

Alcohol Use Policies of the Diocese of Western New York

These policies seek to support the Church in providing a safe and welcoming environment for all people, including those in recovery.

1. All applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the serving of alcohol must be obeyed, including those governing the non-serving to minors.
2. When or if alcohol is served, non-alcoholic beverages must also be served with equal prominence and accessibility. Food containing alcohol should also be properly labeled as such.
3. Groups or organizations sponsoring the activity or event at which alcoholic beverages are served must have permission, in writing, from the clergy and vestry and must abide by the policies of the parish regarding the serving of alcohol.
4. The Diocese and constituent congregations will make certain that alcohol consumption is not the focus of any ministries and that drinking alcohol is not an exclusively normative activity.
5. Food must be served when alcohol is present.
6. Every effort must be made to ensure that no one has too much to drink. If it is discovered that someone seems impaired by alcohol, that person may not drive. Whenever alcohol is to be served, the responsible entity must appoint an adult to oversee its serving. That adult must not consume alcohol during the time of their duty.
7. If hard liquor is expected to be served at an event, a certified or licensed server must be obtained. Under normal circumstances, serving alcohol at church/diocesan functions should be limited to beer and wine.
8. Serving alcoholic beverages at events where minors are present is strongly discouraged. If minors are present, alcohol must be served at a separate station that is monitored at all times to prevent underage drinking.
9. Alcoholic beverages are not to be consumed by adults who accompany minors off church property on a parish/diocesan-related activity.
10. Recognizing the effects of alcohol as a mood-altering drug, alcoholic beverages shall not be served before or during the conducting of the business of the Church.
11. Serving of alcoholic beverages at church events should not be publicized as the main attraction to the event. Diocesan celebrations should not encourage events based on the consumption of alcohol. Any exemptions to this must be through a documented vote of the governing body of the institution.
12. Clergy are encouraged to teach the efficacy of receiving the sacrament in one kind. Only the Bishop may authorize the use of non-alcoholic wine.
13. Clergy shall consecrate an appropriate amount of wine when celebrating the Eucharist and perform ablutions in a way that does not foster or model misuse.
14. Clergy should not expect or require anyone to consume excess consecrated wine.
15. Any alcohol stored on church property should be in a proper cabinet or closet. Key access should be limited.

For congregations adopting these policies, please complete:

Adopted by _____ Church at the Vestry meeting on _____.

Clerk of Vestry _____

Warden(s) _____

The priest and vestry of the church are responsible for disseminating this policy to the congregation.