

### Liquor Licences

#### Introduction

The BVI is scheduled to reopen to international visitors on 1 December 2020. With just under a month to go, business owners getting ready to reopen should check they have all necessary licences and permissions in place to allow them to operate. This is particularly the case for those businesses that may have temporarily ceased operating as a consequence of the Covid-19 related restrictions and which now need to apply for any required licences and permissions that may have expired.

#### Liquor Licences

It is timely to remind business owners that the sale of alcoholic drinks in the BVI is regulated, and businesses that sell alcoholic drinks must hold a liquor licence authorising them to do so. The type of liquor licence varies, depending on the nature of the premises that the alcoholic drinks are sold from. For example, the sale of alcoholic drinks in a restaurant requires a restaurant liquor licence, whereas the sale of alcoholic beverages in a hotel requires a hotel liquor licence. A liquor licence is also required in connection with the manufacture of alcoholic drinks. Each liquor licence is specific to the premises named in it, meaning that a resort with several different bars will require a separate liquor licence for each bar.

Liquor licences are typically valid for six months and are either granted or renewed at one of two hearings that take place each year at the Magistrate's Court. The hearings take place on 1 June and 1 December in each year, or the next working day if 1 June or 1 December falls on a weekend or public holiday.

#### The Application Process

The supporting documents to be submitted as part of an application for a liquor licence vary, depending on whether the application in question is for a new liquor licence, or the renewal of an existing liquor licence. In each case, the relevant application form and supporting documents should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the relevant hearing date.

Applicants for a new liquor licence should bear in mind that as part of the application process, advertisements must be placed in two consecutive publications of a newspaper published in the BVI stating the intention to sell alcoholic drinks. Copies of the advertisements must accompany the liquor licence application. Business owners that require a new liquor licence should therefore start the advertisement process soon, to ensure that the application can be submitted within the requisite timescale.

For more information or if you require any assistance in connection with your business, including any queries relating to licences or permissions, please feel free to email us at [ghp@ghpbvi.com](mailto:ghp@ghpbvi.com) or reach out to one of our lawyers using the contact details below.

## Contact Us

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