The S.C. legislature passed a new law, effective July 1, 2017 which requires certain alcohol permit holders to purchase at least $1,000,000 of liquor liability insurance before their current permit expires. Those that are affected by this law are all establishments that serve alcohol, for on consumption on their premises after 5 pm. If your restaurant or bar has one of these active permits, then you will not be able to renew it without proving that you have this coverage in force.

A recent event in the town of Dillon was the original impetus for this new law. What happened there was that a Dillon policy officer was struck and severely injured by an intoxicated driver. The driver had no insurance and neither did the bar that served him. Next in line for liability for the police officers injuries was his employer, the town of Dillon. But these costs soon proved too much even for the town to cover. This generated an outcry and the family and others soon began to push the South Carolina lawmakers to make sure that this type of uncovered loss can't happen again. So voila, a new law is born and South Carolina restaurants and bar owners now must prove that they have this coverage to stay open and continue to serve alcoholic drinks to their customers.

The impacts of this new law will vary. For S.C. drivers this should help protect them from uncovered losses as a result of being hit by a drunk driver. This will take some time though as the requirement for insurance only happens at permit renewal time and these permits are 2 year permits. For bar and restaurant owners, this is a great chance to take a look at your current insurance program and evaluate if you have this coverage in place. If your agent has never tried to convince you to buy this insurance then her or she may have done you a disservice. Sure, you can wait until your current alcohol permit runs out before your buy a policy, but this is very poor risk management. These types of losses, though somewhat rare, are often quite large and facing them without insurance protection is a recipe for losing your business completely.

How does it work? Liquor liability insurance is pretty basic and is rated using your gross alcohol sales. The link at the beginning of this paragraph will take you a blog that goes into much more detail about how the policy works and what kinds of losses are covered. Here at Clinard Insurance Group, we want to help educate restaurant and bar owners about this huge, often unprotected risk marker in their business plan. If you would like a quick quote for liquor liability for your business, please give us a call at 877-687-7557 or visit our page at www.scliquorinsurance.com
. We can help you navigate this policy and have a quote in hand in under 10 minutes. That said, we will take as much time as you need to help make sure you understand this coverage and are comfortable with it.