



State of Arizona
Department of Liquor Licenses and Control

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tempe Bar Under Investigation by Department of Liquor

PHOENIX – Director John Cocca announced that the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control on June 30, 2020, issued a *Notice of Violation and Opportunity to Comply* to a Tempe bar.

The entity doing business as Varsity Tavern (Lic. No. 06070112, 501 S Mill Avenue #101), and owned by Ipsum Creative LLC, recently became the subject of an investigation for alleged violations of Arizona liquor law specific to a licensee's requirement to protect customers, and violations of Executive Order 2020-40 and associated *business and restaurant and bar* requirements.

According to the Notice of Violation and Opportunity to Comply, Department investigators have confirmed:

- Multiple instances where [management] require[ed] or permit[ted] employees and managers known to have tested positive for COVID-19 to continue working;
- [Management] fail[ed] to take appropriate measures to notify the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) or other agencies, employees, or customers that employees who had tested positive had worked while symptomatic;
- [Management] fail[ed] to create and enforce written policies in compliance with Executive Orders and CDC and ADHS guidelines;
- [Management] fail[ed] to enforce social distancing requirements by requiring the wearing of masks or limiting the congregation of groups; and
- These instances of noncompliance occurred with the knowledge of Varsity's managerial staff.

Based on the seriousness of the allegations, anyone with knowledge of the above or similar misconduct is asked to call the Department's Investigations Division at 602-542-9062 and share information.

On July 1, 2020, Department officials received correspondence from Varsity Tavern ownership wherein they elected to close its business. The document received by the Department placed the Varsity Tavern license on inactive status. An entity whose license is on inactive status is unable to engage in any alcohol-related business to include placing or receiving orders for stock alcohol, as well as furnishing alcohol in any manner to another.

According to Director Cocca, the Department will seek revocation of the license.

Varsity Tavern has been the subject of serious disciplinary action previously. The entity entered into a consent agreement to suspend its license in December 2018, and then had its license summarily suspended by the Department in July 2019.

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