

A guide to preparing an Alcohol Management Plan (AMP) for special events



General information

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What is an AMP?

A document detailing in-house **procedures** to ensure that the licensee (event organisers) meet(s) its obligations under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (the Act) including all special licence conditions and host responsibility requirements.

This document should take into account all staff, including managers, bar staff, kitchen staff, security staff, and “glassies”, including employees, volunteers or contractors.

Why have an AMP?

An AMP provides a **practical/workable** document that outlines what plans licensee/event organisers have in place to deal with the responsible service and management of alcohol.

The plan is to make sure that all aspects relating to the sale of alcohol and host responsibility requirements are incorporated in the operation of the licence.

The AMP should also provide a reference tool for all staff to enable them to quickly familiarise themselves with the operation of the event with regards to alcohol.

Pre-event liason with monitoring and enforcement agencies

An application for a Special Licence should be made **at least 20 working days in advance** of the event. Police and the Medical Officer of Health have 15 working days to enquire and lodge a report if they have any matters in opposition. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the licence cannot be issued until the expiry of 20 working days if no report is received.

Event organisers need to establish and provide a chain of command, documenting who is in charge of the overall event and specific areas of responsibility. It is an expectation that organisers who are present at the event will be assigned these tasks.

To assist with running a trouble free event it is recommended that if more than 100 guests are anticipated, early consultation with a Licensing Inspector is recommended. A pre-event meeting may be required.

This guide is to be read in conjunction with the licence premises checklist located on the last page of this document.

1. Type of Event

When developing your AMP, it is beneficial to define the type of event you're running and note the risks that can be associated with the event and factor in a risk management plan.

You should take into consideration the following:

- type of event
- the area in which the event will take place
- event duration
- behavioural profile or characteristics of the “crowd” or target market
- local expectations and values associated with drinking
- weather; day the event is on
- how alcohol is served and what drinking vessels will be used.

Anticipating these factors will play an important part in developing your overall AMP.

When considering the type of event you are running, it is important to also factor in the impact or risk your event might have on local residents, St John Ambulance, Fire Service and the local Police.

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2. Promoting your event

Pre-event marketing: *Communication with patrons*

Setting a person's expectations **prior** to the event will influence their behaviour at the event.

Pre-event communication to the public will vary from event to event but should include:

- Explicit information regarding the legal requirements to exclude or remove intoxicated patrons. (Promoting the event's orientation towards “family” or “fun” may also help establish the “tone” of the event in advance)
- Explicit information about restrictions on bringing alcohol into the venue
- Explicit information about age restrictions (if any) into the venue
- Explicit information conveying intolerance toward unruly or aggressive behaviour
- An assurance that the conditions of entry and behaviour will be strictly enforced.

Under section 237 of the Act, event organisers are liable to a fine if the promotion of the event is intended or likely to encourage persons on the licensed premise to consume alcohol to an excessive extent.

Please speak to Licensing staff with regard to acceptable practice.

3. Intoxication

In this section, the AMP should set procedures to:

- a. Ensure that the organisers are able to proactively manage patrons, especially during busy periods and are not diverted from this in order to serve behind the bar and carry out other administrative functions
- b. Ensure organisers and staff proactively monitor patrons for intoxication throughout the event
- c. Identify and refuse entry to intoxicated persons
- d. Identify potential problems amongst patrons
- e. Reduce the risk of patrons becoming intoxicated on the premises
- f. Appropriately and safely deal with patrons who require intervention
- g. Identify a “safe place” that can be used for the care and protection of an intoxicated patron until they can safely be removed from the premises
- h. Have a sensible limit on the number of drinks patrons are able to purchase or obtain
- i. Ensure there is a plan for slowing down/ cutting of alcohol service
- j. List any other initiatives the organisers have in place to deal with and limit intoxication.

Staff and organisers need to clearly understand their responsibilities under the Act to **prevent** intoxication.

“When a person’s speech, coordination and behaviour is clearly impaired, as a result of the use of alcohol or other substance, they are considered to be in a state of “escalated intoxication”.

Prosecution of staff, licensee and event organisers under the Act may result if any person is allowed to reach this point of escalated intoxication on licensed premises.

Staff and managers must prevent intoxication and must intervene prior to the point of escalated intoxication. It is not acceptable for staff to just cut/ stop service to a person who has reached that point of intoxication.

Event organisers should be proactively monitoring and surveying patrons for signs of intoxication during the event and critically reviewing the intoxication level at the function to ensure compliance with the Act and conditions of the licence.

The key to compliance is the prevention of escalated intoxication; therefore staff must have the ability to identify the early signs referred to as onset and have a strategy to intervene. Failure to comply can result in severe financial penalties and the likelihood of any future special licence application being opposed.

Offences: (under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012)

- **Section 248:** Sale or supply of alcohol to an intoxicated person. No intoxicated person may be served alcohol at any function.
- **Section 249:** The licensee or manager who allows any people to become intoxicated
- **Section 252:** The licensee or manager who allows an intoxicated person to be or remain on licenced premises
- **Section 253:** The licensee or manager who allows any violent, quarrelsome, insulting or disorderly conduct to take place on licenced premises.

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4. Food

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In this section the AMP should set out:

- a. Who is responsible to ensure ongoing availability of food
- b. Procedures to be followed to ensure appropriate menu items remain available
- c. How you will promote food

It is a standard licence requirement that food must be conveniently available for consumption on the premises **at all times** alcohol is available for purchase.

All food must be readily available in sufficient quantity for the duration of the event, well promoted and reasonably priced.

It is not acceptable to claim that items have “run out” unless they have been replaced by a similar item. If food is no longer available alcohol sales must STOP.

Failure to make or have food available renders any sale of liquor “unauthorised”. (S.247 – possible \$20,000 fine)

5. Low and non-alcohol beverages

In this section:

- a. Who is responsible to ensure availability of low alcohol and non-alcohol beverages?
- b. Procedures to be followed to ensure availability of low alcohol and non-alcohol beverages
- c. How it will be promoted.

It is a condition of all special licences that a reasonable range of non alcohol and low alcohol beverages be available at all times when the premises are open for the sale of alcohol.

Failure to do so render any sale of alcohol “unauthorised” (S.247 - \$20,000)

Non-alcohol beverages must be promoted and available at all times. Not only is it expected but it can also be a condition of your special licence that **free water** will be readily available at all times throughout the duration of the event and must be well promoted and easily assessable to patrons.

6. Minors

In this section the AMP should:

- a. Establish the forms of identification to be accepted for verification of age
- b. Set procedures to verify the age of any person appearing to be under 25 years of age
- c. Set procedures relating to the consumption of alcohol by a person under 18 years who is accompanied by their parent or lawful guardian.

Offences: (under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012)

- **Section 239:** It is an offence to sell or supply alcohol, on licensed premises, to anyone under 18 years of age unless you are their parent or legal guardian.

7. Signage

In this section the AMP should specify where signage will be displayed and who is responsible for displaying it.

It is a legal requirement to have the following signage:

All licences require:

- i. The licence to be displayed on the premises, including a special licence.
- ii. “Prohibited person signage” to be displayed adjacent to points of sale.

The specific signage required relates to the prohibition of intoxicated persons and minors.

*** Signage must be displayed and clearly visible by patrons at each point of sale.**

This signage is obtainable from Community and Public Health or the Council’s Alcohol Licensing Team.

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8. Safe transport

It may be a requirement of a special licence that signs are prominently displayed detailing information regarding alternate forms of transport from the premises.

In this section, you should:

- a. List the safe transport options available from your premises.
- b. Describe how safe transport options will be promoted to patrons.
- c. Detail the approach to be taken when staff become aware of situations when patrons who have been drinking and intend to drive.

It is an expectation that phones are made readily available to patrons for alternative transport to be arranged.

9. Alcohol promotions - on the day

In this section:

- a. List the type of promotion your premise runs or intends to run and include the reasons for each promotion.
- b. Detail the management systems for promotions that will ensure that they do not lead to excessive consumption.

Offences: (under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012)

- **Section 237:** It is an offence for a licensee or manager to do anything in the course of carrying on the business that encourages people, or is likely to encourage people to consume alcohol to an excessive extent.
- Promotes or advertises discounts in a way that leads people to believe that the price is 25% or more below the price at which the alcohol is ordinarily sold.
- Promotes or advertises alcohol in a manner aimed at, or that has, special appeal to, minors.

The maximum penalty for any breach is \$10,000 plus the possibility of licence variation, suspension or cancellation.

Please note that under Gambling Regulations 2005, regulation 4(b) makes it illegal to give out alcohol or vouchers for alcohol as a prize.

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10. Staff training

It is an expectation that all staff receive appropriate training and briefing prior to the event.

Management should ensure that any new employees or contractors, regardless of their previous experience, should receive training, especially covering the conditions of the licence and the contents of the procedure manual **before commencing their first shift.**

Training should include the following:

- Host responsibly and understand the monitoring agency's expectations
- Understanding the conditions of the special licence
- The AMP and assigned roles
- The responsible service and management of alcohol
- How to prevent and/or deal with intoxication
- Surveying patrons for intoxication
- Communication between staff on intoxication issues
- Supply to minors, e.g. under 25 protocol
- Briefing on individual roles and responsibilities.

It is highly recommended that all staff have received relevant Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 training prior to the event from the Monitoring agencies. Community and Public Health's Alcohol Licensing Team can arrange a training session free of charge (telephone (03) 379 9480).

11. Incident and noting book

In this section:

- a. List the types of incidents and notings to be recorded
- b. Define who is responsible for recording entries
- c. Define who is responsible for acting upon information recorded
- d. Record how many tickets are sold
- e. Estimate of amount of people attending.

It is recognised good practice to operate an **incident and noting** book. Often these books are used to record matters relating to patron behaviour.

Removals/refusal from an event and matters arising should be recorded. These records can be helpful in identifying matters and trends that require further action.

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12. Security

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In this section:

- a. Details of security firm employed
- b. Numbers attending an event and numbers of security staff in attendance (ratio of security to patrons)
- c. Hours for which security will be employed on site start/finish times.
- d. Who is responsible for liaising with security.

Note: Only certificated security staff can be used for crowd/door control.

Some events will require trained security staff to be present. As a guideline - if the event numbers exceed 100 patrons (subject to the nature of the event), security staff should be employed. This matter needs to be discussed with reporting agencies prior to making an application for a special licence.

Event organisers are responsible for the event, must ensure the security provider has sufficient resources to do their job and must brief security before the start of the event and monitor their performance during the event. The organiser is ultimately responsible for compliance and enforcement of the Act.

13. Environment

- a. Combine a relaxed atmosphere with a safe environment by providing appropriate lighting, seating and entertainment. The primary focus of the function should not be the consumption of alcohol.
- b. Activities such as drinking games that promote the excessive consumption of alcohol are not permitted at any function and are an offence under the Act.
- c. Where gifts or raffle prizes are offered, these should not include alcohol (Gambling Regulations 2005 4(b) makes it illegal to give alcohol or vouchers for alcohol as a prize).
- d. Ensure adequate toilet facilities are available throughout the event.

14. Debriefing

It is advisable for the organisers to debrief staff and contractors at the conclusion to identify areas of potential improvement. Depending on the scale of the event, Police, Council and Health may need to be involved.

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