



# Diocese of Southern Ohio

## A Policy for the Use of Alcoholic Beverages in the Diocese of Southern Ohio

The Diocese of Southern Ohio seeks to welcome and serve all God's people, including people who choose not to consume alcohol.

### **Law:**

All federal, state, and local laws relating to alcohol and other substance use will be complied with at all diocesan gatherings, including:

- Serving alcohol to minors (those under 21 years of age) is prohibited.
- Sale of alcoholic beverages without a state license is prohibited.
- Persons or groups holding any private events on diocesan property must have permission in writing from the bishop diocesan or her designee, as well as any applicable local license to serve, and appropriate liability insurance. The Hold Harmless agreement signed by persons or groups using the buildings or property of the diocese will reference the Diocesan Alcohol Policy.

### **Church-Related Functions**

#### **Eucharist:**

- Clergy shall consecrate an appropriate amount of wine when celebrating the Eucharist and perform ablutions in a way that does not foster or model misuse.
- Clergy are encouraged to acknowledge the sufficiency of the Sacrament in one kind and to inform members of the assembly of how to receive a blessing at Communion.

#### **Decision-Making:**

- Because of alcohol's effect as a mood-altering substance, alcoholic beverages will not be served when business is conducted. This includes, but is not limited to diocesan governance, commissions, and committees.

#### **Social:**

- Whenever alcohol is served, appealing non-alcoholic alternatives must always be offered with equal prominence and accessibility. Water should always be one (but never the only) alternative.

- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages must be labeled as such. Any food served at diocesan events that contain alcohol must be clearly labeled as such.
- When alcohol is served, organizers will establish a cut-off time for serving alcohol, chosen with sensitivity to transportation concerns.
- Food will be served when alcohol is present.
- The sharing of alcohol will not be advertised or promoted and shall not be the primary purpose of any event (e.g. wine tasting, wine and cheese, BYOB dinner, etc.).
- The serving of alcoholic beverages will be monitored, and those showing signs of intoxication must not be served.
- Alcohol may not be served or consumed at any event sponsored by or put on for the children and youth of the diocese, or on diocesan-sponsored outings at which adults accompany youth.
- Beer and wine may be served at a public diocesan event (any event that is open to and advertised to the public) if permission has been obtained from the bishop diocesan or her designee and provided that it follows this policy as well as applicable licensing and protocols.
- Beer and wine may be served at a diocesan fellowship event (any event hosted by the diocese or a diocesan group or organization that is not open or advertised to the public) if the conditions of the diocesan alcohol policy are met, and a responsible adult oversees the serving of the alcohol. That adult must not drink alcoholic beverages while executing his or her responsibilities. If minors are present, alcohol must be served at a separate, monitored station.

The Diocese will provide a model alcohol policy that congregations are encouraged to adopt for their own use.

Adapted for use by the Diocese of Southern Ohio from “A Policy for the Use of Alcoholic Beverages for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts”, endorsed by Diocesan Council on October 24, 2018. Retrieved from

[https://www.diomass.org/sites/diomass/files/documents/Diocesan%20Alcohol%20Use%20Policy%202018\\_10.pdf](https://www.diomass.org/sites/diomass/files/documents/Diocesan%20Alcohol%20Use%20Policy%202018_10.pdf)

And from “The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland Guidelines for Addressing Alcohol Use and Related Mental Health Issues,” passed by resolution at Diocesan Convention on May 14, 2016. <https://images.yourfaithstory.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2020/03/09152334/Alcohol-use-policy-EDOM-2016.pdf>

Approved by Diocesan Council June 8, 2024, with the commitment to review on an annual basis.