To: Certificate of Approval Holders and Manufacturers  
From: Devon Cook, Office Manager  
Subject: Private Labels and Collaborations  
Date: April 13, 2022

The purpose of this memo is to clarify the law and procedures concerning private labels and collaborations. Should you have questions about a specific label send your design to liquor.licensing@maine.gov for review prior to manufacturing. The bureau will only conduct pre-approval of designs in instances where there is a question about a specific compliance matter.

This memo also serves as notice that label registrations filed on paper no longer meet the definition of the “application for registration” described in 18-553 C.M.R. ch. 105 §5.1 and will not be accepted. All label registrations must be submitted on the industry portal.

**Private Labels**
Pursuant to 18-553 C.M.R. ch. 104 §1, certificate of approval holders are restricted from offering a product that would by nature of its label only be sold by one licensee or a restricted group of licensees; the bureau will not approve a brand label with such a restriction. Moreover, any brand approved by the bureau must be made available to all retail licensees, and in the event that a product is on allocation all retail licensees shall be allowed to purchase the allocated item.

Brands prohibited under this rule include:

- Products bearing the trade name of another licensed entity.
- Products using the logo or trademark of a wholesale or retail licensee.
- Products promoting a wholesale or retail licensee as prohibited by 28-A M.R.S. §707(2).

**Collaborations**
Collaborations with labels that eliminate confusion for consumers by clearly defining the actual brand owner and which licensee is the primary source of supply are permitted. Prominent statements such as “brewed by”, “supported by”, and “in collaboration with” support the clarity of the label for the purpose of approval. Collaboration labels constituting one brand can only be registered by one licensee.