




## MEMORANDUM

TO: Alcohol Beverage Control

DATE: Monday, February 11, 2019

FROM:  James Hoelscher, Enforcement Supervisor

RE: Enforcement Report, Alcohol

AMCO Enforcement has started out this year running; we have seen a substantial increase in questions in the form of emails and telephone calls. This can be attributed in part to alcohol renewals and new marijuana regulations, but it is important to document that this shows a clear pattern that many licensees are contacting enforcement for clarification, which translates into fewer violations and increased licensee compliance. I hope to continue moving forward in this proactive manner as the health and safety of the people of Alaska, along with the prevention of underage drinking, marijuana use, and the sale of alcohol and/or marijuana to minors remain the top priorities for AMCO Enforcement.

The statistics across the country show a definite need for alcohol law enforcement. Some highlights that reinforce the need for alcohol enforcement are:

- To prevent underage drinking and related harms
  - In 2014 nationally, 22.8% of underage people (ages 12-20) were current alcohol users (drank within the past 30 days), 13.8% were binge alcohol users (five or more drinks on one occasion), and 3.4% were heavy alcohol users (five or more drinks on the same occasion 5 or more days in the past 30 days). (SAMHSA, 2015)
  - Alcohol is a factor in approximately 4,300 deaths among underage youth in the U.S. each year. (CDC, 2016)
  - In 2010 nationally, there were approximately 189,000 emergency room visits by persons under age 21 for injuries and other conditions linked to alcohol. (SAMHSA, 2012)
- To prevent impaired driving
  - In 2014 nationally, there were 9,967 fatalities in motor vehicle crashes involving a driver with a BAC of .08 or higher – 31% of total fatal crashes. (NHTSA, 2015)
  - An average of one alcohol-impaired-driving fatality occurred every 53 minutes in the U.S. in 2014. (NHTSA, 2015)
  - Approximately 50 percent of the people arrested for driving under the influence consumed their last drink at an on-sale licensed establishment. (NHTSA, 2005)
  - Nationally, 65-79% of alcohol establishments will serve alcohol to patrons who appear obviously intoxicated. (Lenk, Toomey, & Erickson, 2006; Toomey et al., 2004)

- To prevent violent crimes and death
  - The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence estimates that alcohol is a factor in 40 percent of all violent crimes in the US, and is often an element in non-stranger violence, including intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. (Rivera, Marny; & Hall, Tiffany. (2016). "Recover Alaska: Healing Alaska's Alcohol Problems)
  - In Alaska, parental alcohol abuse has been cited by the Office of Children's Services (OCS) as the reason for a child's removal from the home in 31 to 47 percent of all maltreatment cases between 2011 and 2015. (Rivera, Marny; & Hall, Tiffany. (2016). "Recover Alaska: Healing Alaska's Alcohol Problems)
  - The alcohol-induced mortality rate for all Alaskans has remained at least twice as high as the average U.S. rate for over a decade, and has remained at least six times as high for Alaska Natives. In 2014, the age-adjusted alcohol-induced mortality rate in Alaska was 17.8 per 100,000 Alaskans while the average rate for the U.S. was 8.5 per 100,000 (Rivera, Marny; & Hall, Tiffany. (2016). "Recover Alaska: Healing Alaska's Alcohol Problems)
  - Alcohol continues to be the most abused substance in Alaska. According to the State of Alaska Epidemiology Bulletin dated May 7, 2018, Alaskans experience higher rates of alcohol-attributable mortality compared to most other states, and twice as many deaths are alcohol-attributable each year as methamphetamine and opioid deaths combined (Pachoe, 2018). The abuse of alcohol also continues to be a prominent factor in violence against persons, suicide, and accidental death. Between 2006–2016, 47,427 alcohol-attributable criminal justice convictions occurred in Alaska, which represents 18% of all convictions during that time period (Pachoe, 2018). In 2017, 109 communities prohibited sale, importation, and/or possession of alcoholic beverages through "local option ordinances". (2017 AST SDEU Report)
  - A significant number of crimes can be directly attributed to alcohol abuse, including driving under the influence, sale of illegal substances, and many cases of assault, theft, and other violent and nonviolent crimes. The cost of these crimes includes criminal justice system costs (police protection and law enforcement, legal and adjudication, and incarceration) and the costs to crime victims (both tangible and intangible). Additionally, a portion of child protective services are associated with substance abuse. (The Economic Costs of Alcohol Abuse in Alaska, 2016 – Prepared by McDowell Group for Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority)
  - In 2014, there were 9,438 arrests/offenses and 7,313 crime victims attributed to alcohol abuse in Alaska. These arrests/offenses represented 25 percent of all offenses in Alaska and affected 17 percent of all crime victims. The estimated cost of alcohol abuse to the criminal justice system, including tangible costs (such as medical care costs, lost earnings, and property loss/damage to victims and Child Protective Services in Alaska), is \$194.4 million. Victim intangible costs (such as pain and suffering, decreased quality of life, and psychological distress) adds another \$604.9 million for a total of just under \$874.7 million. (The Economic Costs of Alcohol Abuse in Alaska, 2016 – Prepared by McDowell Group for Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority)

In summary, enforcement of Title 4 and alcohol regulations has a direct impact on public safety. Much of what we enforce is difficult to draw a direct line to this conclusion, but the line becomes much clearer when we take some time to evaluate the impacts alcohol has across Alaska.

Enforcement firmly believes consistent, fair, and proper enforcement of alcohol and marijuana laws effects and impacts the overall safety of all Alaskans.

Finding in depth studies for marijuana use and health risks in Alaska is difficult, but DHSS, Office of Misuse and Addiction Prevention, has an [informative website](#) that is updated frequently.

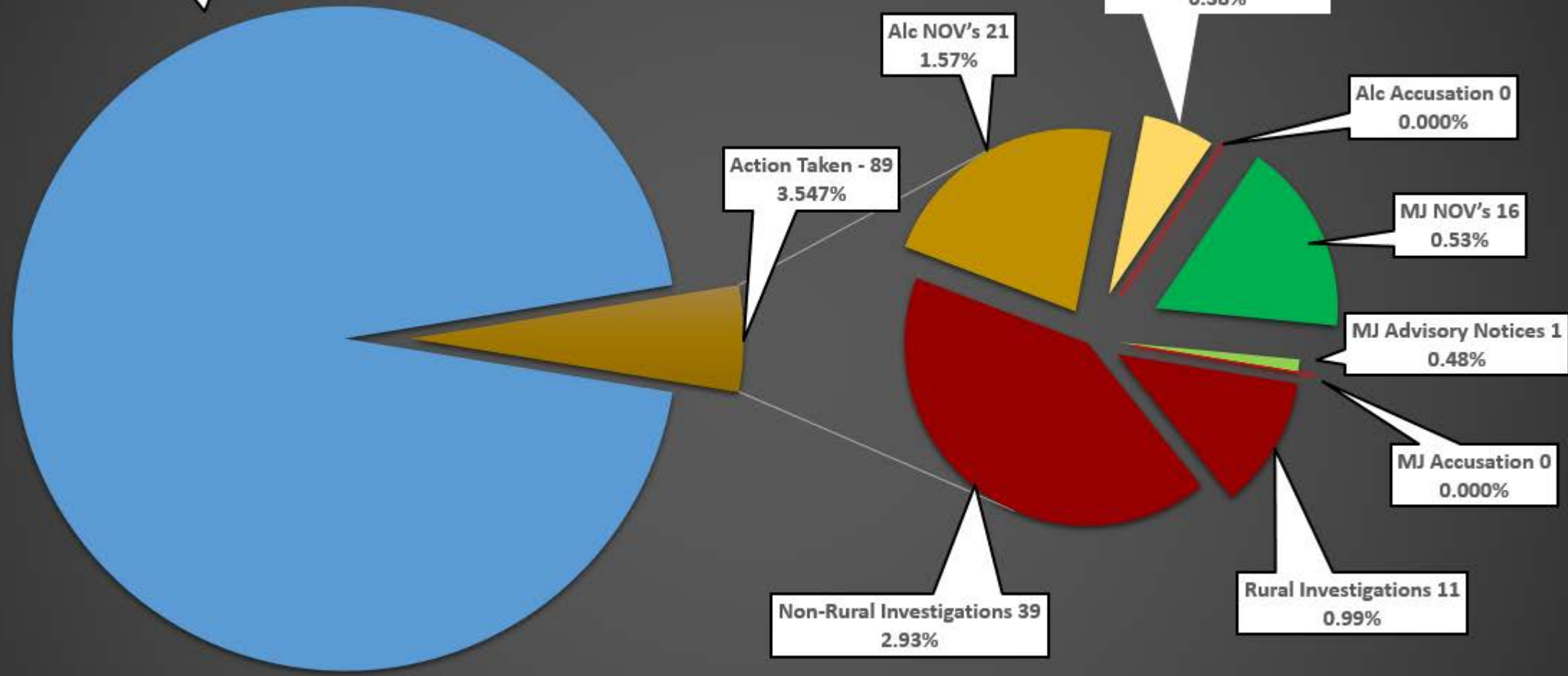
- The percentage of high school students who have ever used marijuana declined 3% between 2007 (45%) and 2017 (42%). In 2017, Alaska Native high school students were the most likely to have ever used marijuana (56%). The percentage of female high school students who ever used marijuana increased 9% between 2015 (35%) and 2017 (44%). The percentage of high school students who first tried marijuana before age 13 has not changed from 2007 (12%) to 2017 (11%), though females and Alaskan Natives in this age group first trying marijuana is still increasing (Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Substance Misuse and Addiction Prevention, 2018).
- Marijuana use in the past year has consistently been highest among 18–25 year olds. In the 2014–2015 survey, about 18% of respondents ages 12–17, 41% of those ages 18–25, and 19% of those ages 26 and older reported marijuana use in the past year.

In summary, an increasing amount of young Alaskan adults, many under 21, are trying marijuana. A lot of this, in my opinion, can be attributed to marijuana being “culturally acceptable” in television, music, movies and being legalized for recreational use in Alaska.

Enforcement Activity	2016 Total	2017 Total	2018 Total	1/1/19 to 2/1/19
Investigations	138	240	432	50
Alcohol Walk-throughs	622	410	435	53
Alcohol Inspections	647	608	388	70
Alcohol NOVs	85	102	155	21
Alcohol Advisory Notices	82	31	44	6
Alcohol Permits reviewed	397	953	878	53
Marijuana Walk-throughs	*	196	169	11
Marijuana Inspections	54	193	180	13
Marijuana NOVs	*	60	74	16
Marijuana Advisory Notices	*	26	48	1
Marijuana Background Conducted (MJ-18)	19	103	29	2
Marijuana Handler Cards Issued	567	2,470	1,867	223
Compliance Checks/Shoulder Taps	*	*	5	0
Criminal Charges	*	*	2	0
Training Provided	*	*	22	0
Public Appearance	*	*	6	1
Enforcement Calls/Requests/General Enforcement Email	Half Year Stat 1,216	7,274	11,904	1,579

\*Stat not tracked or available for this item

# January 1, 2019 to February 1, 2019



## Combined Contacts, Calls, and Emails - 1726

- Combined Contacts, Calls, and Emails - 1726
- Alc NOV's 21
- MJ NOV's 16
- Rural Investigations 11
- Alc Advisory Notices 6
- MJ Advisory Notices 1
- Non-Rural Investigations 39
- Alc Accusation 0
- MJ Accusation 0