

FAST FACTS

Place of Last Drink (POLD) Data

Overview of Place of Last Drink

This data refers to identifying the place of last drink for subjects who have been determined by law enforcement or medical staff as having been involved in an alcohol-related incident. The incidents can range from motor vehicle crashes, DUI/DWI stops, investigations concerning assaults, and situations involving minors in possession. Subjects may or may not be intoxicated at the time of the encounter. The information is entered into a database that can be utilized by law enforcement and community coalitions to fashion appropriate evidence-based interventions.

The Goal

The objective is to gather information, analyze it, and then develop appropriate strategies to deal with identified trends and problem events or locations. By tracking place of last drink, communities can develop a clear understanding of alcohol-related problems facing their communities. The information can help determine if failures exist within homes, the community, or in the alcohol retail industry. Patterns may emerge which can instruct and inform appropriate community responses to address the root causes of the negative behavior. For example, the data may establish that there are problem locations within the community, problem events, or problem times of year that lead to the over-consumption of alcohol. This information can then be utilized by all sectors of the community to develop culturally appropriate interventions such as educational efforts, media campaigns, treatment protocols, and where warranted, increased enforcement to address the problem behavior. For instance, if a retailer or event has an identified pattern of over-serving or selling to underage individuals, law enforcement and community stakeholders can focus on working with those retailers, or event sponsors. Law enforcement and community stakeholders can focus on helping retailers improve their service skills and procedures to reduce the problematic behavior without imposing additional restrictions on compliant retailers.

Why POLD is Beneficial to Communities

Refined interventions can serve to help communities effectively allocate limited resources and ultimately create safer roadways and healthier environments for all. Nearly 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes each year. (1) Every day, 28 people in the United States die in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver. This is one death every 51 minutes. (2) The annual cost of these alcohol-related crashes totals more than \$44 billion. (3) Furthermore, studies show that up to 50% of people driving under the influence had their last drink at a licensed liquor establishment. (4) In nearly every state, the sale to obviously intoxicated individuals is illegal, but all too frequently, bars and restaurants continue to serve patrons long after they show signs of intoxication. One study found that 82% of restaurants and bars that evaluators visited sold to a pseudo-intoxicated customer who was displaying obvious signs of intoxication. (5) Underage drinking and binge drinking can lead

to severe consequences for youth that engage in this behavior and the communities they live in, including sexual assault, sexually transmitted infections, academic failure, drunk driving, and even death. It is essential to collect this data to protect public health and reduce both the economic toll of injury and the tragic loss of life attributable to the over-consumption of alcohol by both adults and youth.

Considerations for Place of Last Drink

The purpose of the POLD database should not be punitive. POLD data is designed to serve as a resource for law enforcement agencies to identify potential problematic behavior resulting from the over-service and/or sale of alcoholic beverages to minors within their communities and develop evidence-based strategies to address the behavior. The information can be used in many ways to include, but not limited to:

- ◆ Providing educational opportunities to licensed liquor establishments in the form of Retail Beverage Service Training
- ◆ Educating the general public on the dangers of underage drinking and over-consumption of alcohol
- ◆ Identifying problem locations or events within the community
- ◆ Developing appropriate service guidelines for special events
- ◆ Increasing enforcement efforts in the community to include compliance check investigations, source investigations, covert investigations of licensed premises, and increased enforcement of DWI/DUI laws.

Helpful Tips and Suggestions

Most of the information and reports contained in a POLD database are based on arrest data or confidential sources. The inclusion of any named establishment or individual within the database in no way implies that the named individuals or establishments have been found guilty of any criminal offense or administrative violation. To ensure that the information is not used in a punitive manner, exceptional care and concern should be taken regarding the development of procedures and protocols for both the collection and use of the POLD data.

This information can be gathered in many settings and from many sources, including sobriety checkpoints, roadside safety checks, DWI/DUI arrests, alcohol-related traffic crash investigations, post-arrest for assaults, minor in possession, emergency department data, and sentencing documents. A data collection form should be created in a useful format, and protocols for the dissemination and use of the information should clearly be defined.

- ◆ Considerations for development of a database, and protocols for use of the data acquired, should include, but not be limited to the following:
 - Who will collect the data?
 - Time and place the data collection occurred.
 - How will the data be used?
 - Who is responsible for maintaining the database?
 - Costs (development, administration, maintenance, analysis, etc.).
 - Access to the database should be restricted. Require a user agreement.
 - Release of data.

The APRC website has resources that provide detailed explanations of appropriate protocols for conducting controlled party dispersals. Additionally, the APRC may be able to provide in-person training on Controlled Party Dispersal Operations for coalitions and law enforcement communities.

Resources and Tools

- ◆ [Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project – POLD Tool Kit](#)
- ◆ NTSB Press Recommendations Press Release
- ◆ [NHTSA Report Evaluation of Responsible Beverage Service to Reduce Impaired Driving by 21-to 34-Year Old Drivers – April 2017](#)
- ◆ FAQ's Sheet

References

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