - Beer with a haircut
 - Wine with a manicure
- Alcohol given to the public at a public place or event
 - Glass of wine at an art walk
 - Mug of beer at a downtown block party
 - Glasses of wine while painting
- Alcohol brought to a public place or event by a customer or visitor
 - Patrons bringing a bottle of wine to a restaurant not licensed to sell alcoholic beverages
 - Patrons bringing beer to a business having a grand opening
- Member Only Clubs with membership fees
 - County Club patrons who bring their own bottle of Scotch

Allowed and Not Considered Bottle Clubs (No money collected to participate)

- Private parties
 - Bring your own alcohol

- The host providing alcohol for the guest
- Attending private events where there is no payment for the use of a venue or service
 - Wedding at a private residence
 - Retirement party at a private residence

Fines

- The Department may assess a fine of up to \$500 to individuals or entities for serving alcoholic beverages or allowing consumption of alcoholic beverages without a license.

SECTION 16-6-306, MCA.

12.2021 (Please note that information in Department Communications may have been modified, superseded, or made obsolete by changes in federal or state law or the Administrative Rules of Montana. If you need to verify the current validity of any Department Communications, contact us.)