



Alcohol Licenses and Sales Violation Trends in Iowa, 2005-2020

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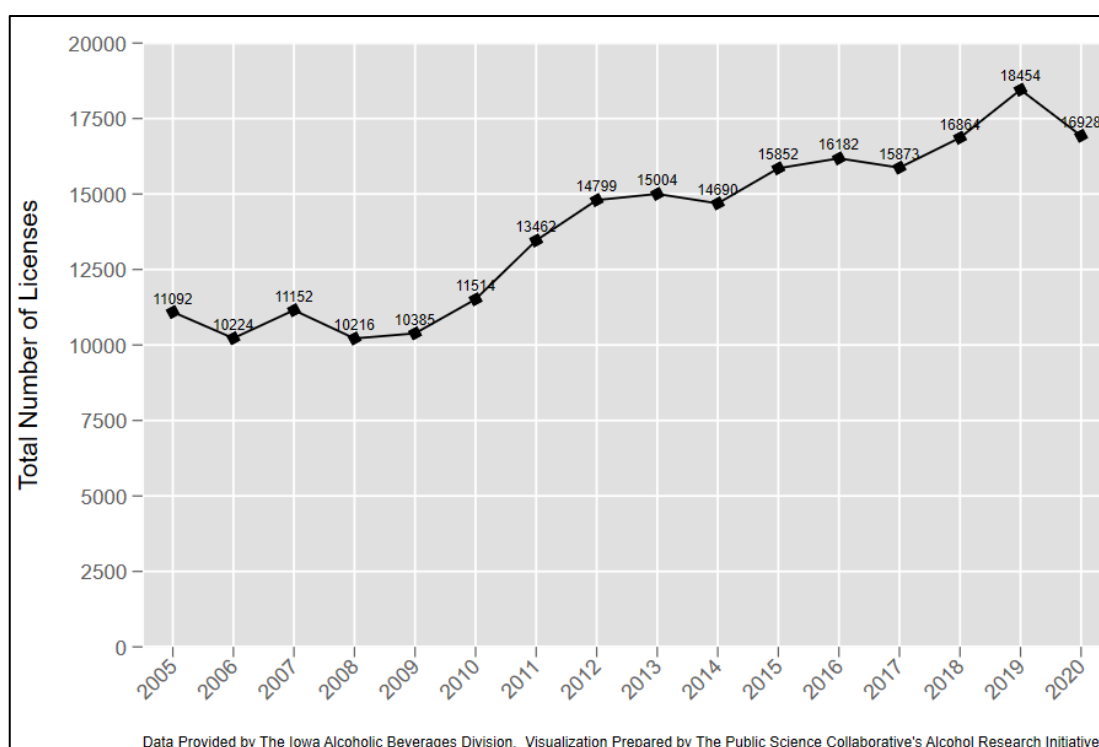
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Annual Licenses

Figure 1: Annual Number of Alcohol Licenses in Iowa, 2005-2020



NOTE: Annual licenses data were provided by *The Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division* (3/25/21).

Figure 1 displays the total number of alcohol licenses provided in a preliminary dataset from The Iowa Alcohol Beverages Division. These data show that there were 11,092 active licenses in 2005. By 2020, the number of standing licenses had grown to 16,928. Peak number of licenses was in 2019 (18,454), though we expect that COVID-related factors are responsible for the 2020 decline.

Table 1 on the following page lists alcohol licenses by type, as contained in our dataset. Each license type is classified as either a retail license, wholesale/manufacture license, or 'other' type of license. In the data that follow, we report trends in the total number of licenses by these three categories.

In 2005, there were 540 Class E Licenses and by 2020 that number increased to 1,858, representing a nearly 350% increase (see Figure 2). Figure 3 graphs changes in alcohol licenses, by type, from 2005 to 2020. We report change in total number of licenses in absolute and relative terms, across the categories of retail, wholesale/manufacturing, and other. The left panel shows total annual number of licenses by type and the panel on the right shows the rate of change from the 2005 value, by license type. Although total *retail* licenses grew by over 5,000 licenses during this time period, *wholesale/manufacturing* and *other* license types experiences a larger relative change, with growth rates four to five times greater than retail licenses.¹

¹ License category 'other' also included various certificates of compliance and shipping licenses.

Table 1: Type of Liquor Licenses included in the preliminary dataset

| <i>Retail</i> | <i>Wholesale/Manufacturer</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|--|---|--|
| Class A Liquor License (LA) | Brewpub | Alcohol Carrier (AC) |
| Class B Beer Permit (BB) | Class A Beer Permit (BA) | Alcohol Carrier/Direct Shipper |
| Class B Liquor License (LB) | Class A High Alcohol Beer (BAA) | Brewer's Certificate of Compliance (CB) |
| Class B Native Wine Permit (WBN) | Class A Native Beer Permit (BAN) | Broker's Permit (SP) |
| Class B Wine Permit (WB) | Class A Native Distilled Spirits License (ND) | Charity Beer and Wine Permit (CP) |
| Class C Beer Permit (BC) | Class A Native High Alcohol Beer (BAAN) | Direct Shipper Permit (DS) |
| Class C Liquor License (LC) | Class A Native Wine Permit (WAN) | Distiller's Certificate of Compliance (CD) |
| Class C Native Distilled Spirits License (LCN) | Class A Wine Permit (WA) | Special Permits |
| Class C Native Wine Permit (WCN) | Manufacturer License (CM) | Vintner's Certificate of Compliance (CV) |
| Class D Liquor License (LD) | Manufacturer Permit (CM) | Wine Carrier (AC) |
| Class E Liquor License (LE) | Micro Distillery (MD) | Alcohol Carrier (AC) |
| Special Class C Liquor License (BW) | | Alcohol Carrier/Direct Shipper |

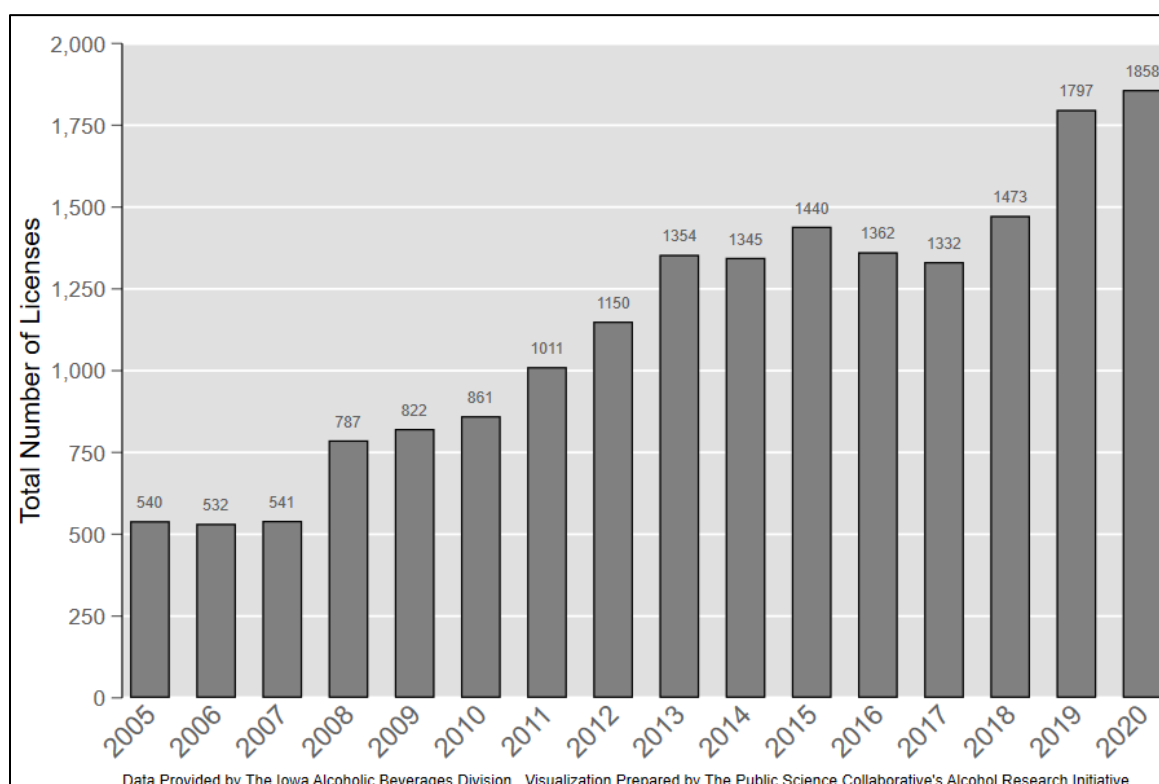
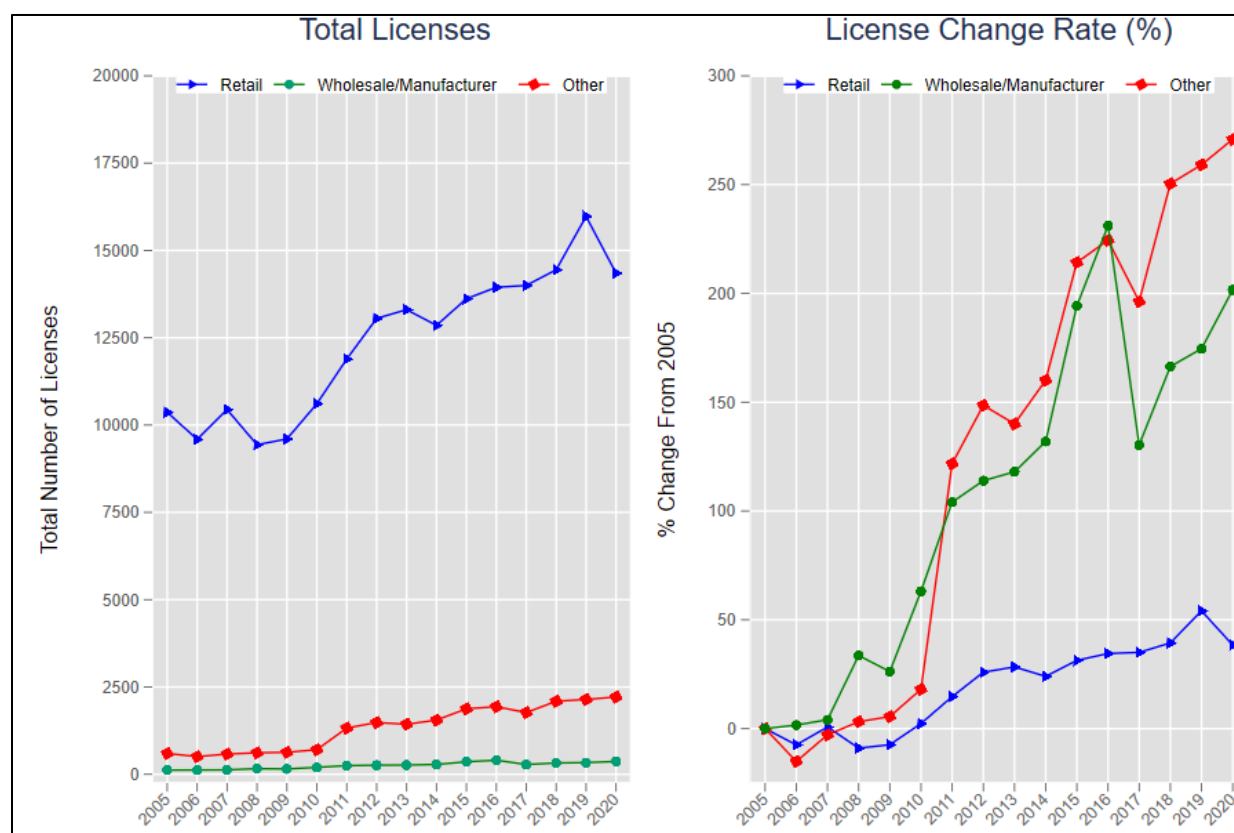
Figure 2: Annual Number of Class E Liquor Licenses, 2005-2020

Figure 3: Change in Alcohol Licenses, 2005-2020

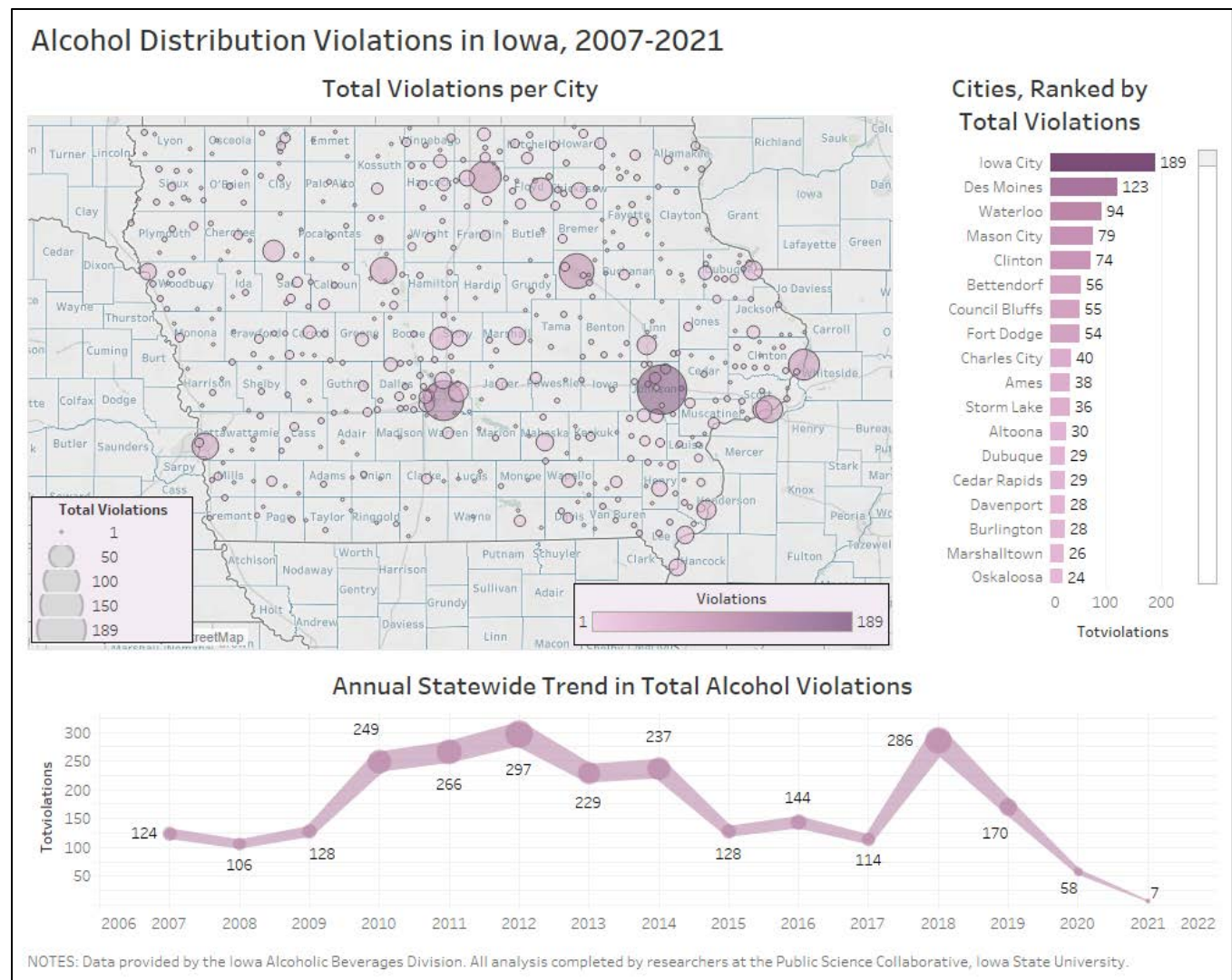


Alcohol Sales Violations

The visualizations on the next page show spatial and time series trends in alcohol violations in Iowa from 2007-2021. Spatial analysis shows that places with a high number of violations are places with a large number of people. Exceptions to that general trend are Iowa City and Waterloo, cities ranked first and third in total violations, respectively. These are both college towns with a history of high prevalence of excess drinking in the college age population. In the case of Iowa City, a university-city alcohol harm reduction partnership was initiated in 2009 and appears to have been linked to an increase in enforcement efforts. According to the University of Iowa, these and other efforts contributed to a decrease in high risk drinking and total number of drinks over the 2009-2019 period ([see here for more information](#) on University of Iowa alcohol harm reduction efforts).

With the exception of 2018, the general trend is a decline in violations in Iowa since 2012. Based on conversations with staff at the Iowa ABD, compliance checks that would result in a violation/citation are initiated by a complaint originating in the local community. Unlike tobacco compliance, alcohol officers in Iowa generally do not conduct spot checks, owing at least in part to fewer resources than what is allocated to tobacco compliance.

Figure 4: Alcohol Distribution Violations in Iowa Cities, 2007-2021



NOTE: Sales violations data were provided by *The Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division* (3/22/21).