Research Protocol for CityHealth: Safer Alcohol Sales

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Research Protocol

I. **Date of Protocol:** September 1, 2023; October 14, 2022; earlier protocols took a different form and were dated October 1, 2021; May 1, 2020; March 23, 2018.

II. **Scope:** Collect and code city ordinances across the 75 largest cities in the United States. This dataset contains the coding question of whether a city has established an ordinance that directly addresses sales activities by alcohol retailers and whether the city can take remedial action – including closing the retailer – for falling out of compliance with the local law. This dataset captures currently available data valid through September 1, 2023.

III. **Primary Data Collection**

   a. **Project dates:** June 2016 to September 2023

   b. **Dates covered in the dataset**: Valid through September 1, 2023.

   c. **Data collection methods**: Originally team of two alcohol policy experts developed the policy with one conducting original local research and second confirming coding matched collected legal data. Subsequent updates have a single alcohol policy expert conducting the legal research as the specific topic is relatively stable and that after original coding continued duplication of review was less necessary.

   d. **Databases used**: municode.com; qcode.us; city websites; google.com to identify where a city hosts its ordinances.

   e. **Search terms**: alcohol or beer or wine or liquor or spirit or malt or vinous

       i. Many of the search engines available on the sites that host city codes will automatically return results that contain similar words of relevance, such as "alcoholic beverage."

       ii. Key word searches were supplemented by examination of the table of contents of each relevant section of the law identified.

   f. **Information about initial returns and additional inclusion or exclusion criteria**: Because of the varying legal landscape of alcohol laws between states, initial returns at the local level varied widely. As a result, it was determined that a clear and specific metric was needed to describe how the alcohol sales environment varied between cities. The research question was ultimately revised to focus on whether the city directly regulated alcohol retailers. Examples of the types of laws that indicated direct regulation included local licensing of retailers, ability to block a specific new licensee, ability to impose alcohol-related operating conditions on retailers, and ability to pull a license to operate.

   g. **Inclusion or exclusion criteria by question**

       i. For the question *"Does the city directly regulate alcohol retailers?"* coders should answer "Yes" if the city ordinance authorizes the city to take remedial action – including closing the retailer – for falling out of compliance with the city ordinance.

       ii. If a city can "directly regulate" then the next question is *"What alcohol retailers can the city directly regulate?"* with coders answering "All" if the city ordinance applies to 1) both on-premises retailers and off-premises retailers; 2) both new and existing retailers; and 3) and retailers that can sell,

beer, and/or distilled spirits. "Some" is coded when the local ordinance only applies to a subset of alcohol retailers, for example only off-premises retailers that sell beer and wine or only new retailers that sell beer, wine, or distilled spirits.

IV.   Coding

a. **Development of coding scheme**: Once the alcohol policy experts identified the coding questions were refined and finalized research began.

b. **Coding methods:** A single alcohol policy expert conducted the research in each city, collected all relevant text, and coded the data in an Excel document with a medal ranking and provided relevant text.

c. **Quality control:** A second alcohol policy expert confirmed the coding based on the provided text. Subsequent updates have a single alcohol policy expert conducting the legal research as the specific topic is relatively stable and that after original coding continued duplication of review was less necessary.