



## HOSPITALITY | PUBS | Issue No. 10 | Patron Safety at licensed venues – what can licensees do?

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Recent media reports of alcohol related incidents and violent patron behaviour highlight the importance of patron and staff safety at licensed venues. Licensees must be aware of and implement risk management practices and procedures in their venues to ensure their patrons and staff are safe and that there is adequate security in place.

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Liquor Act 1992*, liquor licensees have a legal obligation to provide a safe environment for patrons, staff and the areas surrounding their licensed premises.

There are a number of safety issues which licensees need to be aware of and various measures they can implement in order to attempt to avoid such issues. Examples of these safety issues include:

- **Crowd control and security for licensed venues** – licensees should not allow any area within the venue to become too congested with patrons and should regulate the number of patrons entering and exiting the venue. Additionally, it is important that licensees employ the correct ratio of security to patron numbers. For venues outside of the Brisbane City Council area, licensees must comply with individual security conditions listed on their individual licences. Within the Brisbane City Council area, security providers must maintain surveillance in and around the licensed premises from 11.00pm on nights when the premises trades after 1.00am and for at least one hour after the premises closes. Further, licensees that trade after 1.00am within the Brisbane City Council area must comply with security to patron ratios listed under by regulation.
- **Glass removal** – licensees should ensure that staff clear tables and remove empty glass bottles and/or glasses on a regular basis to reduce the potential for glass related incidents and/or violence.

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- **Patron behaviour** – licensees may employ various measures to attempt to control patron behaviour. These may include refusing entry to intoxicated people and minors; engaging a security firm to provide appropriately licensed personnel to avoid, reduce or address violent or otherwise poor patron behaviour; discourage unsafe practices that are likely to cause harm; not allow patrons to leave the premises with open containers of alcohol; supervision of taxi ranks outside the premises; discouraging groups of people from lingering outside the premises and monitoring noise levels.
- **Dangerous and banned products** – licensees should be aware of their responsibilities regarding the use of dangerous products and/or banned products which may include banned liquor products and bans on regular glass use in high-risk premises.
- **Noise** – licensees need to ensure that noise levels from the venue are monitored and that noise levels do not exceed the levels outlined on the venue’s liquor licence.
- **Staff training** – licensees should ensure that their staff are adequately trained and are informed and aware of any potential safety issues which may arise. Staff should be aware of any measures which they may use to attempt to address and/or prevent any issues from occurring.

- **Refusal of service** – licensees need to be aware of the rules governing the refusal of service to patrons. Licensees and staff may refuse service to patrons because the law requires it (eg. if the person is a minor or unduly intoxicated or disorderly); the safety of the patron is in jeopardy (ie. from the consumption of liquor); safety of others is in jeopardy (ie from the consumption of liquor by a particular patron); the licensee considers it warranted (provided it is not discriminatory).

These are only a few safety issues which may arise at licensed premises. Licensees should ensure that they have appropriate measures in place to deal with any safety issues so that patron and staff safety is maintained.



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