



POLICE DEPARTMENT
Inter-Office Communication

To: Captain E. Book #71
From: Officer S. Knighton #366
Subject: Bar Closings

Date: January 2011

Definition: “Soft Closings” is a mechanism that allows bars to stop serving alcohol at a certain time but remain open for a short time afterward. “Staggered closings” is a related concept that allows bars to serve alcohol and close at various times.

“Hard Closings” is a concept that mandates bars to close and stop serving alcohol simultaneously.

Research Method: The Gainesville Police Department has researched the effect of bar closing times on various cities (US and abroad) for several years and how it impacts the citizens and effects the local law enforcement agencies. In 2011, the research team contacted random cities from previous years to note if any major changes had occurred and if their methods were still effective.

The team also decided to widen the scope and included US cities in and around major universities. We polled cities directly from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) – Division 1 conferences (Southeastern Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference, and the Pacific 10 Conference). We did not poll any campus law enforcement agencies. All data collected was contributed by local police departments, municipal ordinances, and City Commissioners.

We addressed the following areas:

- Bar closing times (if any)
- Alcohol consumption times
- Problems associated with their current system (if any)
- Closing preference (Soft vs. Hard)

RANDOM US CITIES

	Location	Soft Closings	Comments
1	Albuquerque, NM	Y	Bars open until 0300 hrs/ no alcohol after 0200 hrs
2	Boulder, CO	Y	Rotate hours based on tourist season
3	Daytona Beach, FL	Y	Bars open until 0230 hrs/ no alcohol after 0100 hrs
4	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Y	Bars open until 0400 hrs/ no alcohol after 0200 hrs
5	Hollywood, CA	Y	Bars open until 0300-0500 hrs/no alcohol after 0200 hrs
6	Minneapolis, MN	Y	Bars open until 0200 hrs / no alcohol after 0100 hrs

7	Normal, IL	Y	Bars open until 0400 hrs/ no alcohol after 0200 hrs
8	Orlando, FL	Y	Bars open until 0300 hrs/ no alcohol after 0230 hrs
9	Pittsburgh, PA	Y	Bars open until 0230 hrs/ no alcohol after 0200 hrs
10	Champaign, IL	N	Bars and alcohol sales end at 0230 hrs. Tried soft closings but was not well received due to profits
11	Colorado Springs, CO	N	Rotate hours based on the season
12	Delray Beach, FL	N	Bars open until 0200 hrs/ Creates massive crowds all at once. Currently visiting the soft close concept
13	Providence, RI	N	Bars open until 0100 hrs
14	Tampa, FL	N	Bars and alcohol sales end at 0300 hrs
15	West Palm Beach, FL	N	Bars open until 0300 hrs M-F/until 0400 hrs Saturday

COLLEGE TOWNS

SEC

1	Tuscaloosa, AL U of Alabama	N	Bars close at 0145 hrs M-TH/0245 hrs F-S
2	Fayetteville, AK U of Arkansas	Y	Christie –Key Dispatcher : Bars stay open until 0200hrs
3	Auburn, GA Auburn University	Y	Ofc. Hubbard-Codes: Close at 0100 hrs M-TH/0200 hrs F-Su Works well
4	Athens, GA U of Georgia	Y	No alcohol after 0200 hrs M-F/0155 hrs SA Bars can remain open up to 45 mins after serving
5	Lexington, KY U of Kentucky	N	Ofc. C. Woodyard: Close at 0230 hrs No problems
6	Baton Rouge, LA LSU	Y	Lt. Johnson: Close at 0200 hrs/ Problems with patrons after closing
7	Oxford, Miss Ole Miss	Y	Ofc. Frazier: Close at 2300hrs Su-Wed/ 0100 hrs TH-Sat
8	Starkville, Miss Mississippi State	N	Bars and alcohol sales end at 0200 hrs
9	Columbia, SC U of South Carolina	Y/N	Ofc. Dorey: Public Access bars close at 0200 hrs/ Private Clubs have no closing
10	Knoxville, TN U of Tennessee	N	Bars open until 0200 hrs / considering soft closes
11	Nashville, TN Vanderbilt	Y	2300 hrs Su-W/ 0200 hrs TH-Sat

ACC

1	Clemson, NC Clemson University	N	Sgt. Rodriguez: 0200 hrs/ No problems
2	Durham, NC Duke University		Waiting for Durham Commisioner Barros' reply
3	College Park, Maryland U of Maryland	Y	Ofc. Roberts: 0200 wknds/0100 wkdays
4	Pembroke, NC U of North Carolina	N	Ofc. Grant: Dry County/ Bars 2400 hrs wknds; 2200 hrs wkdays Only 3 serve beer
5	Raleigh, NC North Carolina State		Waiting for Raleigh Commisioner Mcfarlane's reply
6	Charlottesville, VA U of Virginia	N	Close at 0200 hrs hard
7	Winston-Salem, NC Wake Forest	N	Anne Irvin: 0200 hrs hard
8	Atlanta, GA Georgia Tech	Y	Bars can operate 24/7; No alcohol after 0200 hrs
9	Tallahassee, FL Florida State University	N	Ofc. Matt: 0200 hrs; Bar owners pushing for soft
10	Coral Gables, FL University of Miami	Y	Bar closings are staggered; No alcohol after 0400 hrs
11	Blacksburg, VA Virginia Tech	N	Chris Potter- 0300 hard
12	Chestnut Hill, Mass Boston College	Y	Sgt. Oneal: Soft closing at 0100 hrs/ open til 0200 hrs

PAC-10

1	Tucson, AZ U of Arizona	N	Ofc. Martinez: Bars close at 0200 hrs
2	Metro Phoenix, AZ Arizona State University	N	Ofc. Gindlesperger: 0200 hrs hard
3	Berkeley, CA U of California	N	Ofc. B. Smith: 0200 hard
4	Eugene, OR U of Oregon	Y	Maria: 0100 hrs soft/0200 closing
5	Corvallis, OR Oregon State University	N	Ofc. Connelly: 0200 hrs
6	Palo Alto, CA Stanford University	N	Dorothy: 0200 hrs
7	Los Angeles, CA UCLA	Y	No alcohol after 0200 hrs/ Bar times vary but no set time
8	Los Angeles, CA U of Southern California	Y	No alcohol after 0200 hrs/ Bar times vary but no set time
9	Seattle, WA U of Washington	N	0200 hrs hard
10	Pullman, WA Washington State	N	Sally-Dispatcher: 0200 hrs hard

Research assistance by: Ofc. Page, Volunteers Danielle Burkette and Augusto Ferreira De Carvalho

Findings/ Analysis:

Total of cities polled	48
Cities that incorporate soft closings	22
Cities that incorporate hard closings	24
Cities that did not provide feedback	2

- Of the 15 random cities that were polled, approximately 62% preferred soft closings over approximately 38% hard closings. 15% (2) were based on their respective tourist seasons.
- SEC college towns preferred soft closings approximately 60% over approximately 40% hard closings. 10% (1) utilized both methods.
- ACC college towns preferred hard closings 60% to 40% soft closings. 17% (2) are still under investigation and;
- PAC-10 college towns preferred hard closings 70% to 30 % soft closings.

Comments:

Researchers found that the overwhelming majority of the cities were content with their current procedures. Cities that practice soft closings did not have any negative responses, but most were against bars remaining open all night. Cities with hard closings cited problems such as massive crowds, underage drinking, fights, and loitering at closing times.

Overall, most of the cities incorporate some form of directed patrol during closing hours such as undercover stings to combat underage drinking and DUI's, increased police presence, and capacity checks.