



Trade &
Investment
Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing

PREVENTION OF INTOXICATION ON LICENSED PREMISES

GUIDELINES MARCH 2015



INTRODUCTION

Liquor licensees have important obligations to ensure alcohol is served responsibly to help minimise alcohol-related harm. Supporting responsible consumption practices and preventing intoxication lowers the risk of alcohol-related violence and neighbourhood disturbance, and helps to promote a safe venue for customers and staff.

The NSW liquor laws prohibit the sale and supply of alcohol to intoxicated persons. Licensees also have a legal obligation to prevent intoxication from occurring on their premises. Significant penalties – including fines, higher annual licence fees, and possible suspension or cancellation of a licence – apply where alcohol is served to an intoxicated person or intoxication is permitted.

These guidelines include practical steps that licensees can take to manage the risk of intoxication on their premises. They will assist licensees to comply with the liquor laws and the conditions of their liquor licence.

While implementing these steps is not a licence requirement, it is recommended, as the steps provide evidence of what a licensee has done to minimise the risk of intoxication in the event of a prosecution under the liquor laws.

Because liquor is sold in a diverse range of circumstances, licensees and staff should also consider whether other measures – in addition to the steps outlined in these guidelines – are needed to minimise the risk of intoxication.

What is the law?

It is unlawful for a licensee or staff member to sell or supply liquor to an intoxicated person on licensed premises (section 73(2) of the *Liquor Act 2007*).

The maximum penalty is \$11,000.

A person is intoxicated if:

- a. the person's speech, balance, co-ordination or behaviour is noticeably affected, and
- b. it is reasonable in the circumstances to believe that the affected speech, balance, co-ordination or behaviour is the result of the consumption of liquor.

Separate guidelines have been issued by the Secretary, NSW Trade & Investment, to assist licensees and staff in determining whether a person is intoxicated. These guidelines are available at

www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/intox_guidelines.pdf

It is unlawful for a licensee to permit intoxication on licensed premises (section 73(1)(a) of the *Liquor Act 2007*). The maximum penalty is \$11,000.

A licensee is deemed to have permitted intoxication if an intoxicated person is on the licensed premises (section 73(4) of the *Liquor Act 2007*), unless the licensee can prove:

- a. The licensee or staff:
 - i. asked the intoxicated person to leave the premises, and
 - ii. contacted, or attempted to contact, the police for assistance in removing the person from the premises, and
 - iii. the person was refused further service of liquor, or
- a1. The licensee or a staff member had taken the steps set out in guidelines issued by the Secretary, NSW Trade & Investment under section 73(5A) of the *Liquor Act 2007*, or
- b. The intoxicated person did not consume liquor on the licensed premises.

What is the purpose of these guidelines?

The Secretary, NSW Trade & Investment, is required to issue these guidelines under section 73(5A) of the *Liquor Act 2007*. Their purpose is to describe the steps that licensees and their staff must take where a licensee wishes to be able to rely upon the defence in section 73(4)(a1) to establish that intoxication was not permitted on their licensed premises.

Where a licensee seeks to rely upon this defence, it will be necessary to demonstrate that **each of the steps** in these guidelines were taken at the time that the offence of permitting intoxication was alleged to have occurred.

As an alternative to implementing the steps in these guidelines, licensees also have the option of relying upon sections 73(4)(a) or 73(4)(b) of the *Liquor Act 2007* to defend an allegation that intoxication has been permitted on the licensed premises.

References

Any reference to a licensee in these guidelines includes a reference to a manager as defined in section 4 of the *Liquor Act 2007*.

Any reference to staff or a staff member in these guidelines includes a reference to any person undertaking duties related to the sale and supply of alcohol on the licensed premises, including security personnel and RSA marshals.

Steps to prevent intoxication on licensed premises

1. Selling, supplying and promoting liquor responsibly

The steps are:

- a. the requirement to not sell or supply liquor to an intoxicated person (under section 73(2) of the *Liquor Act 2007*) is complied with,
- b. obligations relating to responsible service of alcohol training and the availability of free water (under clauses 40, 42, 42A, 42B and 51 of the *Liquor Regulation 2008*) are complied with,

- c. any conditions imposed on the liquor licence or any requirements under the *Liquor Act 2007* which restrict the times, type or quantity of alcohol sold or supplied on the licensed premises are complied with, and
- d. liquor is not sold, supplied or promoted in a manner that is inconsistent with the Liquor Promotion Guidelines issued by the Secretary, NSW Trade & Investment, under section 102(4) of the *Liquor Act 2007*.

A copy of the Liquor Promotion Guidelines is available at www.olgr.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/Liquor_promotion_guidelines.pdf.

2. Monitoring liquor consumption and patron behaviour

The steps are:

- a. the licensed premises is operating under the direct supervision of the licensee or appropriately experienced supervisory staff whenever liquor is being sold and supplied,
- b. liquor consumption by all patrons is actively monitored by the licensee or staff,
- c. intervention occurs when the licensee or a staff member becomes aware that a patron is consuming liquor irresponsibly and in a manner likely to result in intoxication,
- d. intervention occurs when the licensee or a staff member becomes aware that a patron is intoxicated to prevent the person from consuming liquor and to request that person to leave the premises,
- e. patrons entering the licensed premises between midnight and 5am are actively monitored and assessed for intoxication at the time of entry, and
- f. any conditions imposed on the liquor licence, requirements under the *Liquor Act 2007*, or requirements of a development consent or approval under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, relating to the engagement and duties of security personnel and/or RSA marshals are complied with.

3. Implementing harm minimisation measures

The steps are:

- a. the availability of free drinking water is actively promoted to patrons throughout the licensed premises,
- b. action is taken to make patrons aware of the availability of non-alcoholic and low strength alcoholic beverages in the licensed premises,
- c. any requirements under the *Liquor Act 2007* relating to the provision of food on the licensed premises are complied with in a manner consistent with the reasonable requirements, expectations and demands of the patrons of the premises, and
- d. the following drinks are not sold or supplied between midnight and 5am:
 - i. any drink (commonly referred to as a 'shot', a 'shooter' or a 'bomb') that is designed to be consumed rapidly,
 - ii. any ready to drink beverage with an alcohol by volume content of more than 5%, and
 - iii. any drink prepared on the premises that contains more than 30 ml of spirits or liqueur, other than a cocktail that contains spirits or liqueur (or both) mixed with other ingredients and that is not designed to be consumed rapidly.

4. Planning to prevent intoxication on the licensed premises

The steps are:

- a. a written document (such as a plan or house policy) is prepared which:
 - i. details the measures in place to prevent intoxication on the licensed premises (including the method of complying with the steps set out in these guidelines),
 - ii. describes how staff are instructed and trained to prevent intoxication on the licensed premises, and
 - iii. is provided to police and inspectors upon request.
- b. all staff receive instructions and training on the contents of the document referred to in step 4(a) above before they commence working on the licensed premises.



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