

# Boulevard Sentinel



Chili's, like many other restaurants, is now offering alcohol to go.

## Alcohol To-Go Raises Concerns

04/30/2020 *By T. A. Hendrickson*

Alcohol Justice, the coalition that has led the fight against later closing times for bars in California, has expressed alarm over new state rules that let restaurants sell beer, wine and mixed drinks for pickup and delivery.

The new rules, in effect since March 20, are intended to help the alcohol beverage industry survive the shutdown, [according to state regulators](#). Under the rules, to-go orders of alcohol must be sold with food and have secure lids (no sippy cups or straw holes). The rules also let retailers sell alcohol at drive-through windows.

In a [letter on April 13](#) to the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC), Bruce Lee Livingston, the executive director of Alcohol Justice, raised 11 concerns. One concern is that the new rules will remain in force even after the shutdown ends. Another is that underage and excessive drinking could increase under the new rules because restaurants may be less able and perhaps less inclined to monitor the age and intoxication level of to-go customers.

In an email to Livingston on April 14, Jacob Appelsmith, the director of ABC said that the new rules are not intended to outlast the coronavirus crisis. A spokesperson for Alcohol Justice told the Boulevard Sentinel that the group would like ABC to specifically and publicly state that the new rules will be rescinded as soon as the stay-at-home order is lifted.

In the meantime, [experts in addiction, social work and other fields at USC have warned](#) of the potential for increased alcohol abuse during the shutdown. Across disciplines, the experts expressed concern that increased alcohol consumption today can lead to alcohol abuse-related problems for years to come.