

THE TEXAN[★]

87th Legislature

'Alcohol-to-Go' Bill Signed into Law by Texas Governor Abbott

Going forward, Texans can now purchase alcoholic beverages to-go with their food orders.

BRAD JOHNSON | 17 HOURS AGO



It's five o'clock somewhere in Texas today after Governor Greg Abbott signed the legislature's alcohol-to-go bill into law.

Flanked by Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, bill author Rep. Charlie Geren (R-Fort Worth), sponsor Sen. Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills), and a few other members of the legislature, Abbott [touted](#), "Today is a great day for Texas

restaurants as well as for their customers as I am about to sign a law that allows restaurants to sell alcohol to-go.”

One of the [first bills passed](#) by the lower chamber, [House Bill 1024](#) sped through the Senate and was among the first pieces of legislation to be signed into law by the governor this session.

“Governor Abbott acted quickly to support Texas restaurants and bars by allowing cocktails to-go via executive order during the pandemic,” said Kristi Brown, of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, celebrating the new law.

“Cocktails to-go provided a much-needed lifeline for struggling hospitality businesses and prevented the permanent closure of many. Now that this measure is permanent, hospitality businesses will have increased stability as they begin the long path to recovery.”

Because it was passed with at least two-thirds support in each chamber — there were only two no votes total, one in each chamber — the law will [go into effect immediately](#).

Shortly after the signing, the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) released guidance for restaurants and bars to which the law is applicable.

“This law allows eligible Mixed Beverage Permit holders and Private Clubs to sell beer, wine and cocktails to consumers for pickup or delivery if sold with a food order,” the TABC email reads.

Texans for Safe and Drug-free Youth, however, pumped the brakes on the celebration. “Now that the governor has signed this into law, we must all turn

our attention to taking specific action to protect kids from the consequences of expanded access to alcohol,” its CEO Nicole Holt said in a statement.

She added, “We have called on our leaders to create a statewide task force led by public health experts to directly address the risks of alcohol to-go and determine effective, enforceable protocols to ensure its safe sale.”

The to-go sales prohibition was one of the first regulations suspended by Abbott at the beginning of the pandemic last year. He first [hinted](#) at making the suspension permanent about a year ago and Speaker Dade Phelan (R-Beaumont) [mentioned](#) it explicitly in his post-election speech.

With little opposition, it was sure to become law and now that it has, post-work happy hour has a new option.