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### **TABC Concerned Over Low Minor Compliance Rates in 2020**

NASHVILLE, TN- Like other law enforcement agencies around the country, the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission routinely conducts minor compliance operations in order to verify if alcohol licensees are compliant with laws prohibiting sales to minors. In 2020, the TABC has seen compliance rates fall to unusually low levels compared to other years, and this has TABC leadership concerned.

Chief Law Enforcement Officer Bond Tubbs stated, “Although 100% compliance is our goal, we are used to seeing relatively high compliance of between 85% and 95%. However, in 2020, compliance rates have dropped significantly.” At the November TABC Commission meeting he reported both monthly and yearly data related to compliance checks and corresponding failure rates. The reported figures extremely concerned the TABC commissioners and staff. The data revealed out of 261 minor compliance checks conducted between October 22 and November 18, 2020, only 74% refused to sell to a minor attempting to purchase alcohol.

A further breakdown revealed significant variations in compliance rates among different activities. During the same time period of between October 22 and November 18, 2020, only 65% of on-premises consumption licensees (restaurants and bars) who were checked refused to sell to a minor. However, the most concerning figure was that of those restaurants and bars who offered curbside or carryout sales. Of the 41 establishments offering curbside or carryout alcohol that were checked, 26 sold to a minor for a compliance rate of 36%, a rate that is incompatible with contemporary regulatory standards and expectations. Yearly compliance rates for establishments offering curbside and carryout sales were also well below expectations. Of the 287 carryout establishments checked so far this year, 120 sold to a minor for a 58% compliance rate. A bright spot was the compliance rates of retail package stores and retail food store licensees who maintained normal rates of 85% and 93% respectively.

“We hope these low numbers are a result of COVID-19’s market disruptions and not a trend. We know the industry has lost some experienced staff. This year has been very tough for our licensees, and I have faith we will get this turned around. The health of the industry relies on our licensees complying with state law.” said TABC Executive Director Russell Thomas.

For more information about the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission, please visit [www.tn.gov/abc](http://www.tn.gov/abc).

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