

MORATORIUM FAQs

1. What is an ABRA moratorium?

It is an ABRA enforced limit on the number of liquor licenses in a designated geographical area (Portion = 1800 ft radius, Section = 1200, or Locality = 600)

2. What is the definition of Over-concentration?

- a.) Portion: total of 18 establishments of any class of license, or 9 of a single class
- b.) Section: total of 12 establishments of any class of license, or 6 of a single class
- c.) Locality: total of 6 establishments of any class, or 3 of a single class

3. Is the cap a flat out ban on license of any type?

No. Generally, each type of license is considered separately in terms of the caps, so for example there may be a limit on the number of CN (nightclubs) licenses, and at the same time no limit on new licenses for full service grocery stores.

4. Do Moratoriums last forever?

No. Moratoriums are intended to be a temporary measure and are up for review for renewal every 5 years.

5. Why have moratoriums been needed?

In areas with a high density of alcohol licenses and further high demand for applications for new licenses, adjacent residential neighborhoods can be severely impacted by crime, noise, trash, lack of residential parking, traffic, safety, and congestion, as well as the possibility of declining property values. Moratoriums help limit further impacts.

6. Have moratoriums been issued before?

Yes. There are currently 6 ABRA moratoriums in effect in the District.
Dupont Circle East, Dupont Circle West, Adams Morgan, Georgetown, Glover Park, H Street

7. What is the process for a moratorium?

The general process is:

- a. A neighborhood or area in the District is identified by residents that have significant concerns with the effects of overconcentration of licenses.
- b. The area must be deemed appropriate under 2 of the following "Appropriateness Standards":
 - Effect on peace, order, quiet, including noise and litter provisions
 - Effect on residential parking needs, and vehicular and pedestrian safety
 - Effect on real property values
 - Over-concentration

- c. After receiving input and support from community organizations, a petition is filed with ABRA requesting the moratorium.
- d. Public hearings are held to have further input from residents and the community.
- e. ABRA issues a Board order which may grant all, some or none of the requests.

COMMON MYTHS:

8. Moratoriums hurt development in the City?

No. Although this has been claimed, there has been no data presented to support that moratoriums adversely impacted business development. There are moratoriums in thriving areas such as Dupont Circle, Georgetown, Adams Morgan, and H Street. Moratoriums are put in place by neighbors and the District to protect the rights of residents and property owners in regard to: safety, peace, order, quiet, parking and trash in neighborhood.

If any residents were adversely impacted by the lack of development from a moratorium they have a voice in both the initiation and 5 year review process. The clear consensus at moratorium renewal hearings is that these have been successful in improving the mix of businesses and sustainability of the neighborhoods.

9. Moratoriums promote unfair competition?

No. The moratorium actually promotes competition, diversity, and long term sustainability in the neighborhood and the District. Neighborhoods adjacent to the zone will see larger growth in ABC establishments and within the zone a more balanced mix of enterprises will be encouraged ensuring the long term viability of the zone and the District.

10. Moratoriums block out new grocery stores like Trader Joes?

No. Moratoriums have no effect on licenses for full service grocery stores. There is currently a District wide quota on new Class B licenses, but an exemption exists for full service grocery stores.

11. Moratoriums are against night life?

No. Moratoriums are in place to protect the quality of life both during the day and the night, while continuing to promote healthy and sustainable communities.

