



POLICY FOR INVOLVEMENT WITH AND INTERACTION BETWEEN THE MICHIGAN COALITION TO REDUCE UNDERAGE DRINKING AND THE ALCOHOL INDUSTRY.

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APPROVED AS POLICY: Tuesday, November 27, 2001

The mission of the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking is to assist individuals, organizations, and grassroots groups to reduce underage drinking locally.

MCRUD believes that the independence of Regional Coalitions to pursue the goal of reducing underage drinking is of primary importance. The Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking believes and some research suggests that financial or in-kind contributions from the alcohol industry may affect the actions taken by local groups and policy decisions regarding underage drinking. Therefore, careful consideration must be taken in deciding how MCRUD will interact with the alcohol industry.

For clarity, representatives of alcohol distillers, distributors, or trade groups who are offering a donation are herein referred to as “representative” or “business” in this document.

The Steering Committee of the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking establishes as policy:

1. The Steering Committee for the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking will not accept monetary donations from alcohol distillers, distributors, or trade groups of the alcohol industry. This includes representatives of those agencies.
2. The Steering Committee for the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking will not accept in-kind donations of products or services from alcohol distillers, distributors, or trade groups of the alcohol industry. This would include representatives of those agencies.
3. The Steering Committee for the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking will not have a voting member who represents alcohol distillers, distributors, or trade groups of the alcohol industry.

4. The Steering Committee for the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking recommends that Regional Coalitions and local groups use the following points to assist in your discussion regarding any partnerships with the alcohol industry:

- < Be sure that the business has a clear understanding of the goals of the Coalition.
- < Consider whether the business has been an active member of the Coalition in the past. Being active with the Coalition in the past may indicate a commitment to the Coalition, and an understanding of its goals. A sudden offer of support or donations to the Coalition may indicate a focus on the business's goals as opposed to the Coalition's goals.
- < Consider whether the business is willing to work within the alcohol industry or with its own trade group to encourage research based and effective policies and practices which could reduce underage alcohol use.
- < Consider whether the business is offering assistance with local activities, or if they are offering brochures or programs developed by their corporate office. An interest in assisting with local activities may suggest an understanding of the same concerns which the Coalition has identified. It would suggest an interest in local matters. An offer of corporate resources can be accomplished by a business without a commitment or understanding of the Coalition's goals.
- < Consider whether the representative resides locally and is a member of the community. Individuals not residing locally may not have the same understanding or interests as those who work and live in a community.
- < Consider whether the business has been involved in the past with other civic or community events. Being active within the community would suggest a sincere concern for the community which they serve. If there has been no other civic or community involvement, there may not be a clear understanding of the community's goals as they relate to reducing underage drinking.
- < Consider whether the business is working with the local school district. Again, history of working with the schools may indicate an understanding of local concerns and a sincere interest in the health and well being of young people.
- < Consider the reputation of the business in the community. Things to consider may include how the employees of the business are received in the community and how the business interacts with other non-alcohol related businesses in the community.

< Consider whether the business has an office or is located in the city or county of the Coalition. A connection to a community other than a business relationship would indicate an understanding of local concerns and the Coalitions's goals.

< As a Coalition, discuss in advance the guidelines for the amount or type of credit the business expects and will receive for any donation or other involvement.

< Give options to the business for assisting the Coalition in reaching other goals. Examples may include:

If the Coalition has concerns regarding alcohol server training, suggest that the business sponsor the trainings.

If the Coalition has concerns regarding point-of-sale advertising that may appeal to minors, suggest that the business work with retailers to remove the advertisements.

< Consider the nature of the donated items, services, or contributions and the audience which the items may appeal to or be targeted to. It is not appropriate to accept donated items which advertise alcohol products and can reach an under 21 audience. Examples may include frisbees, ball caps, shirts, or other items which young people are likely to use or wear.

< Use these items as discussion starters and as a start to your own list of concerns or issues that will need to be addressed.

5. This policy does not exclude any member of the public, or representatives of alcohol distillers, distributors, or trade groups of the alcohol industry from attending and participating in discussions at any meetings held by the MCRUD Steering Committee, any of its standing or ad hoc committees, or meetings hosted by Regional Coalitions, or from asking for time on the agenda to present information to the MCRUD Steering Committee, any of its standing or ad hoc committees, or Regional Coalitions.