

Responsible Beverage Service

Passing a Local Ordinance—From Start to Finish

Ari Russell, ICPS
Executive Director
GUIDE, Inc.

- Gwinnett County is a large suburban county in Metro Atlanta.
- Significant increase in underage drinking triggered local action.
- GUIDE, the county's lead prevention agency, adopted *Communities Mobilizing for Change in Alcohol (CMCA)*, an evidenced-based community organizing model.

Setting the Stage

- Commercial access strategies included:
 - Increased penalties for underage sales;
 - Law enforcement compliance checks; and
 - Voluntary RBS training (TIPS).
- County Task Force advocated for **mandatory** RBS training:
 - County said, “No”; and
 - We set our sights on cities and built solid relationships.

Countywide Strategies

- Duluth: Large suburban city experiencing rapid growth and significant changes in diversity.
- Alcohol-related violations were constituting the largest number of city ordinance violations.
- In the year before the ordinance was passed, alcohol citations and revocations tripled, mostly in establishments owned by recent immigrants.

City of Duluth

- Duluth workgroup included city officials, law enforcement, GUIDE staff, Korean Task Force, vendors, and city's Alcohol Review Board.
- Training and ordinance were crafted concurrently.
- The work involved a lot of collaboration with Korean community and business owners.
- Ordinance took 8 months to be drafted and passed.

Developing the RBS Ordinance

- GUIDE developed a course, materials, and tests for training of owners/managers, handlers, and servers.
- Collaborated with Center for Pan Asian Community Services for Korean translations and training.
- Duluth Police Dept produced a video used in training to emphasize law enforcement's role.
- Charged \$20/person for training (one 3-hour session).

Training

Training Outline:

- City, county, and state ordinances and responsibilities
 - Reasonable efforts to avoid alcohol problems
 - Checking of IDs
 - Role play of activities
 - Review questions and Q & A
 - Test(s)
-
- 95 percent said they'd use information covered in training.
 - 99 percent said the training was very helpful.

Training cont'd

- First year: 749 completed training and received permits, compared to 460 during the prior year.
- GUIDE conducted training for 18 months, then trained and mentored city employees so they could take over the program.
- GUIDE recouped all expenses from the training fees and made a modest profit.

Summary

- City police do not conduct compliance checks; they respond to complaints. They report a sharp decrease in all alcohol citations and revocations.
- County police conduct compliance checks, and fewer citations are written for underage sales/service in greater Duluth than in other areas of the county.

“The alcohol training is absolutely needed to make businesses aware of regulations. However, without enforcement, they don’t make serious efforts to comply. The two-prong approach is needed—education and enforcement.” City of Duluth Alcohol Officer

Conclusion

Ari Russell, ICPS
GUIDE, Inc.

ari@guideinc.org

www.guideinc.org

Contact Information