

## **Fuquay-Varina Downtown Social Districts FAQ's**

### **What is a social district?**

On September 8, 2021, Session Law 2021-150 was ratified, allowing local governments to establish "Social Districts" within their jurisdictions. These Social Districts allow for common areas where licensed establishments (e.g., bars, breweries, restaurants) may sell alcoholic beverages in designated containers to be taken into the common area for consumption.

### **What are the benefits of a social district?**

- Encourages economic vitality in the community.
- Enhances exposure to cultural experiences for residents and visitors.
- Increases foot traffic and revenue for retailers.
- Business attraction for businesses interested in locating in social districts.
- Opportunity to host more special events in the social districts.

### **What towns/cities in North Carolina have approved a social district(s)? This list will be updated periodically. Last updated 10/21/2022.**

1. Albemarle
2. Asheboro
3. Charlotte
4. Cornelius
5. Durham
6. Elon
7. Greensboro
8. Greenville
9. Hickory
10. High Point
11. Kannapolis
12. Lenoir
13. Monroe
14. Mooresville
15. Mount Airy
16. Newton
17. Norwood
18. Oxford
19. Pilot Mountain
20. Raleigh
21. Salisbury
22. Selma
23. Sylva
24. Whiteville
25. Wilson

**When does the social district go into effect?**

If the governing board approves a social district, Town staff anticipates the Social Districts will be operational within the next couple of months. Once all necessary steps are completed, and permissions are granted from the North Carolina ABC Commission, Town staff via social media, Town website, and coordination through local downtown businesses will notify the public that the Social Districts are in effect and operational.

**How will the social district boundaries be marked?**

Signage will be posted at the boundaries of the social districts.

**Can somebody bring alcohol from outside a social district into the social district to consume?**

No. Only beverages purchased by an ABC-permitted business located within the social district may be consumed within the social district. No outside alcohol is permitted.

**What are the proposed days and hours of operation of the social district?**

Fuquay-Varina Downtown Social Districts will operate seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

**Why does the social district end at 10:00 p.m.?**

The hour of 10:00 p.m. is consistent with when special events typically end, and it captures the end of dinner and retail hours before later nightlife activity.

**How does a business opt-in to the social district?**

Businesses may submit a Participant Permit Form to participate and opt-in to the social district. Businesses are not required to opt-out.

**How will participating businesses be marked?**

Window clings will be displayed on participating businesses' doors/or windows to identify those that have opted into the district. A list of participating locations will also be available on the Town's Social Districts' webpage.

**What cups will be used for the social district? What is the cost to my business to use these cups?**

Businesses are responsible for purchasing and using their cups, which must conform to the statutory requirements for social district cups. The Town of Fuquay-Varina will provide the official sticker template that must be displayed on the cups. Establishments are required to display their business name on the sticker in addition to the date and time the alcoholic beverage is served.

**What are the requirements of a social district cup?**

- Container clearly identifies the permittee (business) from which the alcoholic beverage was purchased.
- Container clearly displays a logo or some other mark unique to the social district in which it will be consumed.
- Container is not comprised of glass.
- Container displays, in no less than 12-point font, the statement, "Drink Responsibly–Be 21."

- The container cannot hold more than 16 fluid ounces.

**How many alcoholic drinks can I purchase at one time in the social district?**

A single patron cannot be sold or delivered alcoholic drinks in excess of:

- Not more than two beer or wine alcoholic beverage drinks at one time.
- Not more than one alcoholic beverage at one time if an alcoholic beverage drink contains liquor.

**Can I take an alcoholic beverage in my social district cup home with me?**

- No. Cups should be disposed of in a nearby recycling receptacle prior to exiting the social district.
- Alcoholic beverages must be sold by a permittee located within the social district. No personal beer, wine, or liquor may be brought into the social district.

**Can I drink my alcoholic beverage, pour it into a Fuquay-Varina Social District cup, and walk around in the social district?**

No. Only drinks purchased from qualified ABC-permittee businesses within the social district are allowed. No cans, glass bottles, or outside drinks are permitted within the boundaries.

**Can a convenience store sell alcoholic beverages as part of the social district?**

No. Participating locations must have an ABC permit for on-site consumption as outlined in NCGS 18B-904.1(a).

**What do I do if I am a retailer within the social district and do not want alcohol inside my business?**

All businesses within the social district can opt out of the district. Businesses do not have to allow alcohol within their place of business. Signage will be provided to all businesses that choose to participate or not participate in the social district program.

**Can I take my alcoholic beverage into a vehicle within the social district?**

No. No person shall possess an alcoholic beverage while driving a vehicle, including bicycles. An open container of any alcoholic beverage is also prohibited in the passenger area of any vehicle while on right-of-way within the social district.

**What happens if I leave the social district boundaries with an alcoholic beverage?**

Individuals who leave the social district possessing alcoholic beverages will be criminally charged under the Town's open container ordinance on property owned or controlled by the Town of Fuquay-Varina. In addition, state laws regarding the unlawful possession and consumption of spirituous liquor also apply to patrons who violate open container laws.

**How would the social district operate when you have a special event downtown?**

If a special event is taking place downtown within the social district, the event criteria of the special event will supersede that of the social district's program regulations (e.g., if a special event does not allow alcohol, signage will need to be posted at points of entry to the special event notifying the public that alcohol is prohibited).

**How will the social district be enforced?**

The Town of Fuquay-Varina's Police Department and the North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) has jurisdiction over the social district and will enforce local and state laws.

**How can I report when I see individuals breaking the regulations of the social district?**

- You can call the Fuquay-Varina Police Department's Non-Emergency number at (919) 552-3191. Note: In case of emergency, when an immediate response is needed, call 911.
- You can also report violations to the North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement Division (1-877-ALE-AGENT), Wake County Board of Alcoholic Control (919-832-2726), and the Town of Fuquay-Varina Police Department (919-552-3191).