



AN INITIATIVE OF

the de Beaumont Foundation + Kaiser Permanente

Alcohol Outlet Density

POLICY BREAKDOWN

“[T]here is a direct correlation between the number, density, location and operational practices of alcohol outlets and the rates of violence, drunk driving, physical injuries, underage drinking, public nuisance activities and other social problems in communities. In short: Alcohol outlets pose a serious, documented health risk to citizens, especially those in urban settings.”

—Leana Wen, MD
Former Health Commissioner,
Baltimore



CityHealth helps cities thrive through policies that improve people’s day-to-day quality of life, well-being and health.

CityHealth, an initiative of the de Beaumont Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, works to advance a package of evidence-based policy solutions that will help millions of people live longer, better lives in vibrant, prosperous communities.

Our ratings are the culmination of a two-year assessment of how the nation’s 40 largest cities fare in nine policies based in

research, backed by qualified experts and shown to have bipartisan support. With these policies in place, cities will attract families who want the best for themselves and their children, young people looking for interesting places to work and businesses that need high-quality talent. The bottom line: Policies like alcohol sales control will improve lives and help cities thrive.

FOCUS ON POLICY: ALCOHOL OUTLET DENSITY

Regulations—from licensing to zoning—can allow cities to specify the number and density of alcohol outlets in a given neighborhood. Neighborhoods with high concentrations of alcohol sales are linked to more drinking and higher rates of violence, underage drinking, and driving under the influence. Policies that control the amount of alcohol sales in a neighborhood can have a significant impact on residents’ safety, well-being, and health. These are just some of the benefits of an alcohol sales control policy:

- **Makes communities safer:** Reducing the density of alcohol retail outlets results in safer communities with fewer drinking-related crimes and injuries.
- **Reduces excessive drinking:** Laws that reduce the concentration of retail alcohol establishments can be one of the most cost-effective approaches to reducing excessive drinking by limiting the physical availability of alcohol.
- **Reduces illegal drinking:** Alcohol outlet density rules are effective strategies for reducing drinking among underage youth.

MEDALS BY CITY

Albuquerque	⊘
Atlanta	🥇
Austin	⊘
Baltimore	⊘
Boston	🥇
Charlotte	⊘
Chicago	🥇
Columbus	⊘
Dallas	⊘
Denver	🥇
Detroit	⊘
El Paso	⊘
Fort Worth	⊘
Fresno	⊘
Houston	⊘
Indianapolis	⊘
Jacksonville	⊘
Kansas City	🥇
Las Vegas	🥇
Long Beach	⊘
Los Angeles	⊘
Louisville	⊘
Memphis	⊘
Mesa	⊘
Milwaukee	🥇
Nashville	⊘
New York	⊘
Oklahoma City	⊘
Philadelphia	⊘
Phoenix	⊘
Portland	⊘
Sacramento	⊘
San Antonio	⊘
San Diego	⊘
San Francisco	⊘
San Jose	⊘
Seattle	⊘
Tucson	⊘
Virginia Beach	⊘
Washington, D.C.	🥇

HOW CITIES STACK UP

The State of Alcohol Outlet Density in Big U.S. Cities



The Gold Standard for Alcohol Outlet Density

CityHealth's 40-city assessment combined innovative legal analysis with the input of national experts to determine the "gold standard" for each policy. We identified which elements are necessary for the best quality policy (gold), a good quality policy (silver), and a passable

quality policy (bronze). Cities with no policy received no medal. Our assessment of alcohol sales control laws includes information about city-specific laws, along with the relevant county- and state-level laws, valid through December 1, 2017.

How did we award alcohol sales control policy medals?

	Silver	Gold
City has local zoning and/or licensing laws addressing alcohol outlets	✓	✓
City follows best practices for comprehensive local zoning and/or licensing laws addressing alcohol sales for both on- and off-premises consumption, and both prospectively and retrospectively	✗	✓