vinetur

Denver judge denies Constellation bid to leave Coors Distributing Company before arbitration

The ruling preserves the current distribution arrangement after the court refused immediate relief from an injunction blocking the split

Thursday, November 26, 2026



A judge in Denver on Wednesday, November 25, denied Constellation Brands' request to put on hold an injunction that is blocking the company from leaving Coors Distributing Company, according to Beer Business Daily, keeping the current

distribution arrangement in place while an arbitrator reviews the dispute.

The ruling means Constellation will remain at CDC for now. Beer Business Daily reported that the injunction will stay in effect until the arbitrator examines the petitions filed by the parties. The publication’s account indicates the court did not grant Constellation’s bid for immediate relief while the broader fight moves into arbitration.

The dispute centers on Constellation’s effort to separate from CDC, a distributor associated with Molson Coors. With the stay request denied, the court has effectively preserved the status quo rather than allowing Constellation to change course before the arbitration process moves forward. The decision does not resolve the underlying disagreement, but it does set the terms under which that fight will continue in the near term.

Court fights over distribution can carry weight far beyond the companies directly involved, especially in the U.S. beer business, where access to wholesalers is closely tied to how brands reach retailers and consumers. A legal block on changing distributors can delay shifts in market strategy, affect portfolio planning and influence how quickly a supplier can reposition products in a given territory. In that sense, the Denver ruling could have wider implications for how beverage companies manage distributor transitions when commercial relationships break down.

The case also highlights the leverage that temporary court orders can have in the three-tier alcohol system. Even before an arbitrator reaches the merits of a dispute, an injunction can determine who controls the flow of products to market for weeks or months. For brewers and importers, that can influence sales efforts, retailer relationships and competitive positioning at a time when many suppliers are reassessing distribution networks.

Neither the denial of the stay nor the continuation of the injunction amounts to a final judgment on Constellation’s arguments. Instead, the decision keeps the matter in a holding pattern until the arbitration process advances. That leaves the central business question unresolved: whether Constellation will eventually be allowed to move its business away from CDC and on what terms.

For now, the immediate result is narrower but still important. Constellation did not win the short-term court relief it sought, CDC keeps the business pending further review, and the next meaningful step in the fight is expected to come from the arbitrator rather than from a rapid change in distribution.