Minnesota's New Happy Hour Process
Step one: Register the facility with AGE

Providers must notify the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division, commonly known as AGE, of their intent to serve alcohol under this new provision.
DPS has now posted the registration page for assisted living communities, nursing homes, and boarding care homes.

Importantly, this is a one-time registration for the facility. Providers do not need to complete the AGE registration form before every resident event where alcohol may be served. Once the facility has registered and AGE has processed the paperwork, the provider may use the new process for future eligible resident-focused activities and events, assuming all other requirements continue to be followed.

Step two: Build in processing time
DPS has advised that providers should allow five days for AGE to process the facility's registration paperwork.

Step three: Keep events resident-focused

The new flexibility is intended for activities or events organized for residents. Think resident happy hours, celebrations, social gatherings, and community-building events. This is not a general liquor license. It is a targeted exception designed to support quality

Step four: Follow alcohol safety requirements
The new law removes the liquor license requirement in this specific setting, but it does not remove the responsibility to serve alcohol safely.
Providers should continue to follow all applicable requirements, including:

- Only serving individuals who are legally allowed to consume alcohol.
- Ensuring alcohol is served only in appropriate resident-focused settings.
- Preventing over-service.
- Maintaining a safe environment for residents, guests, and staff.
- Making sure staff involved in service meet applicable age requirements.
- Considering resident care plans, medication interactions, dietary restrictions, and individualized clinical concerns.
- Documenting internal policies and procedures for alcohol service.

This is a good moment for providers to review their current policies and make sure clinical, life enrichment, dining, risk management, and leadership teams are all on the

same page. The goal is not to make happy hour complicated. The goal is to make it safe, thoughtful, and easy to manage.

A provider-friendly checklist
Before hosting your first event under the new law, consider taking these steps:

1. Review the DPS/AGE webpage for nursing homes, boarding care homes, and assisted living facilities.
2. Complete the one-time AGE registration form for your facility.
3. Allow five days for AGE to process the facility registration.
4. Confirm the event is resident-focused.
5. Review internal policies on alcohol service.
6. Identify who will serve alcohol and confirm they meet applicable requirements.
7. Review resident-specific considerations, including medications, care plans, and safety risks.
8. Communicate expectations to staff, residents, and guests.
9. Keep the event fun, welcoming, and well-supervised.
10. Save documentation of your facility registration and internal planning.