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## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Hon. Bristol Town Council  
Steven Contente, Town Administrator  
Melissa Cordeiro, Town Clerk**

**FROM: Amy H. Goins, Assistant Town Solicitor**

**DATE: June 1, 2026**

**SUBJECT: Recently Enacted Legislation re: Extended Hours for Class B Liquor  
Licensees for World Cup Games**

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Please be advised that recently enacted legislation allows the holder of a retail (Class B) liquor license to petition the Town Council for extended hours in connection with upcoming World Cup matches. The legislation, known as Public Law 2026, chapters 32 & 33, is attached for your reference, and was enacted on May 29. The law adds Chapter 7.1 to Title 3 of the General Laws, setting forth the guidelines under which temporary extended service hours may be authorized.

The temporary extended service hours are only allowed on the following days in 2026, in connection with upcoming World Cup matches:

- June 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, and 27;
- July 2 and 3.

The licensee must apply to the Town Council for approval at least 14 days in advance of the first evening on which extended hours are requested. (Note that the timing of the law's enactment makes it practically difficult for licensees to receive approval for extended hours before mid-June.) The law allows licensees, upon approval of the Town Council, to remain open until 4:00 a.m. and permit liquor service/consumption until 3:00 a.m. The temporary extension of service hours applies only to indoor areas and does not apply to any special permits issued by a licensing authority (for example, sidewalk liquor service) unless explicitly granted. The law does not require advertising or a public hearing, only the 14-day application deadline.

The Town Council has significant discretion to approve or deny applications for temporary extended service hours. The law allows the Town Council to “authorize or reject in full or in part for any reason” an application for extended hours (emphasis added). Applicants for temporary extended service hours shall not be required to submit any application fee.

It is our advice that if the Town Council approves an application for temporary extended service hours, zoning approval not be required. Ordinarily, zoning approval is required for establishments that are either legal nonconforming or existing by special use permit or variance to expand their hours of operation. In this case, due to the practical impossibility of applying for and receiving zoning approval, given advertising requirements, it would defeat the purpose of the law to require zoning approval in addition to approval of the Town Council.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

*C:\Users\Amy\Dropbox\UTR-Work\Towns etc\Bristol\Memo to BRTC re Extended Hours for World Cup.docx*

**CHAPTER 032**  
**2026 -- H 8009 SUBSTITUTE A**  
**Enacted 05/29/2026**

**A N A C T**

**RELATING TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -- TEMPORARY EXTENDED SERVICE HOURS**

Introduced By: Representatives Giraldo, Alzate, Voas, and Cruz

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Title 3 of the General Laws entitled "ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

CHAPTER 7.1

TEMPORARY EXTENDED SERVICE HOURS

**3-7.1-1. Authorization of temporary extended service hours.**

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation to the contrary, any person or establishment possessing the qualifications and meeting the requirements of this title that is licensed to sell intoxicating liquor by the drink at retail for consumption on premises in any city or town in this state may, for the periods authorized in § 3-7.1-2, apply to their licensing authority at least fourteen (14) days in advance to:

(1) Operate beyond its normal closing time and until up to four o'clock (4:00) a.m.; and

(2) To sell, serve, and allow for the consumption of alcoholic beverages beyond its normal cut off time and until up to three o'clock (3:00) a.m.

(b) This temporary extension of service hours shall apply only to indoor areas at licensed establishments, and shall not be applicable to any special permits issued by a licensing authority unless explicitly granted by that body.

(c) The provisions of this title relating to hours of operation, time of closing or opening, or hours of sale of intoxicating liquor by the drink at retail for consumption on the premises shall not apply to such licenses approved for any temporary extension period, except as provided in § 3-7.1-3.

**3-7.1-2. Periods authorized for temporary extension of service hours.**

The provisions of this chapter are authorized only for the dates enumerated herein and for the express purpose of offering public watch opportunities for 2026 FIFA World Cup Tournament matches beginning on any of the following dates and continuing through the authorized period granted by the local licensing authority in the morning of the succeeding day in calendar year 2026: June 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, and 27; July 2; and 3.

**3-7.1-3. Municipal authorization-Procedures.**

(a) A licensing authority may authorize or reject in full or in part for any reason an application by a licensee for the extended operation and service hours or areas provided under this chapter within their jurisdiction.

(b) Licensees shall not be required to submit any application fee for the purposes of the temporary extensions granted under this chapter.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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LC005706/SUB A/2

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