

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ABC COMPLETES DISCRIMINATION INVESTIGATION IN SAN FRANCISCO
No accusations are filed but bar owner must meet specific conditions

San Francisco - California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Investigators have completed a lengthy racial and gender discrimination investigation stemming from complaints filed against Les Natali, the owner of a bar located in San Francisco's Castro District.

The investigation has resulted in the recommendation to conditionally approve the transfer of an ABC license for the Pendulum bar to Mr. Natali. ABC's investigation concluded there was insufficient evidence to determine that Mr. Natali lacks the qualifications to hold a license. Since Mr. Natali's request for a license transfer has been protested, a hearing will be held to allow complainants the opportunity to present evidence before an Administrative Law Judge. Should a state administrative and judicial process result in a final determination that Mr. Natali is unqualified to hold a license, the department may follow up with accusations against his other licenses. The department conditionally approved Mr. Natali's license subject to the following:

- No person shall be excluded from these premises on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, disability, marital status or national origin.
- The petitioner shall post and maintain professional quality signs posted at each entrance to the premises that read as follows: "In compliance with Section 125.6 of the Business and Professions Code and the Unruh Civil Rights Act, the licensee of this premises does not discriminate against patrons based on their race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, disability, marital status or national origin."
- All employees of this establishment shall attend a Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs (LEAD) training class within 90 days of the beginning of their employment or within 90 days of this petition for conditional license, whichever comes first. The training will include education on California discrimination law.

ABC conducted a comprehensive investigation using a diverse team of investigators who interviewed numerous witnesses and performed multiple undercover operations at all of Mr. Natali's existing San Francisco licensed premises after the department received discrimination complaints from San Francisco citizens. ABC also reviewed the San Francisco Human Rights Commission Report and respects the Commission's work. ABC appreciates the Commission for investing so many resources and so much time and for allowing ABC to use their facilities during the course of ABC's investigation. After reviewing all the findings of its investigation and the HRC Report, ABC has determined there is not enough evidence to support a license denial in an administrative proceeding.

ABC will continue to monitor Mr. Natali's businesses to ensure compliance with state discrimination law.