

Overview

Step toe & Johnson's Alcohol Team represents a variety of clients in the alcohol industry, including alcohol manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, hotels, resorts, and vendors ranging from locally owned individual establishments to large regional destination resorts.

Team attorneys, supported by the full strength of Step toe & Johnson attorneys working in more than 40 areas of law, have assisted these entities through formation, licensing, food and beverage regulations, alcohol beverage control (ABC), financing, construction, development, zoning, and taxation issues.

The firm also provides ongoing advice regarding labor and employment issues, workers' compensation, employee benefits, governmental relations, and litigation.

Representative Experience

- Applied for hundreds of alcohol beverage licenses, representing almost every type of licensee
- Represented clients in multi-state research projects addressing advertising and trade practice issues
- Defended clients against actions brought by governmental and regulatory agencies, including defending licensees against allegations of misconduct and alcohol violations
- Represented clients in multi-state research projects related to third-party delivery and shipping
- Assisted alcohol manufacturers, including distilleries, breweries, and wineries, as well as retailers, national franchises, bars and night clubs, themed restaurants, caterers, amusement parks, big-box retailers, and ski resorts
- Represented clients in multi-state research projects related to gambling on licensed premises
- Represented clients in negotiation of franchise agreements
- Assisted national wine distributor in avoiding lawsuit through settlement in allegations of unfair pricing
- Represented clients in negotiation of local land use regulation
- Assisted in the development of tax strategies for hospitality and related clients
- Counseled alcohol clients on event hosting, sponsorships, and promotions
- Assisted clients in mergers and acquisitions, including stock purchase, asset purchase, and merger structures

- Represented alcohol clients in zoning, water rights, and disputes regarding restrictive covenants
- Assisted resorts, including casinos, in labor and employment issues, workers' compensation, and related counseling and litigation
- Represented companies in the hospitality, banking, and construction industries in breach of contract and related claims
- Negotiated settlement for national wine distributor lawsuit involving unfair pricing

Areas of Focus

- Alcohol beverage control licensing, including renewals
- TTB permitting
- Multi-state alcohol research and transactional projects
- Regulatory and trade practice compliance
- Label and formula approval
- Server compliance classes teaching responsible practices
- Distribution agreements, alternating proprietorship agreements and contract brewing agreements
- Food and beverage regulations
- Gaming
- Business formation and organization
- Private placements
- Land acquisition, use and zoning
- Environmental law
- Construction and related contract review and assessment
- Corporate financing
- Employment law advice including counseling, training, employment agreements, and day-to-day operational advice
- Labor relations, collective-bargaining, and assisting management with union avoidance
- Litigation, including commercial employment, intellectual property, construction, and other forms of premises liability
- Purchase and sale of existing businesses



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