

Florida's Liquor License Lottery is Open!

Article

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Looking for a lottery ticket that could win you a highly coveted and valuable liquor license? If so, and you have \$100 to spare, then you too can apply for the state's "quota" liquor license lottery. The 2023 entry period for the lottery is officially open until October 4, 2023, so be sure to timely submit a Quota Beverage License Drawing Entry Form and pay the nonrefundable fee to the Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (DABT).

The actual drawing, which will be held in 2024, includes 89 new beverage licenses available for issuance in 30 counties: Alachua, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Clay, Collier, Dade, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Hernando, Hillsborough, Lake, Lee, Leon, Manatee, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Polk, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Volusia, Wakulla and Walton.

In Florida, for every increase in the population by 7,500 residents of a county which permits the sale of intoxicating beverages, a new quota license is created. A quota liquor license is among the various types of liquor licenses available in the State, except that it is a full liquor license allowing the sale of beer, wine and alcohol for package sales or on-premises consumption. Such license is specific to a county and may not be moved to another county.

As set forth in Florida Statutes Section 561.19, the State uses a double random selection drawing method to allow qualifying applicants an equal opportunity of obtaining an available license. If you win, you may then apply for the issuance of a new license by filling out the forms provided by the DABT within 45 days from the date DABT mails the notice of selection. If you are found by DABT to be qualified, a license will be issued.

Were you an applicant in last year's lottery? If so, the winners from the 2022 entry period will be announced on September 25, 2023. If you want to do the math on the odds of winning, consider that the DABT received more than 26,000 entries for 35 licenses in 19 counties.

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Note that if you miss the window for applying or don't win, you can still buy a quota license. Quota licenses in each county can be found for sale through brokers, private sellers, and the like. The State does not set the price for the cost of such license, so the price is usually determined by supply and demand in that area and is therefore dictated by the seller of the license. In addition to the cost, there are transfer fees that will also apply based on a calculation involving the average annual value of gross sales of alcoholic beverages.

Best of luck to those who apply and be sure to reach out to our firm if you have questions on liquor licensing and related matters.