

Longer bar hours, certified bartenders: Changes worth a shot?

Written by Danielle Chiriguayo, produced by Rebekah Ludman Jul. 07, 2022



“There's a lot that has to happen when you serve alcohol, from checking IDs, taking orders, pouring, and delivering alcoholic beverages. ABC just wants to make sure that everyone has proper training to do it,” explains [Eater LA's Mona Holmes](#) about a new law that requires people who serve alcohol to undergo new safety training. Photo by Shutterstock.

Bars might be able to stay open for longer hours — if a new California bill is signed into law. Plus, a new state program means people must be certified to pour those drinks behind the bar.

The law, courtesy of the [Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control](#) (ABC), went into effect on July 1 and mandates “Responsible Beverage Service Training” for every alcohol server in the state. Its purpose is to prevent underage drinking and alcohol-related accidents.

“There's a lot that has to happen when you serve alcohol, from checking IDs, taking orders, pouring, and delivering alcoholic beverages. ABC just wants to make sure that everyone has proper training to do it,” explains [Eater LA's Mona Holmes](#).

All alcohol servers and their managers must complete the training by August 31. Employees who are hired after that deadline will have 60 days to complete it.

The last call pilot program

[Senate Bill 930](#) was introduced to the California Legislature by Senator Scott Weiner. Holmes says if passed, the pilot program would push last call to 4 a.m. for cities including West Hollywood, Palm Springs, San Francisco, and Fresno for five years.

She adds that the benefits to the bill could be wide-reaching.

“Businesses, especially clubs and bars, can serve more alcohol. That means more sales. The return on alcohol sales is really what keeps restaurants and bars and clubs profitable,” she says.

“There's rideshare companies that will have more riders, food vendors, those bacon-wrapped hot dog vendors, anyone who is looking for something to eat after a night of drinking.”

Despite excitement over the proposed plan, Holmes says it faces fierce opposition from law enforcement, West Hollywood residents, and the industry watchdog group [Alcohol Justice](#).