

OMAHA COALITION MEETING
Wednesday, October 8, 2025
9 a.m.

Please use to sign-in:



A G E N D A

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Review of the September 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes
(*please contact PEM staff with corrections*)
- III. Strategic Planning Break Outs
- IV. Focus Area Updates
 - a. Policy
 - i. Nebraska Liquor Control Commission
 - b. Enforcement
 - i. Saturation Patrol & Compliance Check Results
 - ii. Law Enforcement Workgroup Meeting today at 10:00 a.m.
 - c. Youth
 - i. September Youth Meeting Recap & Next Steps
 - ii. Next meeting October 20th at 4:30 p.m.
 - d. Awareness
 - i. KETV Chronicle
 - ii. October Research Summary available at www.projectextramile.org
- V. Additional Discussion/Announcements
- VI. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date: **November 12th, 9 a.m.**
Nebraska Liquor Control Commission
UNO's Community Engagement Center, Room 209

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS

Nebraska Liquor Control Commission Hearings – November 4-5, 2025
Youth Leadership Network meeting – October 20, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.
American Public Health Association Conference – November 1-5, 2025

PROJECT EXTRA MILE

OMAHA METRO AREA COALITION MEETING MINUTES September 10, 2025

- I. Call to Order: Coalition Chair Tom Safranek called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.
- II. Welcome and Introductions: Coalition members and speakers in attendance: Sharona Ernst, Jason Sharp, Ed Kaiser, Nicholas Sauma, Maggie Ballard, Palistene Gray-Moore, Jeremy Kinsey, Mike Schofield, Ray Harrod, Tom Giffie, Cody McGee, Ryley Egger, Ashley Pick, and Tom Safranek. Coalition members in attendance via Zoom: Erin Bone, Jona Beck, and Lanette Richards. Staff members: Chris Wagner, Cecelia Fuller, Beatha Kliewer, and Liene Topko.
- III. Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the August 13th meeting were included in the coalition meeting packet. No additions or corrections were made.
- IV. Community Alcohol Enforcement

Chief Jeremy Kinsey (Blair) discussed the importance of strong partnerships. He described as Blair on some days being a part of the Omaha metro, yet others very much a farm town. Being more rural comes with a greater mentality of alcohol-consumption being okay as seen by MIP parties in the community. When asked about breaking up these parties and tracing the source of alcohol Kinsey explained that on a typical night shift, they have two officers and three deputies on duty so if a party call comes in, they typically write tickets and don't always have the chance to trace the source of the alcohol due to limited resources. Inv. McGee (NSP) offered their agency's support when needed.

Chief Mike Schofield (La Vista) shared that their agency also values partnerships. He described addressing alcohol enforcement in a four-pronged approach: licensing (who is applying for a license and what is their business history); selective enforcements (looking for DUIs, MIPs, running radar); retail compliance checks; and regular patrols. When asked about the Entertainment District, Schofield explained that off-duty officers are hired for inside the venue while the outdoors are patrolled by on-duty officers.

Both Chiefs expressed appreciation for community support and will continue to work with Project Extra Mile to address excessive alcohol consumption and the related harms in their communities.

- V. Focus Area Updates
 - a. Policy
 - i. Chris Wagner informed the group that the Alcohol Intake Study focused on alcohol-related mortality and the alcohol & cancer link will not be published beyond the initial draft. This is likely due to the alcohol industry's pressure since alcohol consumption is decreasing, however binge drinking has not seen a dramatic decrease. Wagner directed

attendees to a Vox news article included in the packet for further details on the study.

- ii. Wagner also shared that the US Dietary Guidelines are updated every five years. This is a tool for healthcare providers to share with patients on how alcohol consumption can negatively impact them. Currently the guidelines are 2 drinks/day for men and 1 drink/day for women. Based on the above study, 1 drink/day had a risk of death due to an alcohol-related cause of 1 in 1,000, but 2 drinks/day has a risk of 1 in 25.
- iii. Federal funding for several public health and safety grants is still uncertain. In July, the Senate appropriated funding for the STOP Act and PFS grant, however the House and Senate must agree prior to the end of the fiscal year on September 30th before this is final.

b. Enforcement

- i. Liene Topko shared that the Nebraska Liquor Control Commissioners have chosen Micah Chaffee as the new executive director. Chaffee has an MBA from UNL, a law degree from Creighton University, and worked as the research analyst for the Nebraska Legislature's Business & Labor and General Affairs Committees.
- ii. Topko also discussed that agencies in Cass, Douglas, and Sarpy Counties are conducting saturation patrols and alcohol compliance checks throughout the month of September to address impaired driving and retail access to alcohol. Cass County compliance checks resulted in one business selling alcohol to minors.
- iii. The Law Enforcement Workgroup will meet on October 8th following the coalition meeting to discuss and schedule future operations, how to improve alcohol-related enforcement, alcohol delivery compliance checks, and overservice enforcements.

c. Youth

- i. Cecelia Fuller shared that the first Youth Leadership Network (YLN) of the school year had 8 attendees, with 4 being new students. The students discussed leadership through the lens of communication and critical thinking by discussing a recent DUI crash that was in the news and how the individual was portrayed.
- ii. The next YLN meeting is on September 15th at 7:00 p.m. at the UNO Community Engagement Center. Coalition members were encouraged to share this opportunity with high school students they know and work with.

VI. Awareness:

- a. The September Research Summaries are available at www.projectextramile.org/ResearchSummary

VII. Additional Discussion/Announcements:

- a. Maggie Ballard with Heartland Family Service shared that their 13th Annual Hands Across the Bridge for national recovery month event in on Saturday, September 13th in Council Bluffs at the Bob Kerry Pedestrian Bridge.
- b. The group also discussed how a recent news article indicated Omaha has a 4% per capita DUI rate (worst in the nation) with 20% of fatal crashes involving alcohol, while Texas has a 2% rate but 40% fatal alcohol-involved crashes. Ashley Pick with the Nebraska Highway Safety Office shared that law enforcement in Nebraska are doing great work to prevent alcohol-involved fatality crashes.

VIII. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date: The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

MEDIA RELEASE



For more information, contact:

Chris Wagner, Executive Director
Project Extra Mile
(402) 898-7342

Sgt. Lindsey Fox
Omaha Police Department
402-444-5660

For Immediate Release
Mon., September 22, 2025

20 Omaha Area Businesses Sold Alcohol to Minors

It was the highest non-compliant rate since 2008

OMAHA, Neb -- Local and state law enforcement agencies conducted compliance checks between September 9, 19, and 20 in Cass and Douglas counties to ensure that retailers are refusing the sale of alcohol to minors. Underage drinking causes a number of harms to youth and their communities if left unchecked. Unfortunately, it was the highest rate of non-compliance in nearly two decades.

"We were concerned to see the percentage of businesses that sold to minors during this round of checks increase drastically from recent operations," said Omaha Police Department Sergeant Lindsey Fox. "We urge businesses to train their employees about IDs so that they can easily verify the minor ID and refuse the sale."

"It's unfortunate that the Nebraska Legislature killed a proposal requested by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission this year that would've required all licensees to train their employees about how to legally sell alcohol in Nebraska, which would've included training on IDs," said Chris Wagner, Executive Director of Project Extra Mile. "We are trying to fill the gap by distributing our *It's Just This Simple* campaign to all of the nearly 5,000 retail liquor licenses in the State of Nebraska to help these businesses and their employees distinguish between adult and minor IDs and lists additional steps that can be taken to reduce illegal sales."

20 (17%) out of 121 businesses checked in Cass and Douglas counties were cited for selling alcohol to minors. A summary sheet of the enforcement results and a full list of businesses checked are [available here](#). One of the businesses cited is facing enhanced penalties due to a prior sale to minor within the last four years -- the time frame used by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission (LCC) to assess penalties.

- **Mega Saver, 5444 Center St, Omaha (4/2021; 12/2021).**

Mega Saver was found guilty by the LCC of selling alcohol to a minor within the last 4 years. If found guilty of last week's sale, they will be facing up to two days of mandatory closure (no alcohol sales allowed) and 20 days of suspension (can be paid off as a fine of \$100 per day) according to the [Liquor Control Commission's penalty guidelines](#).

The other 19 businesses are facing their first sale to minor violation in the last four years. If found guilty, those businesses would be facing 15-25 days of suspension that the business could elect to pay off as a fine at \$50 per day.

24 officers from the Omaha and Plattsmouth Police Departments; the Cass and Douglas and County Sheriff's Offices; and the Nebraska State Patrol participated in the enhanced underage drinking enforcement effort.

To report underage drinking or adults providing alcohol to minors, call the statewide tip line at 1-866-Must-B-21 (687-8221). It's anonymous, and it's the right call. Individuals are urged to call 911 to report an underage drinking party in progress.

This project is funded (100%, \$4,713) by the Strategic Prevention Framework - Partnerships for Success grant (5H79SP083671-02) through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, contracted through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health and Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare. NDOT-HSO also funds the tip line. Project Extra Mile helped to coordinate the enforcement efforts.

-30-

Mission: Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms.

Project Extra Mile, 6001 Dodge Street, CEC 228B, Omaha, NE 68182-0600



Project Extra Mile | 6001 Dodge Street CEC 228B | Omaha, NE 68182-0600 US

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Summary

Alcohol Compliance Checks for sales to minors

Conducted on September 9, 19, & 20, 2025

Location: Cass & Douglas Counties in Nebraska

Participating Agencies:

Cass County Sheriff's Office
Douglas County Sheriff's Office
Nebraska State Patrol
Omaha Police Department
Plattsmouth Police Department

Results:

	<u># of checks</u>	<u>Not in Compliance (n/c)</u>	<u>n/c: Did not Check ID</u>	<u>n/c: Checked ID</u>
Cass Co:	33	1 (3%)	0	1 (100%)
Douglas Co:	88	19 (22%)	9 (47%)	10 (53%)
TOTAL:	121	20 (17%)	9 (45%)	11 (55%)

*Compliance checks coordinated by Project Extra Mile.
For additional information, call our office at 402-963-9047.*

Project Extra Mile – Alcohol Compliance Checks

Conducted on September 9, 19, & 20, 2025 in Cass & Douglas Counties

121 Businesses Checked, 20 Cited for Selling Alcohol to a Minor (17%)

The following businesses were **non-compliant** (cited for selling alcohol to a minor):

Class	License #	Business	Location	City	Zip	Non-Comp	Check ID
C	124033	AKARUI	225 N 12TH ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
C	078736	BIG RED RESTAURANT & SPORTS BAR	8100 CASS ST	OMAHA	68114	X	
I	153813	BLUE HAWAII	1303 S 72ND ST	OMAHA	68124	X	X
D	125168	CASEYS 6113	2765 S 13TH CT	OMAHA	68108	X	
C	123281	FAN TAN CLUB	5915 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
D	125166	GOODSTOP 6831	4414 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68111	X	
C	125677	MAPLE 88 MEXICAN KITCHEN	2822 N 88TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
D	086071	MEGA SAVER	5444 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
I	156629	REVIVAL HOUSE	3710 HARNEY ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
C	107266	SCRIPTOWN BREWING COMPANY	3920-3924 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
B	120673	SELECT MART	2411 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68111	X	X
C	061945	SPEZIA	3125 S 72ND ST	OMAHA	68124	X	X
D	122611	T & A EXPRESS	5825 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68111	X	
C	082896	T HENERY'S PUB	318 S 11TH ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
C	122668	TINY HOUSE	1411 S 13TH ST	OMAHA	68108	X	X
C	152602	TRIPS BAR AND GRILL	7812 F ST	OMAHA	68127	X	X
C	116277	VIA FARINA	1108 S 10TH ST	OMAHA	68108	X	
C	126309	VIDA	105 N PARK AVE	MURRAY	68409	X	X
C	153461	WINE BY DESIGN	731 N 98TH ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
I	116923	ZIO'S PIZZERIA	7834 W DODGE RD	OMAHA	68114	X	X

Project Extra Mile – Alcohol Compliance Checks

Conducted on September 9, 19, & 20, 2025 in Cass & Douglas Counties

121 Businesses Checked, 20 Cited for Selling Alcohol to a Minor (17%)

The following businesses were **compliant** (did not sell alcohol to a minor):

Business	Address	City	Zip	Compliant	Checked ID
13TH STREET BRICKHOUSE	2202 S 13TH ST	OMAHA	68108	X	X
75 MART	114 ROCK BLUFF RD	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
AMERICAN DREAM	7402 F ST	OMAHA	68127	X	X
AMERICAN LEGION POST 353	117 MAIN ST	LOUISVILLE	68037	X	X
AMES AVENUE CONVENIENCE STORE	4145 AMES AVE	OMAHA	68111	X	X
ANDYS PLACE	3701 F ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
BAKER'S SUPERMARKET 311	5555 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
BAKER'S SUPERMARKET 319	888 S SADDLE CREEK RD	OMAHA	68106	X	X
BAY HILLS GOLF CLUB	3200 BUCCANEER BLVD	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
BEAVER LAKE BEER, WINE & SPIRITS	9661 RENEE AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
BLACKSTONE SOCIAL	3910 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
BRAZEN HEAD IRISH PUB	319 N 78TH ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
BRICKWAY BREWING & DISTILLING	1116 JACKSON ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
CASA DEL SOL AZTECA	127 MAIN ST	LOUISVILLE	68037	X	X
CASCIO'S STEAKHOUSE	1620 S 10TH ST	OMAHA	68108	X	X
CASEYS 1182	901 CHICAGO AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	
CASEYS 3529	16610 BESTMANN DR	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
CASEYS 3999	109 ROCK BLUFF RD	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
CASEYS 6176	7660 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
CEDAR CREEK INN	104 E B ST	CEDAR CREEK	68016	X	X
CHILTEPES RESTAURANT	2308 N ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
CLUBHOUSE LOUNGE	3936 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
COUNTRY BAR & GRILL	19715 GLADYS DR	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	
CRYSTAL BEVERAGE MART	4807 S 20TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
CUBBY'S OMAHA REDMAN AVE	4232 REDMAN AVE	OMAHA	68111	X	X
CUNNINGHAM'S PUB & GRILL	3814 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
DARBY'S TAVERN	6503 SUNSHINE DR	OMAHA	68107	X	X
DC'S WATERHOLE	441 MAIN ST	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
DJ'S DUGOUT	2405 OAK HILL RD	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
EL DORADO RESTAURANT	5134 S 24TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
ELBOW ROOM	4973 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
EPOCA CANTINA	1101 DAVENPORT AVE	OMAHA	68102	X	X
FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES	1501 NICHOLAS ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
FAREWAY STORES 165	8900 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68124	X	X
GODFATHER'S PIZZA	132 S 6TH ST	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
GOLDEN CHINA	828 CHICAGO AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
GOOD TIMES SALOON	225 MAIN ST	LOUISVILLE	68037	X	X
HOLLYWOOD CANDY	1209 JACKSON ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
HOTEL INDIGO OMAHA	1802 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
HY-VEE FAST & FRESH	2401 OAK HILL RD	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
HY-VEE FOOD STORE 1469	8809 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68124	X	X
HY-VEE FOOD STORE 1535	9707 Q ST	OMAHA	68127	X	X
HY-VEE RESTAURANT	16418 WESTSIDE DR	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
J D TUCKERS	418 S 10TH ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
KENDALL'S TAVERN	6310 GILMORE AVE	OMAHA	68107	X	X

KINAARA	120 REGENCY PKWY	OMAHA	68114	X	
KWIK SHOP 652	3222 Q ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
KWIK SHOP 673	5306 N 103RD ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
LA CATRINA MEXICAN GRILL & BAR	542 MAIN ST	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
LA FIESTA JALISCO	902 CHICAGO AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
LA GUERA MEXICAN GROCERIES	4233 S 24TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
LAGUNA BAR & RESTAURANT	5611 S 36TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
LIBRARY PUB	5142 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
LIQUOR STORE	5402 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
LOUISVILLE LIQUORS	119 MAIN ST	LOUISVILLE	68037	X	X
MADSEN'S MURDOCK GRILL	301 NEBRASKA ST	MURDOCK	68407	X	X
MARGARITAS GRILL & CANTINA	16304 WESTSIDE DR	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
MARKET, THE	205 MAIN ST	LOUISVILLE	68037	X	X
MEGA SAVER	5301 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
MEGA SAVER	8928 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
MILANO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT	209 S 23RD ST	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
MILT'S GOLF CENTER	6402 Q ST	OMAHA	68117	X	
MISTER TOAD	1002 HOWARD ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
MURRAY BAR, THE	104 E MAIN ST	MURRAY	68409	X	X
NET PAR	225 N 12TH ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
NOLI'S PIZZERIA	4001 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
NUESTRA FAMILIA SUPERMERCADO 793	3548 Q ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
OLD MATTRESS FACTORY BAR & GRILL	501 N 13TH ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
ORDER SONS OF ITALY	1238 S 10TH ST	OMAHA	68108	X	X
PACIFIC CONVENIENT MART	7444 PACIFIC ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
PALETERIA Y RESTAURANT SAN LUIS	4802 S 24TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
PATRON SPORTS BAR	6801 RAILROAD AVE	OMAHA	68107	X	X
PRIMO'S	5914 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
Q STREET EXPRESS	8410 Q ST	OMAHA	68127	X	X
RALSTON OLD MARKET SPAGHETTI WORKS	8412 PARK DR	OMAHA	68127	X	X
RED LION LOUNGE	3802 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
RENO'S	3909 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
RUDY'S BAR	8503 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
SANTORO CANTINA	8601 W DODGE RD	OMAHA	68114	X	X
SAPRI LIQUOR STORE	8524 PARK DR	OMAHA	68127	X	X
SELECT MART	2604 S 13TH ST	OMAHA	68108	X	X
SIPPIN SIRENS	4302 S 42ND ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
STOP N SHOP 1	300 W ELDORA AVE	WEeping WATER	68463	X	X
SUPERIOR MART	906 WEBSTER BLVD	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
T O 5	7515 PACIFIC ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
TAYLOR QUIK PIK	10 MAIN STREET	LOUISVILLE	68037	X	X
THREE HAPPINESS EXPRESS	5107 LEAVENWORTH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
TIKI TIME	9661 RENEE AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
TOBACCO HUT 10	4865 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
TOKYO SUSHI	1215 HOWARD ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
TU FAMILIA MEXICAN RESTAURANT	5402 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
UNITY SEAFOOD	7605 CASS ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
VFW 2543	510 1ST AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X

VINEYARD LIQUOR & VIDEO	211 CHICAGO AVE	PLATTSMOUTH	68048	X	X
VOODOO TACO	1102 HARNEY ST	OMAHA	68102	X	X
WALGREENS 4974	5038 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
WALMART MARKET 3152	2451 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
WEeping WATER EXPRESS LANE	103 S EAST ST	WEeping WATER	68463	X	X
WEST LANES BOWLING ALLEY	151 N 72ND ST	OMAHA	68114	X	X
WINNERS	5413 S 72ND ST	OMAHA	68127	X	X
WORLD LIQUOR	2219 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X

YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. ADVOCACY. AWARENESS. ACTION

READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



Youth in grades 8-12 in the Omaha Metro Area are invited to join Project Extra Mile's Youth Leadership Network. Members will learn about the harms of excessive alcohol use in our community, develop the leadership skills needed to make real change, and put those skills into action!

FOCUSING ON EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO LEAD



Project Extra Mile has been creating community change for over 25 years and we are passionate about reducing alcohol-related harms in our community. In the Youth Leadership Network, we focus on teaching and practicing the skills needed to create change. Youth will receive expert guidance on projects that will utilize media literacy, public speaking, advocacy, problem-solving, and community organizing skills that they'll develop from this initiative.

A YOUTH-LED APPROACH



We're serious about youth leadership, which is why all projects are planned and developed by the youth themselves. Youth projects over the last couple years have included hosting a town hall, meeting with state senators, creating media campaigns to raise awareness, and more!

MEET AND LEARN FROM LOCAL AND STATE POLICYMAKERS

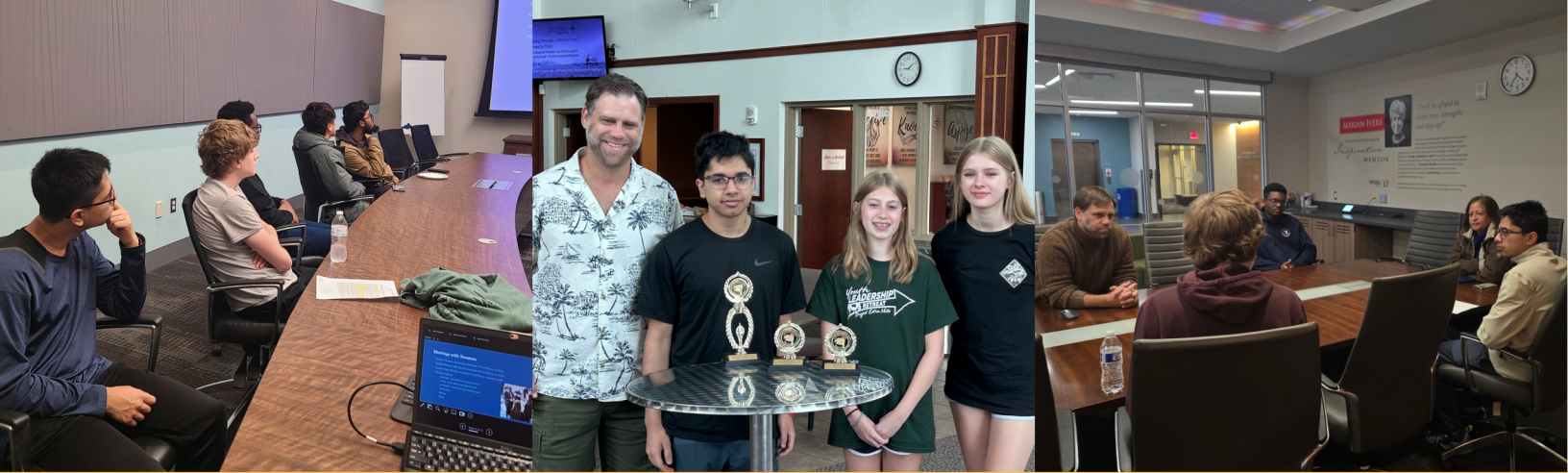
CREATE YOUR OWN MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

LEARN HOW TO USE YOUR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP STYLE

MEET NEW FRIENDS AND DEVELOP SKILLS TO LAST A LIFETIME

**COLLEGE
SCHOLARSHIP
OPPORTUNITY
AVAILABLE FOR
SPRING 2026!**





GROW YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND MAKE FRIENDSHIPS THAT LAST A LIFETIME

YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK FALL MEETING SCHEDULE

AUGUST 25, 2025
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC

SEPTEMBER 15, 2025
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC

OCTOBER 20, 2025
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC

NOVEMBER 17, 2025
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC

DECEMBER 8, 2025
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC

**EXTRA MEETINGS
AS NEEDED**

**YOUTH ADVOCACY DAY
AT THE STATE CAPITOL
SPRING 2026**

**YOUTH LEADERSHIP
RETREAT
SUMMER 2026**

HOW TO JOIN

The Youth Leadership Network is open to all Omaha-area youth in grades 8 through 12 who want to grow as leaders and are interested in preventing alcohol-related harms in our community with the skills they develop. To indicate your interest in joining us for our next meeting, please fill out the form using the QR code below. YLN is completely free to join!



Register here!

WHERE WE MEET

The Youth Leadership Network meetings are held once a month at the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center (CEC) on the University of Nebraska-Omaha campus at 6400 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE. Parking is free and food and drinks are provided at each meeting (must register for food).

LEARN MORE!

To learn more about the Youth Leadership Network, please visit www.projectextramile.org/youth or contact us at youth@projectextramile.org or (402) 963-9047

Find us on:





RESEARCH SUMMARY
Date Compiled: October 2025

Key takeaways from included research:

- Alcohol control policies are linked to lower rates of alcohol-related illness and death, but policymakers need to know which policies have the most public support. A 2024 national online survey of 1,036 U.S. adults who drank alcohol in the past 30 days examined support for various alcohol control policies. About half (49%) supported labeling policies such as cancer warnings, calorie content, and drink size information, as well as restricting alcohol ads when children are watching. Fewer supported stricter measures like lowering the legal blood alcohol limit, limiting sales hours, or increasing taxes. These results suggest labeling and advertising rules could help build momentum for stronger policies.
- A new study examined the association between alcohol consumption per capita (APC) and suicide mortality. The meta-analysis found that for every liter increase in APC, suicide mortality increased by 3.6%, with no difference between men and women. These findings suggest that reducing APC could be an effective component in national suicide prevention strategies.
- This review analyzed 18 studies that examined portrayals of alcohol use during pregnancy and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) across newspapers, social media, television, and other media. Five key themes emerged: contradictory messages about alcohol harms, concern for children and mothers, expectations of motherhood, stigma and shame, and advocacy for prevention and support. Mixed and confusing media messages may hinder public understanding and contribute to stigma.
- This systematic review examined community-based environmental strategies to prevent underage drinking. Most studies focused on regulatory approaches, which often reduced alcohol availability and, in some cases, overall consumption. The most effective and sustainable interventions combined environmental actions with strong community involvement, highlighting the value of multicomponent, community-driven approaches to reduce adolescent alcohol use.

Federal Report on Drinking Is Withdrawn

Written by Roni Caryn Rabin

The Department of Health and Human Services has pulled back a government report warning of a link between cancer and drinking even small amounts of alcohol, according to the authors of the research.

Their report, the Alcohol Intake and Health Study, warned that even one drink a day raises the risk of liver cirrhosis, oral and esophageal cancer, and injuries. The scientists who wrote it were told that the final version would not be submitted to Congress, as had been planned.

The report is one of two assessments that were to be used to shape the new U.S. Dietary Guidelines' recommendations on alcohol consumption. Its early findings were reported by The New York Times in January; a full draft remained on the H.H.S. website as of Friday afternoon.

A competing report, written by a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine panel, came to a conclusion long supported by the industry: that moderate drinking is healthier than not drinking. Some panelists came under criticism for financial ties to alcohol makers.

The academies report was requested by Congress in 2022, after the scientific review for the last version of the dietary guidelines in 2020 stated that health risks associated with low consumption might have been underestimated. The alcohol industry has strongly criticized such findings and opposed efforts to tighten drinking recommendations.

In a statement, Science Over Bias, an industry-supported advocacy group, faulted the alcohol intake study for bias: "The Dietary Guidelines should be guided by a preponderance of sound science, not the personal ideologies of a handful of researchers."

The academies report was not influenced by the makers of alcoholic beverages, the statement continued. H.H.S. did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Mike Marshall, chief executive of the U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance, a nonprofit that aims to reduce the harms of alcohol, said H.H.S. was "doing the work of the alcohol industry."

"They're burying the report so the information about the health consequences is not widely known," Mr. Marshall said.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has decried a "chronic disease epidemic" sweeping the country. But he has said little about alcohol's impact on American health since taking office.

Consumption of both alcohol and tobacco was absent from the first Make America Healthy Again report released in May. Mr. Kennedy (like his boss, President Trump) has said he does not drink.

In public comments on the Alcohol Intake and Health Study, wine and beer vendors and representatives of the alcohol industry urged federal officials to rely only on the competing academies report supporting moderate drinking. They called the alcohol intake study "alarming and misguided."

The decision not to publish that study was first reported by Vox. In June, Reuters reported that the upcoming Dietary Guidelines would scrap the longstanding recommendation: that women have no more than one drink a day, and men no more than two.

Instead, the guidelines would include a brief statement that people should drink in moderation, Reuters said.

“What people need to know is that the risk of serious morbidities and mortality, and chronic disease, increases as alcohol consumption increases, and it even increases at low levels of consumption,” said Katherine M. Keyes, a professor of epidemiology at Columbia University who was one of the report’s authors.

Dr. Keyes said the alcohol intake study did not make recommendations and noted that people do many things that carry risks, like driving cars.

But, she added, “The American public deserves to know what they’re putting in their body and what kind of health outcomes they can cause.”

The authors now plan to submit their analysis for publication in a peer-reviewed medical journal, she said.

The Alcohol Intake and Health Study was one of several to have upended the long-dominant narrative that moderate drinking was not harmful and might have health benefits, particularly for the heart.

Newer studies have questioned the methodology used in older studies, and researchers have increasingly focused on alcohol’s contribution to cancer.

In January, Dr. Vivek Murthy, then the surgeon general, called for putting labels on alcoholic beverages to warn consumers that drinking increases the risk of breast cancer, colon cancer and at least five other malignancies.

He said that drinking directly contributed to 100,000 cancer cases and 20,000 related deaths each year.

Americans are getting the message. A Gallup poll in August found drinking at an all-time low in the United States, with only 54 percent of adults saying they consumed alcohol. A majority said they believed that even one to two drinks a day was harmful to health. Sales of wine and spirits have dipped.

The academies report concluded that moderate drinking was linked to fewer heart attack and stroke deaths and fewer deaths overall, compared to not drinking. It acknowledged that moderate drinking was linked to a small but significant increase in breast cancer in women, but said that there wasn’t enough evidence to link moderate consumption to other cancers.

The National Cancer Institute, among other medical organizations, disagreed.

The alcohol intake study assessed relationships between different levels of average alcohol consumption and the risk of dying from health conditions that can be caused by drinking.

The research found some benefits for those having one drink a day: a lower risk of diabetes for women, and a lowered risk of ischemic stroke among both men and women.

But even at that modest level, women were more likely to develop liver cancer. And just occasional heavy drinking nullified the protection against stroke.

“The key message is that drinking two drinks a day may be moderate from a social perspective, but when it comes to health, it’s a pretty risky amount,” said Dr. Timothy Naimi, director of the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research and one of the authors.

“A man who drinks two drinks every day on average has a one in 25 chance of dying prematurely from alcohol.”

Investigators say 20 Omaha-area businesses sold alcohol to minors earlier this month

Written by Jake Anderson

Investigators said 20 Omaha-area businesses sold alcohol to minors earlier this month.

The checks occurred Sept. 9, 19 and 20. This was the highest rate of noncompliance in nearly 20 years.

Officials said 20 of the 121 businesses checked were cited.

The Mega Saver at 54th and Center streets could face penalties, such as a suspension of alcohol sales.

This was the first violation for all 19 other businesses cited. They could also face suspension of their licenses, as well as fines.

Troopers made 30 DUI arrests over first three Nebraska home football games, state patrol says

Written by Mark Fischer

LINCOLN, Neb. (KLKN) — The Nebraska State Patrol announced it made 30 DUI arrests over the first three home Saturday's of the Nebraska football season.

In a press release on Wednesday, the state patrol said six of those arrests occurred in Lancaster County in the hours surrounding a Husker football game.

During the first month of home games last season, troopers made 35 DUI arrests, including 10 DUI arrests in Lancaster County.

"Gameday safety is absolutely a team effort, and it starts on the road to the game," said Colonel Bryan Waugh, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol. "The vast majority of fans followed the safety game plan and drove sober. If alcohol is part of your gameday experience, use the off week to make the adjustment to designate a sober driver or make another plan to get home without driving impaired."

This effort was funded by the Nebraska Department of Transportation – Highway Safety Office.

In addition to patrolling the roads, troopers assist gameday security operations alongside the UNL Police Department, Lincoln Police Department, Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, and other partners.

The Huskers are off this weekend, but will be back at home against Michigan State on Oct. 4.

Ex-Nebraska Liquor Commission director charged with taking cash, sexual favors in strip club probe

Written by Aaro Sanderford

LINCOLN — The former executive director of the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission faces seven felony charges, including some that allege he deprived Nebraskans of his honest work as a public official by letting two Lincoln strip clubs give him cash, lap dances, sexual favors and free drinks.

He visited often enough that employees tallied the amount his visits pulled from the cash register on sticky notes left for their bosses that they labeled “COB” for the cost of the clubs doing business, according to a federal indictment of the state official unsealed this week.

Part of the state official’s job was to help the commission dole out, discipline and rescind Nebraska liquor licenses. That role included weighing in after police investigations of rival Omaha strip clubs, which the indictment alleges the state official shared with the co-owner of the Lincoln clubs, and looking up dancers in law enforcement databases. The indictment also alleges he demanded a total of \$65,000 from one bar owner to protect a liquor license.

The grand jury charged former commission director Hobert “Hobie” Rupe with three counts of honest services fraud — the charge that means a public official or employee depriving the people of an official’s honest work — one count of conspiracy to commit honest services fraud, two counts of wire fraud and one count of extortion.

It charged a co-owner of Lincoln strip clubs The Office and The Night Before Lounge, Brent Zywiec, with one count of conspiracy to commit honest services fraud and three counts of honest services fraud. All are felonies carrying sentences of up to 20 years in prison. All must still be proven in court.

Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers, who attended a news conference at the FBI’s Omaha office with the U.S. Attorney’s Office to announce the indictment, said it should serve as a warning to anybody who would seek personal gain from public service.

“Nebraskans expect that their public servants give them honest services, that they act with integrity and follow the oath of office they swear to uphold,” Hilgers said of Rupe, who served as executive director from 2004 until June 2025. “That’s not what happened here.”

Gov. Jim Pillen, in a statement Wednesday, expressed disappointment at the “failure of leadership at the Liquor Control Commission.” He said he would do “everything in my power” to make sure the agency, which is run independently of his administration, meets public expectations “going forward.”

“The conduct alleged in the indictment ... falls completely short of what Nebraskans expect of officials placed in positions of public trust,” Pillen said.

Rupe served almost 10 years as an assistant attorney general prior to joining the commission. He did not immediately return calls seeking comment. One former number had been changed. The other went straight to voicemail. The Liquor Control Commission had suspended him without pay from his \$130,596-a-year job in May after a search warrant was served.

Liquor Control Commission Chair Bruce Bailey of Lincoln had said in May that Rupe's alleged offenses related to his "fitness and ability" to serve and required an immediate suspension. No new information had been available until this week.

The shake-up at the Liquor Commission could have impacts beyond liquor cases, because the members of the board also serve on the new Nebraska Medical Cannabis Commission and the two commissions began sharing funds after Rupe's departure.

A woman who answered the phone at The Office Gentlemen's Club in Lincoln said the club would have no comment. One person at the club said Zywiec had been "suspended." No one immediately answered the Examiner's calls to The Night Before Lounge. Efforts to reach Zywiec were unsuccessful Wednesday.

The indictment alleges that payments and services were offered at the clubs from January 2022 through May 2025. Among the gifts offered and accepted, it said, were free entry into bars that usually charge \$20 cover fees, free drinks and cash to cover free lap dances, free VIP dances and services that included oral sex.

A single private dance at the club can cost about \$100 for three songs, while a turn in the VIP lounge can cost up to \$500. The feds say at least one surveillance video investigators secured showed Rupe receiving sexual favors. Some videos of people in compromising positions were saved to the owner's iCloud account, the indictment says.

Rupe, in addition to sharing sensitive information with Zywiec about law enforcement investigations into rival clubs, also ignored violations he saw occurring in the Lincoln clubs, the indictment alleges.

Text messages between Zywiec and an unnamed cohort show the two had developed coded language to speak about visiting the club, the indictment alleges. They used the term "team players" to discuss whether a particular dancer might be willing to offer favors, it adds. The two used the words "book" or "papers" to discuss cash, authorities allege.

"Like I said if I don't know em. Know em i can't endorse em," Zywiec allegedly wrote in one text message exchange. "But that shouldn't stop you."

Rupe replied, the documents allege: "You know me. Always on the lookout for team players."

In another text exchange, Zywiec and an unnamed co-conspirator discussed a "new blond" who "just took Hobie to vip."

The U.S. Attorney's Office is requesting a jury trial in Lincoln.

There is no safe amount of alcohol when it comes to dementia, study finds

Written by Sandee LaMotte

Drinking any amount of alcohol increases your risk of dementia later in life, according to a new study that challenges prior research findings.

Some research has suggested light drinking — such as fewer than seven drinks a week — may be more neuroprotective than no alcohol at all. Those studies, however, focused on older people and didn't differentiate between former drinkers and lifelong nondrinkers, thus potentially skewing the results, study authors said.

In the new study, published Tuesday in the journal *BMJ Evidence-Based Medicine*, researchers analyzed how certain genes linked to alcohol might impact how liquor consumption affects the brain.

"The genetic analyses results (showed) that even small amounts of alcohol could increase dementia risk," said lead study author Anya Topiwala, a senior clinical researcher in the department of psychiatry at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom.

"This is the largest study on the topic, and the combination of observational and genetic analyses was key," Topiwala said via email.

The genetic analysis, called Mendelian randomization, has less risk of introducing a confounding or "spurious" variable to explain the alcohol-dementia relationship, Topiwala said.

Mendelian randomization also reduces the chance of reverse causation, such as dementia processes influencing drinking rather than the reverse, and it can also estimate the cumulative impact of alcohol consumption over a person's entire life, Topiwala said. Observational studies, however, tend to capture a snapshot of mid- to late-life drinking habits, and depend on subject recall, which may not be accurate.

"This is a fairly complicated study that provides some, but not definitive evidence, that alcohol can harm the brain regardless of how much is consumed," said neurologist Dr. Richard Isaacson, director of research at the Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases in Florida. Isaacson, who conducts studies on cognitive improvement in people who are genetically at risk for Alzheimer's disease, was not involved in the new study.

"In my clinic, we tell people with the APOE4 genetic variant, which is the most common genetic risk factor for Alzheimer's, that drinking zero alcohol is best based on the available evidence," he said in an email.

However, for people with less genetic risk for Alzheimer's it often depends on "when" and "how" people drink, Isaacson added. For example, he said, two drinks before bed on an empty stomach several nights will have a more harmful effect on brain health compared with one drink a few times a week with an early dinner.

An emerging link between alcohol and dementia

The new study looked at data from nearly 560,000 people who participated in the UK Biobank, a longitudinal study that included participants from England, Scotland and Wales, and the US Million Veteran Program, or MVP, which includes people of European, African and Latin American ancestry.

In that observational part of the study, people provided self-reports of how much they drank, and researchers compared alcohol consumption with their risk of developing dementia over time.

“In the self-reporting study, people who reported consuming small amounts of alcohol (less than 7 drinks per week) had lower risk than heavy drinkers (more than 40 drinks per week),” said Tara Spires-Jones, professor of neurodegeneration and director of the Centre for Discovery Brain Sciences at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, in a statement.

“Interestingly, in this part of the study, non-drinkers and people who reported never drinking actually had similar risk of dementia to people who drank heavily,” said Spires-Jones, who is also a group leader in the UK Dementia Research Institute in London. She was not involved in the study.

The study then examined genetics from 45 studies of dementia in 2.4 million people and compared genetic markers associated with alcohol use over a lifetime.

Higher genetic risk was associated with an increased risk of dementia, with a linear increase in dementia risk the higher the alcohol consumption, according to the study.

“There is a 15% higher dementia risk for 3 drinks per week compared to 1 drink per week across life,” Topiwala said.

In addition, a doubling in the genetic risk of alcohol dependency was associated with a 16% increase in dementia risk, according to the study.

“Neither part of the study can conclusively prove that alcohol use directly causes dementia,” Spires-Jones said. “But this adds to a large amount of similar data showing associations between alcohol intake and increased dementia risk, and fundamental neuroscience work has shown that alcohol is directly toxic to neurons in the brain.”

Omaha police books a 16-year-old and 35-year-old man in crash

Written by Anna Behning

Omaha police take a 16-year-old and a 35-year-old man into custody after a crash.

Officers responded to a crash near 25th Avenue & Vane Street around 2:40 a.m. Sunday.

Authorities said a stolen 2017 Hyundai Sonata failed to come to a complete stop at the intersection. Investigators said a 2019 Chevy Tahoe hit the Hyundai.

Three boys who were in the Hyundai were taken to the hospital. One was in serious condition.

Omaha police said the driver of the Hyundai, a 16-year-old boy, was booked into the Douglas County Youth Center for theft of a motor vehicle. The two passengers were released.

The vehicle was reported stolen 30 minutes before the crash.

The driver of the Chevy Tahoe, a 35-year-old man, was taken into custody for multiple charges, including DUI and willful reckless driving. He was also previously convicted of a DUI.

Two Nebraska Liquor Commission members resign at governor's request

Written by Zach Wendling

The last two members of the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission who served with a former director who faces federal charges alleging public corruption are resigning at the governor's request.

Liquor Commissioner Bruce Bailey of Lincoln, who served as commission chair, confirmed to the Nebraska Examiner on Monday that Gov. Jim Pillen had personally asked for his resignation as well as that of Commissioner Kim Lowe of Kearney. Neither commissioner is implicated in the federal indictment.

Bailey said Pillen personally called Thursday. Bailey submitted his resignation Monday morning and said Lowe was on her way in to resign at the time of the call. The Governor's Office confirmed both resignations had been received.

"They're moving on," Bailey said.

Pillen's office will accept applications to succeed Bailey and Lowe on the governor-appointed board by 5 p.m. on Oct. 17. Applicants must reside in either the 1st or 3rd Congressional Districts for the seats, respectively, and can apply online at <https://governor.nebraska.gov/boards-commissions-open-positions> or mail applications to the Governor's Office.

"I appreciate the willingness of Bruce and Kim to serve, and I thank them for the time they have been on the commission," Pillen said in a statement.

Pillen's latest calls for resignations from the board came Thursday, Bailey said, a day after federal charges were unsealed against former Liquor Commission Executive Director Hobert "Hobie" Rupe. Rupe has pleaded not guilty to seven federal charges.

The calls also came the same day Pillen rejected all proposed rule changes by the commission that were still pending, including one the governor said would "effectively provide government permission for customers to touch the dancers at a strip club," which he said was "particularly troubling" in light of Rupe's indictment.

Federal prosecutors, who worked alongside the Nebraska Attorney General's Office that had employed Rupe decades ago, allege Rupe solicited cash, lap dances, sexual favors and free drinks from two Lincoln strip clubs while also turning a "blind eye" to liquor license violations that Rupe should have reported. Rupe also allegedly used his position to investigate and target competitor venues.

Bailey and Lowe voted 2-0 in May to suspend Rupe, without pay, pending the investigation. Rupe resigned the following month, ending his service that began January 2004, ending his service that began January 2004.

Like Rupe, Brent Zywiec, a partial owner of The Office Gentleman's Club and The Night Before Lounge who also is named in the federal indictment, has pleaded not guilty.

The other Liquor Commission member is retired Judge J. Michael Coffey, whom Pillen appointed in June. Coffey succeeded Harry Hoch, Jr., who had served on the commission since 2019. Hoch had 40 years of industry knowledge in liquor and told the Examiner his resignation came as Pillen sought “more cannabis experience” on the board.

Medical cannabis impacts

One reason: Voters in November approved creating the Nebraska Medical Cannabis Commission and placed the three members of the Liquor Control Commission on it, along with up to two at-large appointments.

Bailey said he felt Pillen also sought his resignation due to his more permissive view of medical cannabis in light of voters’ wishes. He said some in the executive branch viewed him as a “roadblock.”

At recent meetings, Bailey had been vocal when he felt the commission was being too restrictive, mainly at the lead of Pillen’s at-large appointees, who prefer a stricter system. Among those positions, Bailey had called to allow smoking or vaping medical cannabis and to increase the number of cultivator licenses to boost the supply chain.

Members of the public attending the meetings had also praised Bailey for meeting with them one-on-one and raising their concerns.

The Medical Cannabis Commission was set to meet Tuesday but appears unlikely to approve any cultivator licenses ahead of a voter-set Oct. 1 deadline to begin issuing the first licenses. Dr. Monica Oldenburg, commission chair, had been designated to review and evaluate any applications received by last Tuesday, alongside Lowe and Bailey.

The Liquor Control Commission had been set to meet on Wednesday but will no longer meet due to a lack of members. Bailey said the commission has a “great staff” in its stead. Lowe described the staff as “rock stars.”

Oldenburg said the Medical Cannabis Commission will address the licensing process Tuesday. “Obviously, the resignations were an unexpected wrinkle,” she said in a Monday email. “However, we intend to move forward as expeditiously as possible so as to minimize impact to the licensing process.”

The resignations mean that, once replaced, Pillen will have appointed all three members to oversee liquor as well as the two others to oversee medical cannabis. Members serve six-year terms, which are staggered for Liquor Commission members.

Pillen has said the new appointments will follow his example with Coffey, whom he said “Nebraskans can trust to restore strong leadership and governance to this troubled independent agency.” Pillen’s office has said he has no intention of retooling and moving the agency under the governor’s direct control.

Reflecting on commission service

In Bailey’s 11 years on the Liquor Commission, he reflected on the group’s work to implement new software for license holders and to create a new education program for bartenders and others that is set to start soon and he said is “99% complete.”

“We’ve accomplished some good things,” Bailey said.

Bailey's service also coincided with the 2017 vote to end liquor licenses in Whiteclay, Nebraska, establishments that were criticized for years of having contributed to alcohol-related problems on the adjacent Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, where alcohol possession and sales were legally prohibited.

Lowe, who joined the Liquor Commission in 2021, said serving on the board was a great opportunity. She also highlighted the move to a new software system and said she was "very proud" of what had been accomplished in her tenure.

On the Rupe situation, Bailey said he is still surprised by the allegations, reeling and second-guessing himself and wondering, "Should I have seen something?"

"The governor said we should have known. I don't know how we could have. We certainly don't keep track what people do in their off time," Bailey said.

Bailey said he partly wishes he had known and had an opportunity to intervene and at least say, "Hey, dumb s—, don't do it."

"I liked him a lot as a friend," Bailey said of Rupe, "and I'm sorry that he just simply went off the deep end."

Lowe said she had no knowledge of what Rupe is accused of doing. Hoch did not immediately return a call seeking comment Monday.

Asked her thoughts on the Liquor Commission moving forward, Lowe said: "I just hope the best for this organization."

New director takes charge of turbulent Nebraska Liquor Control Commission

Written by John Grinvalds

LINCOLN, Neb. — From an indicted former director to resigning commissioners, the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission faced weeks of turbulent news.

But Micah Chaffee is the new face in the executive director role, and he's hoping to chart a new course for the organization.

"Really, I see this as a fresh start," Chaffee said. "I think our staff sees this as a fresh start."

Chaffee had past experience with the commission, serving as legal counsel for the Nebraska Unicameral's General Affairs Committee.

"As part of my job, in the legislature, we covered the Liquor Control Act," Chaffee said. "And so I immediately met with the Liquor Control Commission to go through where they make recommendations on what they'd like to change within the Control Act."

The commission focuses on public health, safety and welfare—regulating the alcohol industry across the three tiers of manufacturing, distribution and retail.

"We want to make sure that that's held to those same standards," Chaffee said. "That we're not we're not serving people underage and that we're not over-serving."

Chaffee started in his role on Wednesday, and he has his work cut out for him. His predecessor, Hobert Rupe, several federal charges alleging he shielded two Lincoln strip clubs in exchange for cash and sexual favors.

"Something like this, you know, can be kind of surprising and also kind of frustrating," Chaffee said.

On top of that, Commissioners Bruce Bailey and Kim Lowe were asked to resign by Gov. Jim Pillen, leaving many empty seats in leadership.

"It's about helping to increase the morale here in the office just because of the constant negative headlines of the previous director," Chaffee said. "I'd like to be able to restore the public's trust, that we are operating in the best interests of the public."

Chaffee said that begins with increasing transparency and the commission's public footprint, including by reviving social media pages. He also said it's important to shed light on what's going well.

"The bright success that has led to our staff going to national conferences and speaking at them is that online, our paperless licensing," he said.

Chaffee said he's supportive of the agreement between the Liquor Control Commission and the Medical Cannabis Commission.

"To be able to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and duties with these real deadlines," he said.
"So I am happy to help as best I can."