

Liquor Control Victoria

Responsible Service of Alcohol Workbook



VICTORIA
State
Government

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Please note:

Throughout this workbook, we refer to some words in general terms to help you understand liquor regulations and requirements. For example, we often refer to liquor as alcohol, depending on how it is used in a sentence.

When we say venue (club, pub, restaurant and cafe, nightclub, winery, brewery, etc.) and shop (packaged liquor store, convenience store licensed to sell alcohol), we mean licensed premises or licensed locations.

Responsible service of alcohol

The Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) program helps licensees and their staff develop policies and procedures for the service of alcohol based on the strategies discussed in this program.

Responsible service of alcohol is a duty

Responsible service of alcohol training will assist you in understanding your legal obligations. It will help you develop the knowledge and skills necessary to serve alcohol responsibly. By doing so you will contribute positively to the liquor industry and your community.

The benefits of serving alcohol responsibly are:

- helps to minimise alcohol-related harms
- ensures people do not become intoxicated and have a negative impact on customers, staff, and the local community
- reduces the risk of alcohol-related violence, injuries, and health issues
- provides a safe environment for customers and staff
- maintains a positive reputation of a business in the community.

When serving alcohol, your duties will span more than just serving. You're also:

- a good host helping to create a friendly atmosphere
- a safety officer who thinks about the wellbeing of customers and staff to reduce risks
- a salesperson who is knowledgeable about your products
- a supervisor ensuring no one breaks any liquor laws
- a caretaker making sure the venue is clean and tidy.

In general, alcohol is consumed responsibly, but it can cause harm. It is, therefore, essential to supply it in a way that will help minimise any potential harm. This means considering who you serve, how much you supply, and the customer's well-being.

One vital element of providing hospitality is ensuring customers have an enjoyable time. Good hospitality offers customers the following:

- an enjoyable atmosphere where friends and family can come together
- good food, drink (both non-alcoholic and alcoholic) and entertainment
- jobs for bar staff, servers, live performers, and tradespeople.

However, excessive alcohol consumption can cause harm to individuals and the community. It plays a significant role in:

- road and pedestrian fatalities
- assaults and other criminal offences
- domestic violence
- hospital admittance due to falls, accidents, assaults, and illness
- disruption to the amenity of areas surrounding licensed premises.

Benefits of responsible service

When alcohol is served and consumed responsibly, the alcohol industry, staff, customers, and the community all benefit.

The benefits to a business for improving RSA include:

- higher staff morale leads to greater productivity and less staff turnover
- a safe and enjoyable atmosphere where customers spend more time in your venue, spread the word and return with more family and friends
- prevention of damage to your venue or shop, potential legal problems and police attendance.

Excessive alcohol consumption makes life more difficult for people within the hospitality industry. Staff and other customers are subjected to:

- abuse from customers
- harassment
- possible violence.

Licensees can create an attractive and profitable atmosphere by promoting responsible service and consumption of alcohol.

Victorian RSA requirements

Anyone selling, offering, or serving liquor working in venues with these types of licences must have an RSA:

- general
- on-premises
- packaged liquor
- late-night.

RSA is to be completed within one month after the employee first serves alcohol at the venue. The RSA refresher program must be completed every 3 years after the initial RSA. There is no cost to complete the RSA Refresher, which can be done online at learninghub.liquor.vic.gov.au.

A current RSA is also required by the licensee (if an individual or partnership) or a responsible person (if the licensee is a body corporate).

RSA training may also be compulsory in other situations where a special condition is specified on the liquor licence.



As of December 2025, if you are completing the RSA for the first time with a training provider, you will also need to complete a standalone online module Sexual Harassment and Assault: Recognise, Prevent, Respond (SHARPR).

Once your training provider finalises your assessment and provides your details to LCV, we will email you the certificate number and link to the LCV Learning Hub to complete the SHARPR module. Access to this module is free and may take up to 60 minutes to complete. Only when you have completed both components of the RSA program will you receive an RSA Certificate of Completion. This is the certificate you need to give to your employer.

When you complete an approved course in Victoria, you will receive 2 different certificates. It is your responsibility to provide your employer with a correct certificate. The certificates are explained in Table 1.

Note: A licensee may receive a penalty exceeding \$12,211 for allowing staff to work without completing an RSA or not providing a correct RSA certificate.

Table 1 RSA certificates

Certificate name	What it looks like	What does it do
Certificate of Completion issued by Liquor Control Victoria		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must provide this certificate to your employer in Victoria. The certificate has the certificate number (bottom right hand corner). Your employer can use this number to check the validity of your certificate.
Statement of Attainment issued by a training provider for SITHFAB021 completion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you move to another state in Australia, a liquor regulator may accept this certificate. Check the website of the regulator for the state or territory you are moving to and ensure you have the correct certificate.

Summary

- Workers in the liquor industry have a key role in reducing the harm of alcohol supply.
- RSA training assists with understanding your obligations.
- RSA training is recommended for anyone supplying alcohol. In Victoria, only some staff in licensed venues are required to have RSA. RSA must be refreshed every 3 years.
- As of December 2025, you must complete SHARPR module to receive Liquor Control Victoria’s RSA Certificate of Completion.

Activity: Responsibilities

List the benefits of serving alcohol responsibly for the following persons:

For staff:

For customers:

For the community:

For the business:

Module 1: Victorian liquor laws

This section discusses Victorian liquor laws. It is important to know which laws apply when supplying alcohol in Victoria and the most common liquor licence types.

Every year, excessive alcohol consumption is a contributing factor in thousands of hospitalisations and fatalities across the state. It leads to billions of dollars in lost productivity and significant healthcare costs for Victorians. It can cause heavy strain on families and communities and leads to anti-social behaviour, increased injuries, accidents, violence, abuse and sometimes, death.

Excessive drinking can lower inhibitions, impair a person's judgement and increase the risk of aggressive behaviours. According to Turning Point, during the 2022/23 period, there were:

- 36,764 alcohol-related hospitalisations
- 8,966 alcohol-related family violence incidents
- 6,562 alcohol-related assaults reported to Victoria Police.

In 2022/23, Turning Point reported **2,042 alcohol-related serious road injuries**, all happening during the known high alcohol risk hours of Friday and Saturday between 8pm and 6am. Additionally, in 2022 there were **942 alcohol-related deaths** registered in Victoria alone.

Victorian liquor laws

In Victoria, the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* (the Act) controls the sale and supply of alcohol. Any person or organisation that intends to sell, offer, or provide liquor in Victoria must have a liquor licence, but there are some exceptions.

The Act has several objectives. Its main objective is harm minimisation. 'Harm minimisation' involves focusing on the negative health, economic and social impacts of alcohol on both individuals and the community.

The Act aims to minimise harm by:

- controlling the sale and consumption of alcohol
- ensuring the sale of alcohol contributes to, and does not detract from, the amenity of community life
- restricting the supply of certain alcoholic products
- encouraging a responsible alcohol-drinking culture.

The Act also encourages diversity among licensed businesses and contributes to the responsible development of Victoria's hospitality and live music industries.

The Act sets out what licensees and staff can and cannot do, including:

- the hours alcohol can be supplied
- where alcohol can be supplied and how
- when minors can be at your venue
- requirements for delivering alcohol
- who is required to complete the RSA course and how often
- penalties for not complying with the Act.

The following is a list of legislation that applies to liquor regulation in Victoria.

Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (the Act)

Sets out obligations for licensees and staff of licensed venues and outlines penalties for breaking the law. It includes licence types and some of the requirements for licence holders. It outlines the role of a liquor regulator and its powers in regulating the liquor industry.

The Act prohibits the retail supply of alcohol-based food essences that are:

- in the case of vanilla essence, in a container of more than 100ml
- in the case of any other essence, in a container of more than 50ml.

Liquor Control Reform Regulations 2023

The regulations supplement the Act and include information that must be submitted with an application for a liquor licence, application and renewal fee amounts, and security camera standards.

Liquor Control Reform (Prohibited Supply) Regulations 2025

These regulations prohibit the supply of certain types of alcohol in Victoria. For example:

- alcoholic low-fat milk products
- alcoholic vapour
- certain liquor supplied in flexible tubes
- liquor that is a dry, soluble, concentrated substance (powdered alcohol).

These products are prohibited due to their potential to appeal to minors. The Victorian Liquor Commission, at times, can ban an alcohol product whose advertising and or packaging has appeal to minors, for example, 'Hard Solo' was the most recent case.

Liquor Control Reform (Wholesale Liquor Supply Information) Regulations 2015

These regulations outline the requirements to report wholesale liquor sales data.

Liquor Control Reform (Prescribed Class of Premises) Regulations 2008

These regulations outline the requirements for video shops to gain ministerial approval for a licence to be granted.

Key liquor regulatory agencies

With more than 23,000 liquor licences in circulation annually and accessibility of alcohol for purchase and consumption, the government has a role to play in ensuring harm from supply is minimised. Three key liquor regulatory agencies are responsible for regulating and enforcing liquor supply in Victoria.

Liquor Control Victoria

The Victorian Liquor Commission (the Commission) delivers licensing, compliance, investigative, disciplinary and other regulatory functions under the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* (the Act) and regulations relating to the supply and consumption of liquor in Victoria. The Commission is supported in delivering these functions by the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) business unit staff. The Commission and staff from DJCS are called Liquor Control Victoria (LCV).

To find out more about LCV visit vic.gov.au/liquor-regulation-victoria.

Victoria Police

The role of the Victoria Police is to serve the Victorian community and uphold the law to promote a safe, secure and orderly society. The police are responsible for the ongoing enforcement of liquor

laws. Liquor licence applications are sent to Victoria Police for comment, and they may object to an application on any grounds they see fit.

To find out more about Victoria Police visit police.vic.gov.au/.

Local government

Local government enables the economic, social, and cultural development of its municipal area. It supports individuals and groups, providing a wide range of services to promote the local community's well-being. Victorian councils have roles and responsibilities under more than 100 Victorian Acts and regulations. Your local council issues permits for the use of land and can inspect liquor licensed venues to ensure compliance with any local laws.

To find out more about your local council visit vic.gov.au/know-your-council#.

Key obligations under the Act to minimise high-risk harms

The Act outlines the minimum obligations a licensee or staff at licensed venues must adhere to. If you are a licence holder or person working in a licensed venue, there will be other actions you can take to ensure the risk of alcohol is minimised. Both owners and workers have a responsibility to maintain the safety of licensed venues and to ensure people who are at risk of harm are not supplied with alcohol.

The key actions and obligations to minimising harm in any licensed venues are:

- do not sell, serve, or supply minors with alcohol.
- do not allow drunk people on the premises.
- do not serve an intoxicated person.

In Victoria, it is against the law to serve alcohol to an intoxicated customer. The intoxicated customer is allowed to enter and remain on licensed premises as long as they are not served alcohol.

As of 7 November 2023, Victoria introduced the Public intoxication reform, removing public drunkenness as a crime. Under the reform, if an intoxicated person is in a public place, they can be assisted to a place of safety through available support services.

For more information on available services, please visit health.vic.gov.au/alcohol-and-drugs/new-public-intoxication-response-services.

Offences and non-compliance with regulation

As a licensed venue, it's crucial to comply with the Act to avoid receiving fines. These fines are generally issued to a licensee. An employee may receive a fine for serving a person under 18 or an intoxicated customer.

Responsible licensees with no record of non-compliant incidents within 2 or more years receive discounts on annual renewal fees. However, if a licensee commits a non-compliant incident, they are subject to higher renewal fees. If a licensee commits more than 5 non-compliant incidents, their licence will be automatically suspended.

A non-compliant incident is an incident where a licensed premises has:

- supplied liquor to an intoxicated person
- permitted a drunken/disorderly person on a licensed premises
- supplied liquor or permitted liquor to be supplied to an underage person
- permitted an underage person on licensed premises when not permitted by law.

For more information on the demerit points and star rating system visit vic.gov.au/demerit-points-and-star-ratings-for-licensees.

The impact of non-compliance is far more significant than receiving a fine. The effect of serving alcohol to a person who is at risk can have a long-lasting consequence on that person, their family, community, the person serving and the licensee. Responsible service of alcohol is in everyone's interest.

Most common offences relating to the sale or service of alcohol, which can result in a fine or other sanctions, are summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Most common liquor offences

Offence	Maximum penalty
Supply liquor to an intoxicated person	\$24,421
Allow drunk or disorderly persons on licensed premises	\$24,421
For a drunk, violent, quarrelsome person to refuse a request to leave a licensed premises	\$10,176
Supply liquor to a person under 18	\$24,421
Supply liquor to a person under 18 by an employee	\$4,070
Allow someone else to supply liquor to a person under 18	\$24,421
For persons under 18 to purchase, receive, possess, or consume liquor	\$1,018
Failure to display mandatory signage and liquor licence	\$1,018
Failure to display liquor licence	\$1,018
Failure to have a red line plan available for inspection	\$2,035
Failure to comply with a licence condition	\$12,211
Failure by licensee to ensure that staff complete an approved RSA training program	\$12,211

For a complete list of offences, visit vic.gov.au/liquor-offences-and-fines.

Most common liquor licences

In Victoria, a licence is required to sell or supply liquor. A person, partnership, company or body corporate can apply for a licence. Applications are made to LCV and, in most cases, will require a local council planning permit.

The Act outlines various liquor licence types. Each licence type outlines how liquor can be supplied. The most common liquor licence types are listed below.

General or late night general – allows alcohol to be sold for drinking on and off the premises. Most commonly, pubs and bars.

On-premises or late night on-premises – allows alcohol to be supplied for drinking on the premises – most commonly nightclubs and bars.

Restaurant and cafe – allows alcohol to be supplied for drinking on the premises and for take away or home delivery. The main activity must be preparing and serving meals.

Packaged liquor – a supply of packaged alcohol for people to take away and consume elsewhere. Most commonly, bottle shops.

Full club – allows alcohol to be supplied to club members to drink on the premises and take away and for members' guests to drink on the premises. Most commonly, they are RSLs and larger sporting or community clubs.

Restricted club – alcohol to be supplied to club members to drink on the premises. Most commonly, sporting and community clubs.

Producer's – supply for drinking the licensee's own product on the premises or taking it away, supply of all types of alcohol for customers to drink on the premises and supply to licence holders. Most commonly, wineries and breweries.

BYO permit – a restaurant, club, or party bus permitting customers to bring alcohol.

Some businesses are exempt from applying for a liquor licence if they meet specific requirements. They are:

- bed and breakfasts
- florist or giftmaker
- hairdressers
- butchers
- hospitals
- residential care services
- retirement villages
- cruise ships.

Understanding a liquor licence

A liquor licence allows you to supply alcohol in Victoria. A licence is issued for a calendar year and is renewed annually.

It is essential to understand the liquor licence conditions at the venue or store where you work. The conditions on the licence are included to reduce harm to the alcohol supply. These are minimum obligations you must adhere to.

It is a requirement to display a licence where your customers and liquor inspectors can see it. By displaying the licence in your venue or store, you can refer to it anytime. It is your responsibility as a staff member or licensee to know the conditions of the licence. As a venue manager, ensure your staff and security know your licence conditions.

Below is an example of a restaurant and cafe sample licence, which shows the types of conditions and what they mean.

For more information visit: [vic.gov.au/understand-your-liquor-liquor-licence](http://vic.gov.au/understand-your-liquor-licence).

You are responsible for your customers when they are at your venue and as they leave (this includes immediate footpath area).

If you have special conditions listed on your licence, you must comply with them, or you will be committing an offence.

The maximum number of permitted customers (patrons) prevents overcrowding and minimises impacts on surroundings for example noise.
If you allow more people than stated, you are committing an offence.

If you have approval to supply alcohol in a footpath dining area it will be listed here.

This approval allows supply of liquor during catering for social receptions or functions at another location other than the licensed premises (offsite).

Liquor Control Victoria

Liquor Licence 2026
Victorian Liquor Commission
 Section 101, Liquor Control Reform Act 1998

RESTAURANT AND CAFE LICENCE

Licence No. 32304387

Subject to the provisions of the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 and any conditions specified in the licence, the licensee is authorised to supply liquor up to and including 31 December 2026

Licensee	RED DUCK PTY LTD (ACN : 111 222 333)	Licensed premises address	5 GREEN STREET RICHMOND 3121
Address for service of notices	5 GREEN STREET RICHMOND 3121		
Trading as	RED DUCK CAFE		

Additional person(s) endorsed on licence
 JOHN CITIZEN – approved as nominee, and is liable as if the licensee, until ceasing to manage and control the licensed premises

GENERAL INFORMATION
 Holding a liquor licence doesn't override local laws or planning rules. Licensees must follow all planning permit conditions, even if they are more restrictive than the conditions set out on your liquor licence.

Any reference to the Liquor Regulator below is a reference to the Victorian Liquor Commission, or any successor statutory office, body or officer however named, under the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 or successor legislation, that has powers and carries out regulatory functions equivalent to the Victorian Liquor Commission.

TYPE OF LICENCE
 This licence is a restaurant and cafe licence and authorises the licensee to supply liquor on the licensed premises for consumption on the licensed premises during the trading hours specified below.

RESTAURANT & CAFE CONDITIONS
 This licence is subject to the following conditions:

- a) the predominant activity carried out at all times on the licensed premises must be the preparation and serving of meals for consumption on the licensed premises; and
- b) tables and chairs must be placed in position on the licensed premises so as to be available for at least 75% of the patrons attending the premises at any one time; and
- c) the licensee must not permit -
 - i. the live performance of any musical works; or
 - ii. the playing of any recorded musical works - on the premises at higher than background music level at any time outside ordinary trading hours.

Condition (c) does not apply to music performed or played on the licensed premises outside ordinary trading hours as part of a function that is held in an area of the premises that is set aside for the exclusive use of persons who have booked a table in that area and their guests, and is attended only by those persons and their guests.

AMENITY
 The licensee shall not cause or permit undue detriment to the amenity of the area to arise out of or in connection with the use of the premises to which the licence relates during or immediately after the trading hours authorised under this licence.

SPECIAL CONDITION
 The windows facing Brown Street are to be shut and remain shut after 9pm on any day.

MAXIMUM CAPACITIES
 Internal (52 patrons) External (73 patrons)

TRADING HOURS

Sunday	Between 10am and 1am the following morning
Good Friday and ANZAC Day	Between 12noon and 1am the following morning
On any other day	Between 7am and 1am the following morning

APPROVALS/CONSENTS

Section 9(1)(b)/9A(1)(b)/11A(3)(b) Footpath/External Area. The licensee is authorised to supply liquor on premises, other than the licensed premises, authorised by the Liquor Regulator and shown on the approved plan during the hours specified under "Trading Hours" for consumption on those premises.

Section 9(1)(b)/9A(1)(b) Off Site Catering. The licensee is authorised to supply liquor in the course of catering for social receptions or social functions on premises other than the licensed premises during the hours specified under "Trading Hours" for consumption on those premises.

End of Conditions - Printed on 01/01/2026

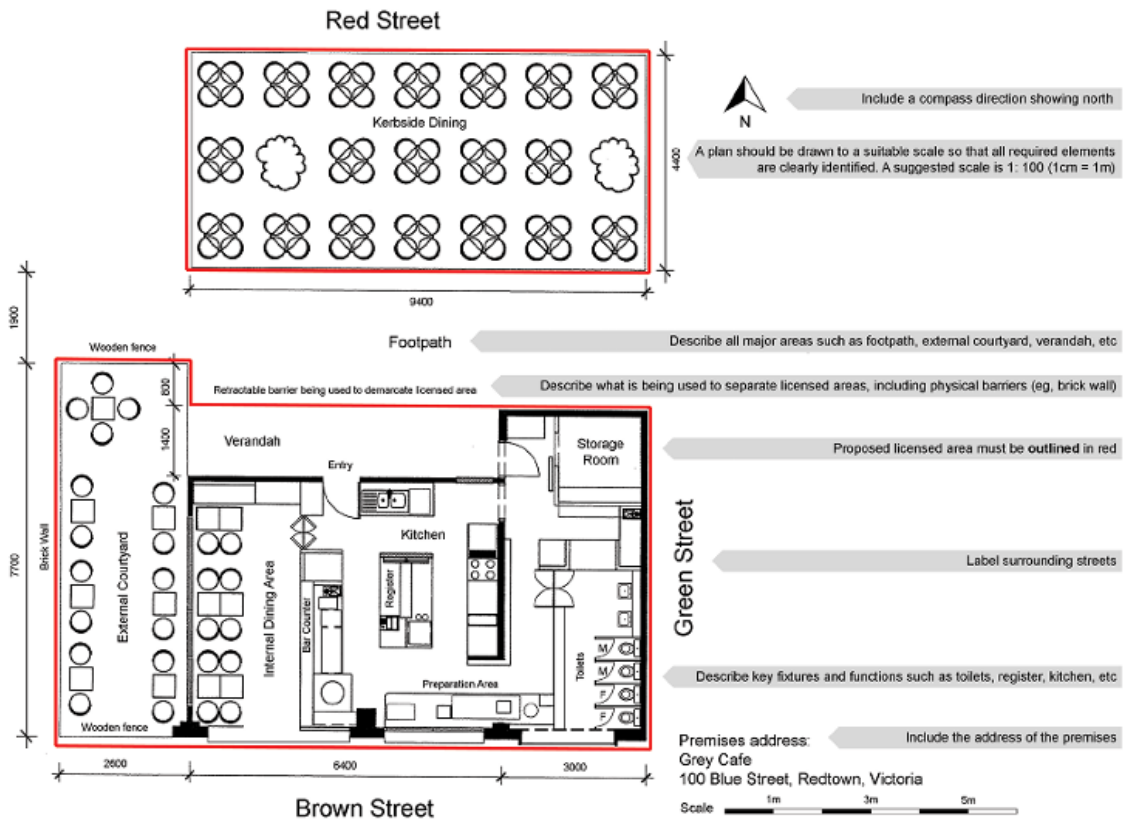
Liquor Control Victoria
 E: contact@liquor.vic.gov.au P: 1300 182 457
 M: GPO Box 4356, Melbourne 3001 W: liquor.vic.gov.au

This licence must be displayed in a conspicuous place on the licensed premises, in a manner that invites public attention.

Red line plan

A red line plan is the plan approved by LCV when a licence is granted. The red line plan shows where in a venue or store alcohol can be supplied or consumed.

A copy of the approved plan must be available for inspection on request by a member of Victoria Police or an LCV inspector. Failure to keep a copy of the plan on the licensed premises or produce a copy of the plan for inspection could result in a fine being issued.



Trading hours

All liquor licences in Victoria contain approved trading hours when a licensee is allowed to sell, serve, or supply alcohol. The trading hours for most liquor licences will include ordinary trading hours stated in the Act and any additional hours LCV granted.

If your licence has trading hours for specific areas of the venue, you must comply with those specific trading hours.

You can supply alcohol during the times shown on your liquor licence only if your planning permit allows you to trade during those times.

You have 30 minutes after closing time for customers to finish purchased drinks. During this time, you cannot sell them any more alcohol.

For more information on trading hours during key holiday dates, visit vic.gov.au/public-holiday-trading-for-licensed-venues.

Amenity – monitoring noise and disturbance

Amenity is the impact a venue and its customers may have on the surrounding area. The Act defines the amenity of an area as the 'quality that the area has of being pleasant and agreeable'.

LCV often receives complaints from residents regarding noise and disturbance from licensed venues. You can put some things in place to monitor noise and disturbance around your venue.

As a staff member:

- know your licence conditions
- consider how loud the music is being played
- monitor customer capacity
- observe the behaviour of your customers and don't serve them when they're intoxicated
- offer water and non-alcoholic drinks to customers who appear to be getting louder
- offer safe transport options to customers who are leaving and showing signs of intoxication
- remove empty glasses or bottles from tables, especially where customers are getting louder
- consider the time you empty bins and how this will impact your neighbours.

As a licensee:

- explain to your staff how they can monitor noise and what to do when noise levels become excessive – closing doors, windows, drawing curtains, lowering sound
- consider the location and source of the sound within the venue and how sound emanates from the venue
- manage the times when alcohol is delivered or bottles are removed
- employ security guards to monitor noise and disturbance as customers are leaving
- monitor the effectiveness of your control measures such as soundproofing, electronic noise limiting devices, and other processes for reducing noise.

For more information visit: <https://www.vic.gov.au/stay-compliant-for-liquor-licensees>

Summary

- Liquor Control Victoria regulates the liquor industry in Victoria.
- Minimum obligations for licensed venues are set out in liquor laws.
- There are restrictions on the sale of some liquor products in Victoria.
- It is important to know your licence conditions and restrictions on trading hours, patron numbers and amenity.

Activity: Understanding liquor licence

A local resident lives 200 metres from your venue and complains that the noise coming from your venue late at night is affecting their sleep. What licence condition might you be breaching? How would you respond?

A woman purchases a bottle of wine in your store. She explains that she is on her way to a picnic and doesn't have a corkscrew and asks you to open the bottle for her. Will you be in breach of your licence if you open the bottle for her?

Yes

No

Explain your answer

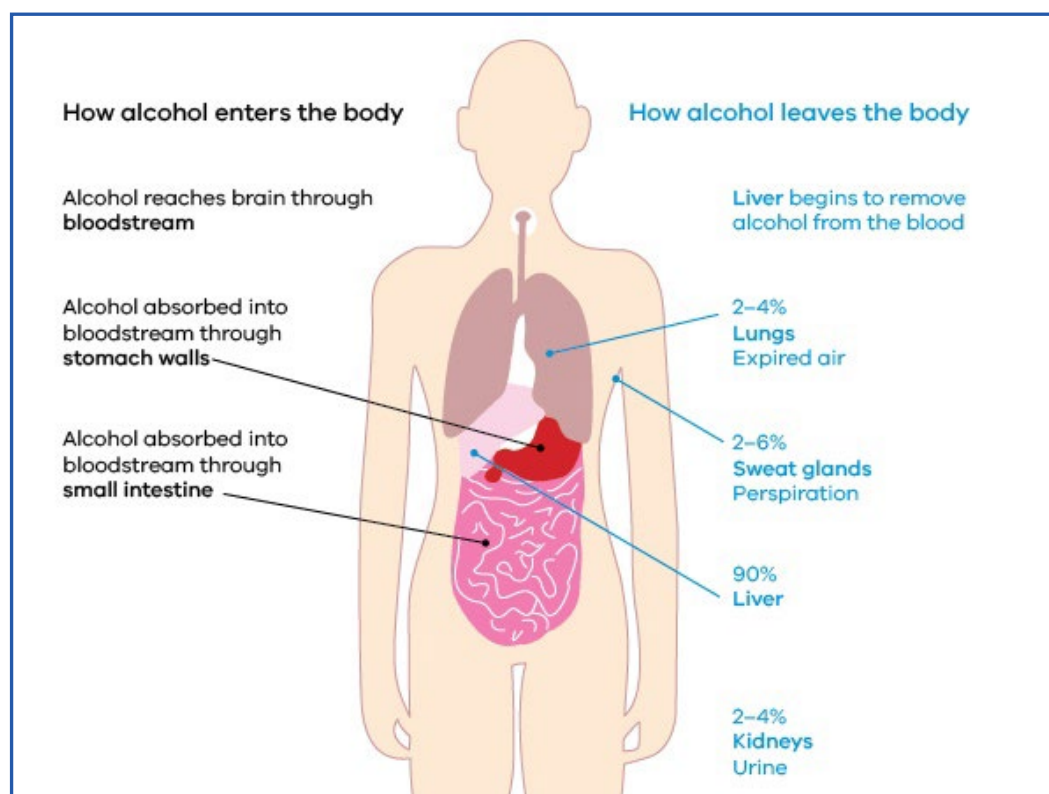
Module 2: Alcohol consumption effects and impacts

This section discusses some facts about consuming alcohol. You are not expected to become an expert on alcohol; however, it is essential to know the effects of the product you are serving. You will find this information helpful when working in a licensed venue.

Alcohol is a dangerous product. If a person drinks alcohol to the extent that the body cannot process it, it is called alcohol poisoning, which can result in severe illness and could lead to death. It is essential people supplying alcohol understand how much alcohol they are providing to their customers.

Blood alcohol concentration

As a person drinks, alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream. It is absorbed through the stomach walls and the intestines. The bloodstream carries the alcohol to every body part, including the brain. One of the first effects of alcohol is the loss of judgement and inhibitions.



Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream. It is measured by grams of alcohol in 100mls of blood. For example, a BAC of .05 means .05 grams of alcohol in 100ml of blood.

BAC rises as more alcohol is consumed. Moments after it is consumed, alcohol can be found in all tissues, organs, and secretions of the body. Alcohol in carbonated drinks, such as sparkling wines and mixed drinks, usually enters the bloodstream more quickly, so the effects of alcohol in these carbonated drinks are felt more quickly. The effects of alcohol are also felt much faster on an empty stomach.

The more alcohol consumed, the more impaired the functioning of the brain. As BAC increases, there may be a temporary loss of coordination, affecting a person's sense of balance or ability to judge distances. People who drink regularly can develop a tolerance to the effects of alcohol and may not appear or feel drunk despite having a high BAC.

Factors affecting BAC

Many factors affect BAC. Some of the physical factors affecting BAC are:

Sex: females tend to have a slightly higher BAC than men after drinking the same amount because they have less body fluid to dilute the alcohol.

Size: smaller people are affected more than larger people for the same reason.

Fitness level: it may take longer for a fit person with more muscle tissue and less fat to be affected by alcohol, as lean muscle tissue contains around 65 per cent more water than body fat.

Health: being tired, ill, or stressed may affect a person's reaction to alcohol. The central nervous system is under stress when a person is tired or sick. Alcohol is a depressant and places more stress on the body's systems, which may result in the person being more quickly affected by alcohol.

Age: as a person ages, their total body water tends to decrease, so a given amount of alcohol will produce a higher BAC.

Some other factors are:

Drinking on an empty stomach: if there is food in the stomach, alcohol will mix with the food before passing to the small intestine. This slows down the alcohol absorption into the blood. Eventually, all the alcohol consumed will be absorbed into the blood and will travel around the body, but the BAC will not rise to the same levels as it would if the person had not eaten.

Medication: many medications will interact with alcohol. This increases the potential for losing control of behaviour and can be dangerous. People should avoid drinking alcohol when taking medication.

Illicit drugs: mixing illegal drugs, such as cannabis, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, or ecstasy, with alcohol can have dangerous and even lethal consequences. People should avoid mixing alcohol and drugs.

Rate of drinking: if a person drinks alcohol quickly, it will have a more significant effect because they are drinking at a faster rate than their body can remove it.

Psychological: an unhappy or depressed state of mind may be increased when a person drinks alcohol.

Drink and drive limits in Victoria

In Victoria, some drivers must drive with a **zero BAC** (for example, those that have a learner permit or probationary licence, driving instructors, bus drivers, heavy vehicle truck drivers).

Other drivers (for example, those holding a full driver licence must drive with a **BAC below .05**).

For more information, visit vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-rules/penalties/drink-driving-penalties

Effects and impacts of alcohol

Intoxication begins when the first drink of alcohol is consumed and commences its passage through the human body. When alcohol builds up in a person's bloodstream, it can significantly affect the drinker's understanding of events and their outward behaviour. The body quickly absorbs alcohol. However, the exact time the body will take to absorb alcohol will vary from one person to another.

Alcohol can affect a person's health, including emotional and physical states and can impact a person's productivity.

Lack of judgement, distortion of sense and perception, memory lapses, temporarily feeling relaxed, less anxious, or more confident are examples of some of the emotional responses to alcohol intake.

Loss of coordination, vomiting, injury (to oneself or others), slurred speech, fatigue (tiredness), and risky sexual behaviour can often be observed as physical signs of alcohol consumption. Some of these effects can also mimic other health conditions.

Drinking alcohol can also lower productivity as a person's concentration is reduced and decision-making is impaired.

Impact of excessive drinking on an individual

The effects of a single occasion of excessive drinking on an individual can include:

- **Lowered inhibitions**, which can lead to reduced self-awareness and impaired functioning, more drinking and blackouts.
- **Interpersonal conflict**, as alcohol can intensify emotions, which can lead to increased arguments, violent outbursts, and controlling behaviours.
- **Behaviour changes** due to loss of impulse control, such as inability to stop drinking, changes in motivation and becoming violent.
- **Falls and accidents**, as alcohol can impair a person's judgment and coordination, which can increase the risk of falls.
- **Hangover** that can last up to 24 hours, with symptoms such as headache, fatigue, stomach pain, tiredness, and trouble concentrating.
- **Alcohol poisoning** that includes vomiting, nausea, loss of consciousness, slow breathing, and aggression. Call 000 for assistance.

If a person continues to consume alcohol above the recommended guidelines, the following **long-term effects** of alcohol consumption can be a result of continued use:

- mental health issues such as increased risk of suicide
- alcohol dependency, especially if a person has depression or anxiety or a family history of alcohol dependence
- increased risk of diabetes and weight gain
- impotence and other problems with sexual performance
- cancers such as stomach cancer, bowel cancer, breast cancer, mouth cancer, throat cancer, oesophageal cancer and liver cancer
- fertility issues such as reduced sperm count and reduced testosterone levels in men
- brain damage and brain-related conditions such as stroke and dementia
- heart issues such as high blood pressure, heart damage and heart attacks
- cirrhosis of the liver and liver failure.

For more information visit adf.org.au/insights/health-impacts-alcohol/.

Customers at heightened risk from alcohol use

Some customers are at a heightened risk from alcohol use. Drinking any or excessive amounts of alcohol may impact these customers negatively.

- **Children and young people.** Supply of alcohol to people under 18 is not permitted. People under 18 years of age are more likely to suffer harm from alcohol.
- **A person who is pregnant or breastfeeding** should avoid drinking alcohol, as the baby's blood receives about the same level of alcohol as the mother's blood.
- **People with alcohol use disorders** who are heavy drinkers and are unable to control their alcohol intake.

- **People with mental health conditions** are vulnerable to developing alcohol use disorder, which can worsen existing conditions or cause the development of new ones.
- **People affected by the consumption of illicit and other drugs when drinking and** combining alcohol and other drugs (for example, sleeping pills, heroin and cannabis) can:
 - affect clear thinking
 - make moving harder to coordinate
 - increase the risk of fatal respiratory failure.

A person who has taken illicit or other drugs may show erratic behaviour, which is not directly associated with consuming alcohol.

What is Blood Alcohol Concentration?

Summary

- BAC measures the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream.
- Alcohol affects each person differently.
- Alcohol can have short and long term impacts on a person, generally it can affect person's health (physical and mental health) and relationships.
- Some customers are at heightened risk from alcohol use.

Module 3: Intoxication

This section explains the laws regarding intoxicated customers, how to prevent intoxication and the signs to look out for to identify whether a customer is intoxicated.

The government has a role in introducing legislation and regulations to protect the community and encourage appropriate alcohol use.

Intoxication is defined in Section 3AB (1) of the Act as:

A person is in a state of intoxication if their speech, balance, coordination or behaviour is noticeably affected, and there are reasonable grounds for believing that this is the result of the consumption of liquor.

Intoxication is a contributing factor in many social problems:

- assaults
- family violence
- road deaths
- accidents and falls
- chronic illness.

This results in costs to the community for:

- our hospitals
- emergency departments
- city streets
- ambulances
- police stations
- homes of our families and friends.

It is an offence to supply liquor to a person in a state of intoxication. In deciding whether to charge a licensee with supplying liquor to a person in a state of intoxication, a police officer or an LCV inspector will observe the behaviour of the customer to see whether they are showing signs of intoxication. A staff member can be fined for providing liquor to an intoxicated person, as well.

LCV is required to issue guidelines containing information that assists in determining if a person is in a state of intoxication.

The Intoxication Guidelines can be viewed in full at vic.gov.au/managing-intoxicated-customers.

You can also access additional information on identifying intoxicated patrons, what to do if someone is intoxicated, and ways of helping reduce the risk of intoxication.

Preventing intoxication

Licensees and staff are responsible for preventing customers from becoming intoxicated.

Licensees are responsible for putting a control system to monitor and assess people trying to enter your premises for signs of intoxication. You must ensure alcohol is served, supplied and promoted in a way that maintains a safe environment in and around your venue.

As a staff member serving and supplying alcohol, you have a crucial role in preventing intoxication and a person harming themselves or another person. Your awareness of your customers and attention to serving alcohol can make a difference and save lives. Always be alert as to what is happening in your venue or shop.

Know what you are serving – standard drink

Alcohol is a drug that depresses the central nervous system. It slows down the part of the brain that controls behaviour. While people become more outgoing after a few drinks, it is the loss of control over their behaviour that becomes a concern.

The intoxicating ingredient in alcoholic drinks is ethyl alcohol, also known as ethanol or pure alcohol. This ingredient is common in all alcoholic beverages, but it occurs in different concentrations in each alcoholic drink, such as beer, wine, and spirits.

In your venue or store, you will have a range of products (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) of various strengths and volumes. As part of your customer service role, knowing what is available for purchase and the difference between each product will assist you in serving your customers and helping them make an informed decision when ordering and purchasing.

Each alcoholic product will have a label showing the standard drink size. A standard drink is typically defined as a drink containing approximately 10 grams of pure alcohol. A standard drink and a standard-sized glass are not the same thing.

Determining how many standard drinks are served will depend on the volume expressed in millilitres and the strength of alcohol expressed in percentages.

The alcohol percentage will vary based on brand and type of drink. For example, beers can have strength from 2.7% to 4.8%, wines typically have strength from 11.5% to 13.5%, ready to drink spirits (RTD) typically from 4% to 7%.

A serving of 100ml of wine with a strength of 13.5% is approximately one standard drink. If 150ml of the same wine were served, this would be approximately 1.6 standard drinks.

All beverages with an alcohol content of more than 0.5% must include on the label the number of standard drinks and the percentage of alcohol (alc/vol). Always read the label so you know what you are serving.

The formula for calculating standard drinks is:

$$\text{Volume (in ml)} \times \% \text{ Alcohol} / 1000 \times 0.789$$

For more information on standard drinks, please visit [health.gov.au/topics/alcohol/about-alcohol/standard-drinks-guide](https://www.health.gov.au/topics/alcohol/about-alcohol/standard-drinks-guide).

To lessen health and safety risks, the National Health and Medical Research Council recommends the following levels for safe consumption:

- **For healthy men and women**, drinking no more than two standard drinks on any day reduces the lifetime risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury.
- **For healthy men and women**, drinking no more than four standard drinks on a single occasion reduces the risk of alcohol-related injury arising from that occasion.
- **For children and people under 18 years of age**, parents and carers should be advised children and people under 18 years of age are at the most significant risk of harm from drinking. Not drinking alcohol at this age is especially important.
- **For women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy**, not drinking is the safest option.
- **For women who are breastfeeding**, not drinking is the safest option.

They also note:

- human brains continue to develop until around the age of 25 years and are particularly sensitive to alcohol
- drinking alcohol is a contributor to the leading causes of death among adolescents, including road accidents, injuries, and suicides. It also contributes to risk-taking.

Approximately 10 grams of pure alcohol are contained in how many mls of the following drinks?

Drink **ml**

Beer (3.5%)

Wine (13.5%)

Spirits (40%)

Port (17.5%)

Drinking no more than _____ standard drinks on a single occasion reduces the risk of alcohol-related injury.

Provide information to your customers

You can inform your customers about the drinks you sell in various ways.

Drink lists, menus, product promotional material, websites, and drink labels all assist customers in identifying what they are being served or what they can buy. You can also use these to commence conversations about the products you are selling or serving.

Posters are another example of a compelling reminder to your customers about their obligations and what they are consuming. Some posters include a website where customers can get more information.

You can use posters to:

- encourage customers to drink within appropriate limits
- offer information on standard drink sizing when customers are ordering drinks
- remind customers of their legal obligation if they are driving.



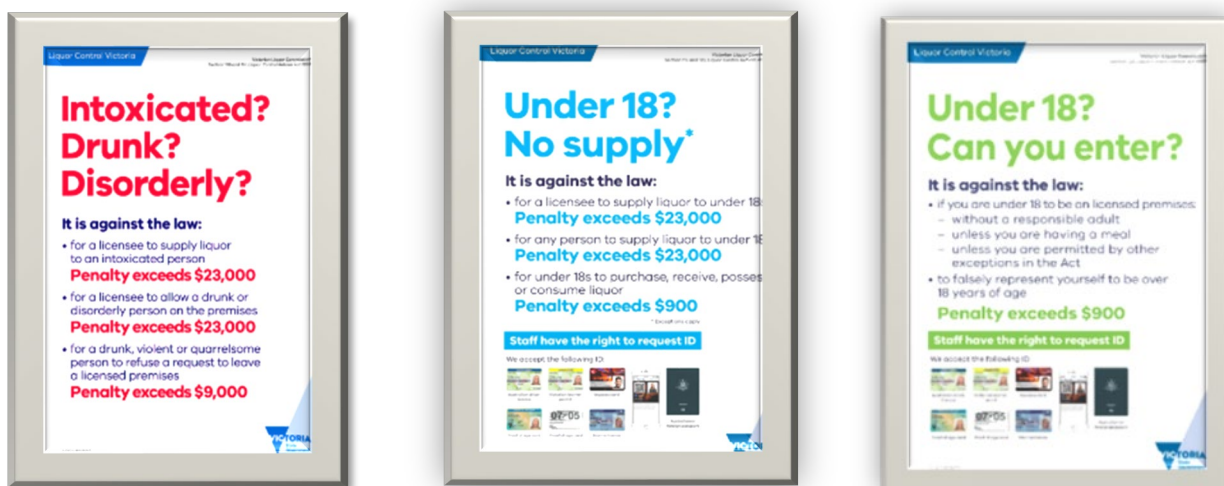
The above posters are available at drinkwise.org.au/about-us/resources/# and nrsp.org.au/resources/standard-drinks-posters/.

Visual and verbal reminders

Licensees must display mandatory signage required by LCV. The signage informs customers of legal requirements and maximum penalties for breaking liquor laws. Signage can assist you in serving alcohol responsibly. Make sure it is displayed in a visible place.

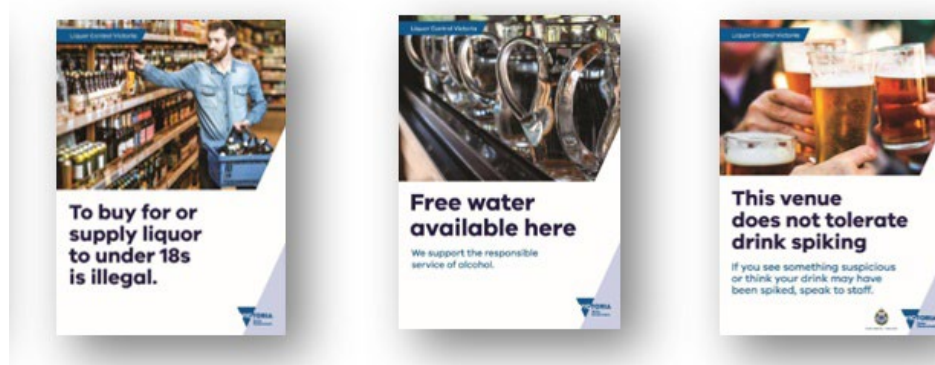
The signage can help:

- tell your customers what you expect of them while at your venue
- convey to customers alcohol service will be refused to follow the law
- enforce responsible service of alcohol laws.



For more information on signage visit: vic.gov.au/signs-to-display-where-customers-buy-alcohol.

LCV has additional signage licensees may wish to display at their venue. This signage and mandatory signage can be used to remind your customers visually and verbally about your obligations regarding the responsible serving of alcohol.



Encourage responsible drinking

Responsible service of alcohol can lead to a more profitable and attractive venue and can also reduce staff turnover. When intoxicated customers are avoided, staff members can have a more pleasant work experience.

The management is responsible for creating a safe and low-risk environment by implementing policies with their staff that prevent intoxication and underage drinking. Each staff member is responsible for adhering to those policies and the law.

Some effective strategies to prevent intoxication and encourage responsible drinking include the following:

Promote low-alcohol drinks: Sales of low-alcohol beer have increased over recent years. Under normal drinking conditions, it is difficult for customers to exceed .05 BAC when drinking low-alcohol beer. Promoting low-alcohol drinks could also provide a commercial opportunity for licensees. A licensee can sell increased amounts of low-alcohol beverages while being socially responsible.

Promote non-alcoholic drinks: Many venues have found non-alcoholic drinks can be sold if they are properly promoted. Staff are in the best position to encourage non-alcoholic beverages.

Offer free water: Provide free drinking water to customers upon request and serve water with drinks. Under the Act, licensees must provide suitable free drinking water to customers where alcohol is consumed on-site.

Have food available: Serving food helps prevent problems in two ways: it slows the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream and slows down drinking, as when customers eat, they are likely to drink less.

Some venues offer free snacks between mealtimes because customers who drop in after work will likely have an empty stomach. In general, customers appreciate well-priced, interesting snacks.

Sales techniques: Licensees may reconsider bulk sales, such as using jugs. They may also consider alternatives to happy hours. If a happy hour is a regular practice, consider promoting light beer only.

Other strategies include:

- wait for the patron to re-order and don't automatically fill up drinks
- slow service down – keep yourself busy attending to other patrons or cleaning
- point to the relevant sign outlining your responsibilities
- alert other staff
- talk to patrons and gauge the level of intoxication.

Train staff regularly: Ensure staff know the signs of intoxication to look out for and what constitutes a standard serving size of alcohol.

Avoid inappropriate promotions: Ensure alcohol is promoted responsibly (for example, reconsider happy hours or all-you-can-drink promotions).

Assessing intoxication

Observing your customer's behaviour is crucial in assessing if a person is intoxicated.

Where possible, observe customers entering your venue when ordering or purchasing alcohol. The following changes in behavioural or emotional state can be indicators of the person being in a state of intoxication:

- becoming loud, boisterous
- becoming argumentative
- annoying other patrons and staff
- using offensive language
- spilling drinks
- fumbling and difficulty in picking up objects
- swaying
- difficulty walking straight
- bumping into furniture or customers
- rambling conversation
- loss of train of thought

- difficulty in paying attention
- not hearing or understanding what is being said
- drowsiness or dozing while sitting at a bar or table.

It would be best if you also considered whether this is the result of the consumption of alcohol by evaluating information such as:

- How much alcohol have you witnessed the person drink?
- Information about how much the person has had to drink
- Does the person smell of alcohol?

Conditions exhibiting similar symptoms and signs of intoxication

Sometimes, physical and mental disabilities show some of the same signs and symptoms as alcohol intoxication. Consider the possibility of the existence of such conditions before refusing service on the basis that a person is intoxicated.

Some health conditions can mimic signs of intoxication.				
Intoxication signs	Diabetes	Epilepsy	Traumatic brain injury	Dementia
Disorientation	✓			✓
Inability to concentrate, focus	✓		✓	
Hostility, aggressive behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sudden mood change	✓			✓
Difficulty speaking or slurring speech			✓	✓
Dizziness	✓	✓	✓	

Believing a person is intoxicated

There is no requirement for a person to be intoxicated to refuse service. The law only requires there be 'reasonable grounds' for the belief that the person is intoxicated because of alcohol consumption. You can refuse service to a person based on this belief, even if you are wrong.

Reasonable grounds for belief are what a reasonable person would believe in the given situation, considering the relevant knowledge, facts you have and the circumstances you are in.

A belief can be formed based on observing the physical signs and symptoms, talking to the person and their friends, and then considering whether such symptoms could result from alcohol consumption or another condition.

Erratic drinking practices

Engaging in conversation with customers can be a helpful tool in determining their intent to become intoxicated.

Observing their behaviour, listening to what they are saying, and asking questions, such as if they are celebrating a special occasion or have been to a big event, can provide valuable insight into their prior access to alcohol. Being proactive in this way can help prevent over-serving and ensure responsible service of alcohol.

Once they commence ordering, be aware of the following erratic drinking patterns which can lead to customer becoming intoxicated:

- mixing a wide range of drink types
- drinking quickly and drinking in quick succession. For example, two people order four drinks or a large round of shots at a time.
- ordering more than one drink for one's consumption
- consistently returning to the tasting site to request more samples
- ordering multiple or large samples
- ordering 'triple shots' or extra-large drinks.

Recognising signs of intoxication in a bottle shop

The same laws previously discussed apply to packaged liquor licences, and alcohol cannot be sold to a person in a state of intoxication.

In a bottle shop, monitor regular customers' behaviours and purchase patterns. Depending on how often alcohol is being purchased, you may need to refuse service.

When regular customers come into your bottle shop, consider the following:

- how regularly they purchase alcohol from you
- are they purchasing multiple times a day/week and purchasing a high quantity or high potency of alcohol?

Use the DirectLine poster that can be downloaded from vic.gov.au/optional-signage-DirectLine.pdf and display it in your store to encourage a conversation with your customer about seeking help.

As a customer enters through the door, consider whether they are showing signs of intoxication. For example, you can assess whether the customer:

- smells of alcohol
- is loud and boisterous
- is swaying or rambling when speaking
- is using offensive language
- is unable to handle money (fumbling with cards or money).

If you suspect someone who enters your bottle shop is intoxicated but aren't sure, you could try starting a conversation to see if they show any further signs. For example:

- 'How's your day/night going?'
- 'Have you been somewhere before here?'
- 'Anything exciting planned for the rest of the day?'
- 'Are you celebrating a special occasion?'

Alcohol and other drugs in drink spiking

There are real dangers of alcohol and other drug drink spiking on licensed premises. Be aware alcohol and other drug, drink, and food spiking are criminal offences with a two-year jail term. The perpetrator is often known, such as a friend or date. On rarer occasions, it happens if the victims

have left their drink unattended or accepted a drink from someone without seeing how it was made.

Drink spiking is not only putting illicit drugs into a drink. Extra unrequested alcohol is the most used drug in drink spiking, for example, ordering drinks for people with extra shots. Many incidents of alcohol and other drink spiking occur in a venue when a person has been given extra alcohol without their knowledge; other drugs that have and can be used include gamma-hydroxy butyrate (commonly known as GHB), depressants, and stimulants.

Patrons may not realise their drink has been spiked. If other substances are used, they are often colourless and odourless. Symptoms a patron may display can range from feeling drunker than expected, drowsy, unbalanced, vomiting, a loss of consciousness, muscle spasms, or respiratory difficulties.

Symptoms will vary depending on:

- type and combination of alcohol and other drugs
- amount of alcohol and other drugs
- the patron's health and physical factors.

The perpetrator of drink spiking is usually someone who is known to the victim (date, friend, etc.), and they may intend to sexually assault the victim and/or commit other harmful behaviour such as stealing.

Steps to preventing alcohol and other drug drink spiking

The best way to prevent drink spiking is to follow RSA principles and to:

- remove unattended glasses
- act on harmful and suspicious behaviour – keep in mind the perpetrator may not be someone a victim knows, so harmful and suspicious behaviour could include encouraging someone to drink more than they want to drink. There are also cases where the perpetrator is a staff member.
- not sell or promote alcohol in a way that leads to rapid consumption
- in line with policy, decline excessive alcohol requests such as beer with a shot of vodka
- decline any requests to add alcohol to another person's drink.

If a victim reports their drink has been spiked either by alcohol or other drugs, there are some simple steps you can take to respond with care, such as:

- make sure they are safe, offering to call someone they trust
- call an ambulance if they become severely unwell/vomit repeatedly/unconscious and ensure the person is still breathing on their own until the ambulance arrives
- believe the victim and ask them what they need
- respond to their needs, this could be organising safe transport home
- give them information about support services
- record the details in the incident register.

[What to do when someone has been SPIKED](#) is an optional sign to display at your venue to remind you or other staff what to do when a customer has had their drink spiked.

[Support Services](#) lists support services available to victims of drink spiking.

For more information on signage visit: vic.gov.au/signs-to-display-where-customers-buy-alcohol

Activity: Roles in preventing intoxication

What responsibility do the following persons have regarding intoxicated customers?

Managers have a responsibility to:

Staff have a responsibility to:

Customers have a responsibility to:

The penalty for supplying liquor to an intoxicated person or allowing a drunk person on the premises exceeds: _____

Activity: Strategies to prevent intoxication

List 4 strategies to prevent intoxication:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Activity: Erratic drinking patterns

List 3 erratic drinking patterns:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Refusal of service

Once customers have consumed alcohol to a level where they are showing signs of intoxication, their normal judgement is impaired. Therefore, it is up to the server, not the customer, to decide whether they should be served.

Even when management and bar staff do their best, some customers may still become intoxicated. The continued service of alcohol to intoxicated customers is a crucial factor in the association between licensed venues and alcohol-related harm, such as violence, drink-driving, and injury.

Do not serve a customer who comes to your venue intoxicated. When you notice a customer has become intoxicated, stop serving them. Management also has a legal duty to remove drunk people from the venue.

It is important to realise sobering up takes time. Letting people become intoxicated and giving them an hour to sober up is NOT an effective strategy.

All the old stories DO NOT work. Such as:

- cold showers
- black coffee
- vomiting
- urinating.

The best way to limit the harms of alcohol when drinking alcohol products is for individuals to ‘**pace**’ themselves – that is, drink at a rate no faster than the body can break down the alcohol.

Be alert

Monitor the alcohol consumption of customers or groups of customers. This can be useful in reducing problems. Small issues not dealt with become major issues.

The following are some factors to be monitored:

- What type of drinks are being ordered?
- Who is doing the ordering?
- How fast are they drinking?
- Is food being eaten?
- Is everyone at the table drinking?
- Are there people on the table who could give you support?

Remember it may take up to 30 minutes for alcohol to have an effect. If the customer is already intoxicated, another 30 minutes might find them in a bad state.

Body language

Understanding body language can be beneficial in seeing trouble and dealing with situations threatening the safety and security of customers, colleagues and property. This is especially relevant when dealing with aggressive customers. It can also help you seek assistance from appropriate personnel or colleagues per your organisational policies.

The table below shows the signs to look out for if someone gets aggressive. Think about your body language. When dealing with the situation, you must be assertive if you want people to do as you say, not aggressive or passive.

	Aggressive	Assertive	Passive
Posture	Leaning forward	Upright/straight	Shrinking
Head	Chin jutting out	Firm, not rigid	Head down
Eyes	Staring, piercing, or glaring eye contact	Good, regular eye contact	Glancing away, minimal eye contact
Face	Set or firm	The expression fits the words	Smiling even when upset
Voice	Loud and emphatic	Calm, clear and controlled	Soft, trailing off at the end of sentences
Arms	Hands on hips, fists, pointing, jabbing	Relaxed/moving easily, open palms	Slow and hesitant or fast and jerky
Movement/ Walking	Slow and pounding or fast, deliberate	Measured pace suited to the situation	Slow and hesitant or fast and jerky

It's not easy to get it right, but don't give up. If you think carefully about your voice, body language, and calmness, everything else tends to follow.

Distance

Each person has a certain amount of 'personal space.' If a stranger stands too close, it is uncomfortable. In conflict situations, standing too close may be seen as a threat, so keep a comfortable distance from the person you're speaking to and never touch the customer.

A barrier of some kind, such as a table, can help to keep this distance. The bar or counter itself is a barrier. You may find you feel more comfortable speaking with people behind the bar or counter than alone. This is because the physical barrier acts as a psychological barrier as well.

It may not be appropriate for you to refuse service until you have built up some experience. Talk to your supervisor about how they want you to handle these situations.

If customers are angry, try to calm them down by speaking calmly and quietly. If people or property are threatened, it may be necessary to call the police. Keep your colleagues informed, and the manager will make the appropriate decision.

Remember, if the customer is intoxicated, their brain will be affected by the alcohol, making them less inhibited, quicker to anger, and more likely to say or do things they wouldn't normally do. They may also have more difficulty in understanding you. It is imperative to speak clearly and slowly – you may have to repeat yourself several times, so try not to get angry or impatient.

Steps in refusing service

It is essential when serving customers alcohol that you can identify which customers should be refused sale or service according to Victorian legislation.

In Victoria, customers who must be refused sale or service are:

- minors and those purchasing liquor on behalf of minors
- intoxicated persons.

A person affected by the consumption of illicit and other drugs should be refused service, as they are at high risk of harm. Mixing alcohol and other drugs can be dangerous.

Refusing service should be done respectfully and professionally. Other customers should not notice the perfect refusal. If not handled with sensitivity and tact, it can create conflict.

The following T-A-K-E C-A-R-E steps can help avoid difficult situations:

Tell early: If the situation has been appropriately monitored and the early signs of intoxication recognised, then this is the time to act. Slowing service, suggesting food or a quiet word of warning can stop problems from escalating. Using other, more sober, group members might be helpful to warn the intoxicated person.

Avoid put downs: Don't be judgemental. Don't say things like 'you're drunk' or 'you've had too much to drink'. Don't scold the customer, try to agree with them where possible 'I agree you're not drunk, if you were, I'd have to ask you to leave and I'm trying to prevent that'.

Keep calm: Your tone of voice is especially important. You need to have a firm voice without being aggressive. Do not raise your voice. Behaviour breeds behaviour. You can calm them down if you remain calm yourself. Take them away from the audience and monitor the reactions of other customers.

Ever courteous: Customer service demands staff respect their customers. Be polite and use tactful language. Use open and non-aggressive body language. Do not use physical touch.

Tell them why you are refusing service from your point of view:

- 'I'm sorry if I served you another drink, I'd be breaking the law.'
- 'I'm sorry if I served you another drink, I could lose my job.'
- 'I'm concerned about your safety.'

Clarify refusal: Explain why the service is being refused. Remember to focus on the behaviour, not the individual. Sometimes, a customer may think they are being barred from the premises. Explain they are welcome back tomorrow if they behave.

Alternatives: Offer them a way to back out with their dignity intact.

A warning that this will be the last drink for a while may allow them to 'save face' in front of their friends or offer to call a taxi. Switching customers to food and low or non-alcoholic drinks may also be an alternative.

Report: Ensure staff and other shifts know what has happened. Keep an incident logbook near the bar and write down what has occurred. If the customer injures themselves or a third party after leaving the premises, the record may assist in defending against civil action.

Echo: If the customer is a regular, staff can quietly reinforce the message when they return. They will usually be more receptive to hearing and understanding why the action was taken. The customer may even thank the staff for looking after them.

Communication methods when refusing service

When refusing service, it's important to consider the type of communication methods you will use. This can help the customer understand why they are being denied service and reduce potential conflict. It's also important to remember that refusing service is not a personal attack but a necessary measure to ensure the safety of other customers, staff, and the community.

Some methods that can be used are:

- using open and non-aggressive body language
- using clear and tactful language
- maintaining a calm tone
- maintaining eye contact
- maintaining physical distance between you and the customer if necessary.

You also need to consider what type of assistance can be offered to a customer when refusing service, including:

- assist the customer to connect with their designated driver or companions
- offer alternatives to alcohol, including food or non-alcoholic drinks
- organise or provide relevant information on transport for customers wishing to leave.

Handling difficult situations

Knowing how to handle difficult situations is crucial for anyone working in a licensed venue or store. Here are some tips for mastering the art of conflict resolution:

Stay calm and focused: When emotions are running high, staying calm and focused is vital to avoid escalating the situation. Take a deep breath, listen to the customer's perspective, and respond calmly and thoughtfully.

Be empathetic: Try to understand the customer's point of view and acknowledge their feelings. Empathy can help to defuse tension and create a more collaborative environment for resolving the conflict.

Communicate clearly: Clear communication is critical to resolving conflicts. Be honest and direct about your concerns and be willing to listen to the other person's perspective.

Seek a win-win solution: Look for solutions that benefit both parties rather than focusing on 'winning' the argument. This approach can help to create a more positive outcome and preserve relationships in the long term.

Practice active listening: Active listening involves giving the other person your full attention and showing that you understand their viewpoint. This can help to build trust and create a more positive environment for conflict resolution.

Refer difficult situations to the appropriate person

When dealing with intoxicated or aggressive customers, if dealing with a person is challenging and beyond your responsibility, it is advisable to refer the matter to your manager or another staff member who better understands how to deal with these customers.

Don't take on a situation beyond your responsibility, authority, and capability. If you immediately refer the problem to someone who can handle it, it will be resolved faster and with a better outcome.

Referring the situation to someone else could avoid a situation where the customer becomes more aggressive and a physical confrontation occurs.

Consider when you may need to call 000 and ask for an ambulance or police

Licensees and staff need to know when to call 000 and ask for an ambulance or police.

If you ever encounter a situation where someone in your venue threatens the safety of others or themselves, it's important to take action. In such a scenario, the best action is to immediately call the police by dialling 000. Additionally, if an incident has already occurred and someone has been harmed, you should contact the police. If someone refuses to leave the licensed premises, calling the police can also help resolve the situation.

In case of a medical emergency, call 000 and ask for an ambulance. If you observe the following signs in someone who has been drinking, call an ambulance immediately:

- confusion
- vomiting
- seizures
- slow breathing (less than eight breaths a minute) or irregular breathing (a gap of more than 10 seconds between breaths)
- blue-tinged skin or pale skin
- low body temperature (hypothermia)
- difficulty remaining conscious
- passing out (unconsciousness) and can't be woken.

If someone is unconscious or cannot be woken up, they could be at risk of dying. They may have alcohol poisoning – even if you don't see the signs and symptoms.

Responding to a mental health episode

Mental illness and alcohol and drug-related harm occur in our community, and staff working in licensed venues may come across individuals displaying aggressive or problematic behaviour due to these health issues.

If you encounter an individual exhibiting aggressive or problematic behaviour because of a mental health or drug-induced episode, below are some steps to help you assess and respond to the situation:

Green behaviours	Orange behaviours	Red behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cooperative anxious, restless, excessive talking able to respond to questions and directions (e.g., to move to a quieter or safer environment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loud outbursts frequent non-purposeful movements (e.g., pacing, lip-smacking, repeated hand movement) difficult to engage (e.g., partial listening, partially following instructions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uncooperative (e.g., refusing to follow staff instructions) aggressive or combative lacking capacity to make decisions
<p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in de-escalation monitor your safety 	<p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempt de-escalation monitor your safety 	<p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> call '000' void approaching the individual maintain your safety and that of other people in your venue

If a person in your venue is exhibiting a mental health episode:

1. Avoid physical restraint if possible

Individuals may have unknown health vulnerabilities that make even minor attempts at physical restraint more dangerous and life-threatening.

All physical restraint involves some possibility of physical and psychological injury, such as lacerations, bruises, broken bones, brain injury, and death.

Any form of restraint should only ever be used by professionals with proper medical training.

2. Never use a prone restraint

Prone restraint refers to face-down or floor restraint, with or without pressure applied to the stomach and back.

This increases the risk of restraint-related 'positional asphyxiation', which occurs when a person's airway is blocked, reducing oxygen intake.

Positional asphyxiation or any blockage of airflow to an individual can result in brain injury or death, even if the airflow is only momentarily obstructed.

Provisions for requiring someone to leave the premises

Give customers who have become intoxicated or abusive a verbal warning about their behaviour and request they refrain from behaving in the manner they are.

This warning gives them a chance to improve their behaviour and shows them there may be consequences if they continue behaving the way they are.

If they continue to behave in a way that does not comply with the venue's policy or Victorian liquor laws, you can ask them to leave.

If you ask a customer to leave your venue, escort them to collect their belongings and leave peacefully. If they become confrontational, use conflict resolution strategies to try to calm down (active listening, positive language, finding common ground, offering other solutions). Refer the matter to another staff member or call security to escort them from the venue if required.

There are three options available to licensees and their staff to refuse entry into licensed premises:

- refusing entry that is non-discriminatory (at any time)
- issuing a barring order:
 - first incident up to one month
 - second incident up to 3 months
 - third incident up to 6 months.
- banning a person as part of a liquor accord (can be for a maximum of 12 months).

For more information visit: vic.gov.au/refusing-entry-to-licensed-venues.

Customer safety when refusing entry or removing from the venue

When you refuse entry or remove a customer, you must ensure the customer is safe. Providing safe transport options to customers is an essential element of harm minimisation.

Safe transport options, particularly late at night, should be promoted to customers to reduce the potential for drink-driving, violence, assault, and sexual assault. Depending on the nature and location of the licensed premises, safe transport options can also reduce the potential for noise disturbances when customers leave the premises.

Safe transport options can include:

- courtesy buses – these show a commitment to customer safety and community amenity. It assists in reducing anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of the premises, especially late at night.
- taxis or rideshare services – wherever possible, licensed premises should promote the use and availability of taxis and rideshare services. Options include:
 - offering to call a taxi for customers
 - having a free phone available for customers to call a taxi
 - displaying signage
- public transport – a practical option for licensed premises close to public transportation is to promote and display timetables of local bus, train, and ferry services and making announcements before the last trip of the night
- designated drivers or companions – offering to connect the customer with a friend or family member to come and pick the customer up safely.
- outreach service hotline – available in Metropolitan Melbourne, which can assist with safe transport options if the customer agrees.

Barring patrons

Licensees, responsible persons (any person in management or control of a licensed premises), and police officers have the power to issue a barring order that is enforceable by Victoria Police.

A barring order may be served for the following reasons:

- the person is drunk, violent, or quarrelsome in the licensed premises or
- the licensee, permittee, responsible person, or police officer believes that the safety of the person or any other person on the licensed premises is at substantial or immediate risk due to consuming alcohol.

An authorised barring order form must be used for this purpose. The authorised form must be used; otherwise, this may invalidate the barring order.

- Once a person is served with a barring order, they must leave the venue and its vicinity and cannot return until the barring order expires (the period will be specified on the barring order).
- The vicinity of a licensed venue is defined as within 20 metres of the venue.
- If a person does not comply with the barring order, Victoria Police may issue them with an infringement notice.
- Victoria Police also have the option of formally charging the barred patron with an offence for which the person would be required to appear.

Summary

- Informing customers of beverage options and displaying signage can encourage responsible drinking.
- Observing and monitoring the behaviour of customers and using intoxication prevention strategies can reduce people becoming intoxicated.
- Use intoxication prevention strategies to encourage responsible drinking.
- A person who is intoxicated must not be served or supplied any more drinks.
- If you form a reasonable belief that a person is intoxicated, this is sufficient to refuse service.
- When unsure or feeling unsafe in approaching an intoxicated or drunk person, seek assistance.
- If asking customer to leave, offer assistance.

Activity: Refusal of service

Read the story by Lucy MacDonald published on ABC News on Monday, 3 July 2023, available at [abc.net.au/news/2023-07-03/jarrold-davies-had-23-drinks-before-drowning-in-hobart-inquest/102554176](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-07-03/jarrold-davies-had-23-drinks-before-drowning-in-hobart-inquest/102554176)

What would you have done differently if you were a staff member at one of the venues mentioned in the article?

List 3 things you would have done to prevent serious harm from occurring.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Module 4: Alcohol and young people

This section covers the laws relating to minors, the impact alcohol has on young people, when minors can be on licensed premises, and how to check ID and assess if secondary supply of alcohol to a minor is taking place.

The Australian alcohol guidelines state the safest option for people under 18 is not to drink. Young people widely use alcohol for a range of reasons, including curiosity, experimentation and trying to fit in with a group. While stages of exploration are normal for teenagers, risky drinking can also lead to binge drinking, drink driving, and unsafe sex.¹

Minors are not allowed to drink alcohol on licensed premises under any circumstances.

Supplying liquor to a minor is not permitted under the Act. The following is a list of offences that apply:

- Supply liquor to a person under 18 – maximum penalty exceeds \$24,421.
- Supply liquor to a person under 18 by an employee – maximum penalty exceeds \$4,070.
- Allow someone else to supply liquor to a person under 18 – maximum penalty exceeds \$24,421.
- For persons under 18 to purchase, receive, possess or consume liquor – the maximum penalty exceeds \$1,018.

Impact of alcohol on young people

The legal drinking age is set because alcohol can be hazardous to young people. This is because they lack the experience of dealing with alcohol, and their internal organs have not finished developing, so a small amount may have a much more significant effect than it does on adults.

Studies have shown that those who first became drunk by the age of 19 are more likely to be alcohol-dependent and heavy drinkers later in life. The safest option is to delay the first alcoholic drink for as long as possible.

There's a relationship between adolescent alcohol use and mental health problems, including depression, suicide and self-harm.

The brain continues to develop until around 25 years of age, making it more sensitive to damage from alcohol.

Alcohol consumption during this time can bring about learning difficulties, memory problems and other health problems later in life.

Alcohol use can have social consequences (impacting relationships at school or work, arguments with family or friends, crime), economic consequences (where the young person is unable to go to school, work or participate in voluntary activities), and can increase risk-taking (car accidents, injuries) and self-harm.

A plan is needed to prevent the illegal supply of alcohol to people under 18 years of age (minors). There are heavy penalties for licensees and staff who illegally:

- allow minors on licensed premises
- permit liquor to be supplied to minors
- permit a minor to supply liquor.

¹ Source: betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/alcohol-teenagers

Minors on licensed premises

A minor can be on licensed premises if:

- they are in the company of a responsible adult
- they are partaking in a meal
- they are residing on the premises
- they are employed in duties other than the supply of alcohol
- they are engaged in a training program in hospitality or work experience. The program must have written approval of LCV and keep with any conditions. These conditions will always include that minors must be closely supervised when they serve alcohol.
- the premises has an on-premises licence with restaurant conditions or a restaurant and cafe licence, and it is before 11pm
- they are employed to deliver packaged alcohol to a person over 18 years of age for consumption off the licensed premises
- it is a live music event, where sound is created or manipulated for artistic, cultural, or religious purposes and performed to an audience (alcohol-free event)
- it is an underage or mixed-aged events not involving live music (alcohol-free events)
- they have approval from LCV and are subject to any conditions of that approval.

An adult must not send a minor to obtain alcohol on their behalf. An adult cannot purchase alcohol for minors. More information is available at [vic.gov.au/under-18s-at-licensed-venues](https://www.vic.gov.au/under-18s-at-licensed-venues).

Evidence of age

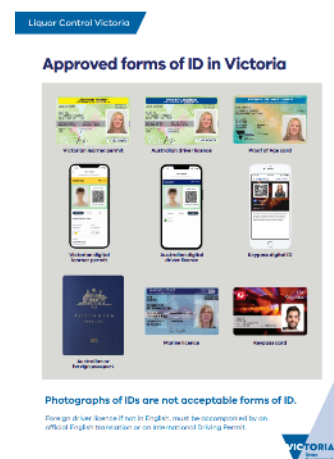
As a licensee or staff member of a licensed venue, you must have strategies to prevent underage drinking; checking evidence of age is one such strategy.

Some licensees have found it helpful to check IDs for all customers who look to be under 25 years of age.

If you suspect someone may be underage, ask for an evidence of age document.

Acceptable evidence of age documents are:

- an Australian driver licence (physical or digital)
- a Victorian learner permit (physical or digital)
- an Australian or foreign passport
- a Victorian Proof of Age card or equivalent from another state
- a Keypass card (physical or digital)
- a Victorian marine licence
- a foreign driver licence in the English language. If not in the English language, it must be accompanied by an official English translation or an International Driving Permit.



Checking ID

Many venues have staff at the door to ensure underage people are not admitted. This allows staff to avoid trouble early. Monitoring the door also allows staff to refuse entry to intoxicated persons.

Staff should request identification if there is any doubt about the customer's age. Some licensees have found it helpful to check IDs for all customers who look to be under 25 years of age.

If you are working at a store or restaurant and café, make sure you check ID for anyone under 25 years of age, even when they take alcohol for takeaway or have ordered alcohol via a QR code or application for consumption at the venue.

Drink waiters and 'glassies' that walk around the floor area of venues can potentially identify underage drinkers who are not going to the bar to order.

When checking a person's ID:

- check for the consistency of holograms
- pay close attention to their physical features such as nose, freckles, etc.
- carefully check the date of birth for liquid paper, tampering, or scratching
- ask them about their birth date or star sign.

Confiscating ID

As an employee of a licensed venue or store, you can confiscate an ID (except a driver licence) if you determine that the ID being presented:

- is not the customer
- contains the name and/or date of birth of someone other than the customer
- is forged or altered.

A fake ID (except for a driver licence) may be seized by a:

- Victoria Police officer
- liquor inspector
- protective services officer on duty at a designated place
- licensees or permittee or an employee of a licensee or permittee.

If a document has been seized by a person other than a police officer, a protective services officer or a liquor inspector, that person must give the document to a police officer.

Confiscating a driver licence

A genuine driver licence issued by a state government or territory in Australia cannot be confiscated. For example, a minor tries to use driver licence of a relative or friend who is over 18 years of age, this driver licence cannot be confiscated.

Licensees and staff can confiscate a fake driver licence (plastic version) when they're **absolutely sure** it's not a genuine driver licence. They must be handed over to the police.

A fake driver licence is a forged document that is not issued by any state government or territory in Australia.

A fake driver licence may have features that distinguish it from a genuine driver licence, such as:

- the plastic may be thinner
- the font may be different
- holograms may not appear where they should.

Fake digital driver licences cannot be confiscated. When a minor knowingly uses a fake ID to purchase alcohol or enter a licensed venue, they can be fined more than \$1,000. There are serious offences for using fake IDs.

For more information visit: vic.gov.au/checking-IDs-before-supplying-alcohol.

Fake Victorian probationary driver licence

When checking ID, look for under 18 patrons using fake driver licences. Check their identification thoroughly, paying particular attention to Victorian probationary driver licences.

Below is an example of a fake Victorian probationary driver licence.



The quality of fake IDs is continuously evolving; this is general guidance and is accurate at the time of this publication. Using ultraviolet light might currently be the best tool for detecting fake IDs.

If you have doubts about the authenticity of an ID presented, ask for a second form. If you are still not satisfied, refuse service/entry.

Secondary supply

It is illegal to sell alcohol to a minor. A licensee or staff member must be on the lookout for adults purchasing alcohol for minors.

Where there are reasonable grounds for considering an adult is purchasing alcohol for a minor, the sale must be declined. Examples of this might be:

- a minor is with an adult when the purchase is made
- a minor suggests the purchase to the adult
- minors congregate outside of the store, then an adult enters and makes a large order of various drinks popular with young people
- you decline to serve some minors, and a short time later, an adult enters your store and makes the same order the minors made
- a minor is at a party and is supplied alcohol by a person over 18 years of age.

Summary

- Minors can be on licensed premises under certain circumstances.
- Minors can't drink alcohol on licensed premises.
- Minors can only supply alcohol if engaged in an approved LCV training program.
- Check ID of any person that looks under 25.
- Be wary of adults trying to purchase alcohol for minors.

Activity: Minors breach and penalties

Maximum penalties for the following breaches of the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* are:

Breach	Section of the Act	Maximum penalty \$
Minor is on licensed premises (other than a restaurant) unaccompanied.	s.123(1)(c)	
The server illegally supplies liquor to someone under 18 years of age.	s.119(4)	
Licensee illegally allows persons under 18 years of age to supply liquor.	s.122(1)	
The licensee illegally supplies liquor to someone under 18 years of age.	s.119(1)(a)	
A person illegally purchases liquor for minors.	s.119(3)	

Activity: Minors prevention strategies

List 2 strategies to prevent underage drinking:

- 1.
- 2.

Module 5: Alcohol delivery

Selling packaged alcohol creates unique challenges for responsible service of alcohol. Anyone involved in the sale and supply of alcohol via takeaway or delivery must be aware of the risks and have strategies to ensure alcohol is supplied responsibly.

The remote sale and delivery of alcohol comes with significant responsibilities for licensees, staff, and delivery persons. It is crucial to ensure alcohol is not sold or supplied to minors or intoxicated persons and only allowable quantities are supplied through takeaway or delivery.

Licensed venues should inform delivery drivers of their obligations, and procedures should be in place for delivering alcohol to unoccupied premises, including where to return the orders. These measures help to ensure the safe and responsible sale and delivery of alcohol.

Offences under the Act

A delivery person and a licensee can be fined for breaches of the Act.

The delivery person can be fined for:

- delivering a liquor order via an off-premises request to an intoxicated person (maximum penalty exceeds \$24,421)
- knowingly deliver liquor to a person under 18 (maximum penalty exceeds \$24,421).

The licensee can be fined for the following:

- not providing written notice to the delivery person that a same day delivery must not be left unattended (maximum penalty exceeds \$24,421)
- failure to comply with a licence condition (maximum penalty exceeds \$24,421).

Licences with pick up and alcohol delivery

The following licences allow the supply of alcohol to a person who makes an off-premises request:

- general licence and late night (general)
- restaurant and cafe
- full club
- packaged liquor and late night
- producer's
- remote sellers
- some renewable limited.

An off-premises request means an order made by mail, email, telephone, web/internet, or other electronic communication; throughout this section, we refer to it as remote order.

Certain licence types have restrictions on what they can deliver or provide for pick up. A list of those restrictions is below:

- full club licence (only supply to club members)
- producer's licence (only supply producer's product)
- restaurant and cafe licence (must be supplied with food and restricted to 750ml of wine, or six (6) containers, no more than 375ml per container of beer, cider, or pre-mixed spirits)
- renewable limited licence (if a licence condition expressly authorises supply to a person who makes an off-premises request).

Licensee must provide instructions to delivery persons

Licensees who supply alcohol via delivery must inform delivery drivers of alcohol delivery requirements.

These requirements are:

- Alcohol must be delivered before 11pm.
- For the first-time order:
 - ID must be checked
 - delivery must be made to the person who placed the order.
- For gift orders:
 - ID must be checked
 - the gift recipient (provided they are 18 years or over) or someone else at the delivery address can accept the order
- For **repeat orders** by an existing customer:
 - order must be delivered as per customer's instructions, if they are not there.

A delivery person **must not deliver to:**

- a minor
- a person who is intoxicated or at substantial risk of intoxication.

Under the Intoxication Guidelines, a person may be intoxicated if they exhibit one or more of the intoxication signs, and these signs are displayed because of the consumption of alcohol.

How to decide whether to refuse alcohol delivery

Delivery people, when delivering alcohol, usually have only short interactions with the customer accepting the delivery, which can make it challenging to identify signs of intoxication. Delivery people should take a cautious and prudent approach to assessing whether a recipient is or might be intoxicated.

When making a delivery, assess the location on arrival and look for the following:

- signs that minors may be present (for example, L or P plates on cars)
- signs of people in or around the delivery location displaying signs of intoxication (for example, large groups involved in loud, heated discussions or jostling)
- people engaging in activities that can harm others, such as secondary supply to minors or intoxicated people.

Delivery people should consider whether the customer shows signs of intoxication when receiving the order. For example, they can assess whether the customer is:

- loud and boisterous
- swaying or rambling when speaking
- using offensive language
- unwilling to comply with ID verification requirements, or
- having difficulty signing for the delivery.

Please refer to the Intoxication Guidelines for further examples of the signs of intoxication. The intoxication guidelines can be found at vic.gov.au/off-premises-requests-for-alcohol-delivery.

Delivery people should also consider whether the signs exhibited by the customer are a result of the consumption of alcohol. This may include assessing:

- whether the customer smells of alcohol
- any comments made by the customer indicating their current level of intoxication
- the context of the delivery (for example, where there appears to be a party at the delivery address, which could indicate that the customer was consuming alcohol before accepting the order).

Delivery people do not need to be sure the customer is intoxicated to refuse delivery. Instead, if it is likely a customer is intoxicated because they are showing signs of intoxication, the delivery must be refused.

If you deliver alcohol to a customer who is intoxicated or is likely to be intoxicated, you may be in breach of the Act and liable for a maximum penalty exceeding \$24,421.

Licensees should provide instructions to delivery persons on what steps to take if an alcohol delivery cannot be completed because the customer is intoxicated or there is a substantial risk the customer is intoxicated. This should include information about where the order should be returned and the circumstances in which a refund may be issued to the customer.

Summary

- Some licence types have restrictions on alcohol they can supply.
- Licensees must provide instructions to delivery drivers on how alcohol can be delivered.
- Licensee and delivery persons can receive a fine for alcohol delivery.

Module 6: Harm minimisation

Harm minimisation in licensed venues involves developing policies and procedures for the responsible service of alcohol to reduce the risk of alcohol-related harms, violence, injuries, and health issues, and to provide a safe environment for customers and staff.

The Act and its rules are designed to minimise harm from alcohol by implementing a harm minimisation approach. This approach acknowledges the supply of alcohol may carry substantial risks and people who use alcohol require a range of support to reduce harm to themselves and the community, including their families. The approach focuses on reducing the negative consequences of alcohol use rather than eliminating alcohol use.

The following is a list of 3 **principles for harm minimisation**.

Manage the availability of alcohol by **reducing the supply** of alcohol by:

- limiting the type and range of drinks sold (strength of alcohol)
- limiting hours of supply for high-potency alcohol (no shots after 1 am).

Prevent or delay the drinking of alcohol and support recovery by **reducing the demand** for alcohol by:

- refusing service to intoxicated people
- offering water, non-alcohol drinks and food
- delay serving alcohol to a customer
- promote alcohol and drug counselling.

Reduce consequences of drinking alcohol through **harm reduction** by:

- monitoring customer behaviour
- promoting house policies
- promoting expected customer behaviour.

Responsible service of alcohol strategies

Throughout this workbook are minimum strategies for ensuring responsible service of alcohol, including:

- training required and why it is important
- knowing your licence conditions (trading hours, licence conditions, etc.) and your obligations (displaying licence and mandatory signage, providing free water, alcohol delivery requirements)
- applying the RSA principles:
- Refuse alcohol to intoxicated patrons.
- Do not allow drunk and disorderly people on your premises.
- Do not supply liquor to minors (under 18 years of age).
- Discourage activities that may cause harm.

Other strategies to ensure responsible service

There are other strategies your venue or store can put in place to ensure responsible service of alcohol, including:

- adopting a house policy

- developing a venue management plan
- promoting alcohol supply as per the responsible alcohol advertising and promotion guidelines
- attending liquor forums
- undertaking required and additional training
- recording incidents that arise at your venue or store
- implementing a designated driver program.

House policies/procedures

Written policies and procedures are the best way of informing new staff about the business rules.

A house policy creates a framework for the operation of the business. The house policy lets staff know that the business is committed to the following:

- encouraging moderation
- not serving underage people
- minimising the possibility of driving.

After adopting a house policy, it will need to be promoted. Staff should have solid support from management to implement the policy. The licensee should always be seen as a role model for employees and lead by example.

A comprehensive house policy should include:

- who will not be served alcohol
- requirements for checking ID
- expected standards of behaviour from customers
- recommended approach to dealing with challenging customers
- encouraging responsible drinking
- drink limits
- respecting neighbours (when leaving the venue).

Venue management plan

A venue management plan is important as it shows licensed venues have a strategy to manage safety and risks in running the venue. A venue management plan should include the following:

- details of any proposed special events and specific management strategies for dealing with such events
- security arrangements, including the number of personnel and their hours of operation
- strategies for responding to drugs and weapons
- strategies for dealing with intoxicated, drunk, and disorderly customers
- approach to the responsible service of alcohol (RSA)
- management of aggressive or unruly customers
- the provision of free drinking water
- details of the maximum number of customers to be permitted on the premises
- managing entry and exits and pass-out arrangements
- dealing with theft on the premises
- lighting within the boundaries of the premises

- security lighting outside the premises
- security camera locations, operation, and management
- general rubbish storage and removal arrangements, including hours of pick-up
- bottle storage and removal arrangements, including hours of pick-up
- noise reduction measures (for example, doors, windows, curtains, or soundproofing)
- processes for managing litter in and around the venue
- training available to staff on how to manage customer and residents' behaviour.

Designated Driver Program

Venues should consider implementing a Designated Driver Program (DDP).

The DDP aims to ensure the person driving a group is safe to drive. Examples of how some DDP work include:

- drivers registering with staff when they enter the premises
- provide drivers with a badge or marker so that bar staff can identify them
- free non-alcoholic drinks provided to registered drivers.

It is a good strategy to offer discounted food to the driver. This may encourage the drinkers in the group to order food simultaneously. It will also increase food sales and decrease the chance of people drinking on an empty stomach.

DDPs are only a good idea if the people involved drink responsibly. It should not become an excuse for non-drivers to become intoxicated once they know they have a ride home.

If a licensee implements a DDP, they should publicise it. Having a DDP can bring in business and promote the venue as a responsible venue. This sends a message to the community that the licensee cares about customers.

Recording incidents

It would be best if you recorded all incidents for a variety of reasons, including to:

- use as a learning tool and to assist communication between staff and management
- provide an accurate record for police, company, or insurance purposes
- help prevent similar incidents from happening again.

The incident record should include the following:

- date
- time
- what happened
- who was involved
- how it was dealt with
- whether police were called.

You may also wish to record the names of any witnesses and their contact information.

A template for the incident report can be downloaded at content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/liquor_accord_incident_report.pdf

Responsible alcohol advertising and promotions

The way alcohol is promoted and sold influences the way customers consume alcohol and how they behave.

Apply a common-sense approach to serving practices. Several promotional serving practices may fulfil the duty to serve alcohol responsibly.

The following practices may be acceptable under controlled conditions:

- 'happy hours' that have reasonable limits and controls
- promotions involving low alcohol drinks
- reduced pricing that does not encourage drinking quickly
- drink cards offering limited alcohol.

Unacceptable serving practices include:

- 'laybacks', 'slammers', 'blasters', 'bombs' or similar
- reward schemes such as drink cards, or promotions, which encourage rapid consumption of alcohol over a short period
- 'all you can drink' offers for a set price
- promotions such as 'drink until you drop'
- drinking games such as poker, roll the dice, and 2-for-1 practices
- promotions linked to inappropriate activities, such as bikini nights.

When a liquor licence is granted, the licensee agrees to abide by the Act. Every licensee must serve alcohol within these legal requirements.

Serving practices that result in drunkenness misuse can result in action being taken against the licensee. LCV or Victoria Police may act and seek to vary, suspend or cancel the liquor licence.

LCV may also give notice to ban a licensee from advertising or promoting the supply of alcohol at a licensed venue if it is likely to encourage irresponsible consumption or is not in the public interest.

Guidelines for responsible alcohol advertising and promotions have been published. They assist licensees and promoters in identifying the standards and conduct expected of them when advertising or running alcohol-related promotions.

These guidelines not only outline the expected standards associated with responsible serving practices but also provide real-life examples of practices that are likely to attract a ban.

The guidelines are available at vic.gov.au/responsible-alcohol-advertising-and-promotions

Community education campaigns

The following is a list of education campaigns by other agencies. Being aware of these campaigns can assist in providing information to customers who may be experiencing issues with alcohol consumption.

- **One drink campaign** aims to increase awareness that there is no safe amount or time to drink alcohol during pregnancy. You can find details about this campaign at alcoholthinkagain.com.au/about-us/current-campaigns/one-drink
- **Hello Sunday Morning initiative** is dedicated to helping people who want to change their relationship with alcohol, whether that relationship means abstaining, taking a break, or simply understanding how to have a healthy relationship with alcohol. You can find details about this initiative at hellosundaymorning.org
- **Break the habit campaign** to encourage Australians who increased their alcohol consumption due to COVID-19 related stress and anxiety to reduce their alcohol use to safer levels. You can find details about this campaign at littlehabit.com.au

- **Local Drug Action Team Program initiative** supports community organisations to reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs in their local area. You can find details about this initiative at community.adf.org.au/ldat-program/about
- **Positive Choices initiative** is an online portal to help Australian schools and communities access accurate, up-to-date, evidence-based alcohol and other drug education resources. You can find details about this initiative at positivechoices.org.au
- **Pregnant Pause initiative** encourages Australians to go alcohol-free during their pregnancy or the pregnancy of loved ones. You can find details about this initiative at pregnantpause.com.au
- **Every Moment Matters campaign** is a project sharing the latest evidence-based information about alcohol during pregnancy and breastfeeding. You can find details about this campaign at everymomentmatters.org.au

Compliance and enforcement

Compliance and enforcement of liquor regulations are essential for ensuring public safety and maintaining the integrity of the liquor industry. Compliance involves adhering to liquor regulations, licence conditions and other obligations. Local and state government agencies carry out enforcement, and penalties for non-compliance can include fines, licence suspension or revocation, and even criminal charges.

Victoria Police or LCV can inspect any liquor licensed premises to ensure compliance with the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* and licence conditions.

Compliance inspectors

LCV's compliance inspectors monitor licensed premises throughout Victoria to ensure licensees comply with their licence conditions under the Act. Inspections may occur anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Inspectors will:

- introduce themselves/show badge
- ask for the manager or the most senior person
- view licence, red line plans, signage, RSA
- check cameras (CCTV) – if premises have CCTV conditions, inspectors will conduct a CCTV compliance check (for example, they will look for requirements for CCTV such as time, date and image clarity)
- view the crowd controller register
- ask for additional information, documents, records and equipment on the licensed premises
- conduct overall observations of the premises.

Inspectors have the power to:

- enter and inspect licensed premises
- request licensees and their staff answer questions and provide information, documents, records and equipment
- seize items as evidence
- request proof of age and seize liquor from a minor
- issue infringement notices (Note: they are not able to issue notices for breaching a banning notice or exclusion order or for failing to comply with police directions about a banning notice or exclusion order)

- enter a private home if they have a search warrant or if the home is situated on the licensed premises and the inspector has prior consent from the licensee.

Inspectors may sometimes undertake covert inspections at licensed venues, so it's important to ensure you continuously comply with your obligations regarding the service and supply of alcohol.

Inspectors can undertake investigations of complaints received by residents who have been negatively impacted by a licensed venue (for example, noise complaints).

For more information about inspections, visit vic.gov.au/inspections-of-licensed-venues-or-locations

Summary

- Everyone has a role in minimising harm from alcohol supply.
- Staff and licensees are encouraged to implement actions and practices that go beyond mandatory obligations.

Activity: Harm minimisation

List 3 things that should be included in a house policy.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

For the 3 things listed above, explain what procedures can be implemented for each.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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Short Courses Australia

Crown Casino

Best Restaurants Training

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