

LOCAL ALCOHOL POLICY - FURTHER CONSULTATION

Department: Civic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 The purpose of this report is to update Council on the review of the DCC's Local Alcohol Policy (LAP), and to seek Council approval to engage with broader stakeholders and the public on possible LAP content options.
- 2 Council resolved in August 2025 to recommence the review of the LAP, approving a three-stage engagement process to build upon the work carried out during the 2024 review.
- 3 Stage One engagement with key stakeholders has taken place, along with research and information updates including those from whom Council must consult with when developing a draft LAP (Police, Health New Zealand/Te Whatu Ora, and Alcohol Licencing Inspectors).
- 4 A range of possible LAP content options have been identified to engage broader stakeholders and the public on to inform a draft LAP to formally consult on later this year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

- a) **Approves** further stakeholder and public engagement on a range of possible LAP content options noted in this report.
- b) **Notes** that this engagement will inform the draft LAP to formally consult on later this year.

BACKGROUND

- 5 The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (the Act) allows territorial authorities to develop local alcohol policies, following the object of the Act:
 - a) the sale, supply, and consumption of alcohol should be undertaken safely and responsibly; and
 - b) the harm caused by the excessive or inappropriate consumption of alcohol should be minimised.
- 6 LAPs are aimed at ensuring the accessibility and availability of alcohol is in line with the object of the Act. Licences can be refused if they are contrary to a LAP and conditions may be imposed on a licence if they are required by a LAP.

The LAP must only include matters relating to licencing

Review of the DCC Local Alcohol Policy

- 12 A review of the current LAP (adopted in 2019) was started in 2024, including formal consultation and submissions. The Hearings Committee made several recommendations in February 2025. Council resolved in August 2025 to approve them:

Moved (Cr Jim O'Malley/Cr Bill Acklin):

That the Council:

- a) **Approves** the Hearings Committee's recommendations of 27 February 2025 that:
 - i) A revised consultation document be prepared and consulted on.
 - ii) A revised consultation document be prepared and consulted on and that the tri-agencies (Medical Officer of Health, NZ Police and Licensing Inspectors) and other affected parties are actively engaged throughout the process including the preparation of the revised consultation document.
 - iii) Evidence presented to date be considered in the preparation of the revised consultation document.
- b) **Notes** that there would be a Council workshop later this year identifying options for the content of a revised draft Local Alcohol Policy.

Motion carried (CNL/2025/249)

- 13 A three-stage engagement process is being undertaken for this review:

- a) Stage One – compiling research under section 78 of the Act, reviewing evidence received during the 2024 review, engaging with key sector stakeholders, holding a Council workshop and identifying issues and possible LAP content options (completed).
- b) Stage Two – what this report is seeking Council approval to carry out: engaging with broader stakeholders and the public on possible LAP content options and analysing feedback to develop a draft LAP.
- c) Stage Three – Council approves consultation on the draft LAP via the Special Consultative Process, including submissions and hearings, for Council to then adopt the reviewed LAP.

DISCUSSION

Research

- 14 Research and information have been gathered in respect of the Act's seven section 78(2) considerations, with a full research report to accompany a report to Council on the formal draft LAP later this year. Selected key examples are as follows.

- a) The objectives and policies of the district plan – the relevant objectives and policies in relation to licensed premises in commercial and mixed-use zones are:

- Dunedin has a well-structured and economically and socially successful range of commercial and mixed-use environments.
 - The potential for conflict between activities within the commercial and mixed-use zones and in adjoining zones is minimised
- b) The number of licences of each kind held for premises in the district, and the location and opening hours of each of the premises:
- On-licences – 242
 - Off-licences – 77
 - Club licences – 79
- c) Any areas in which bylaws prohibiting alcohol in public places are in force
- For Dunedin’s Alcohol (Control of Alcohol in Public Places) Bylaw 2004 (approved for review in March 2026 by Council), the areas of George Street between The Octagon and Albany Street, Princes Street between The Octagon and Jetty Street, and the accompanying streets, lanes, public places, footpaths, carparks and reserves (including The Octagon, Exchange, Queens Gardens, Railway Station and the grounds of First Church).
- d) The demography of the district’s residents:
- 15-24 year olds make up 20.5% of the Dunedin population compared to 12.5% nationally.
- e) The demography of the people who visit the district as tourists or holiday makers:
- Port Otago had 151,609 passengers arriving in the 2024/25 cruise ship season.
 - A 2025 visitor profiles report found that 10% of New Zealanders who had travelled domestically in the last 12 months had visited Dunedin.
- f) The overall health indicators of the district’s residents:
- The NZ Quality of Life Survey in 2024 found that 70% of respondents perceive alcohol and drug problems, or antisocial behaviours caused by alcohol or drugs, to have been an issue in Dunedin in the last 12 months, up from 66% in 2020.
 - The New Zealand Health Survey 2023/24 indicates that the Otago region has high levels of heavy and hazardous drinking, and the highest monthly heavy episodic drinking compared to any other region in New Zealand/Aotearoa.
- g) The nature and severity of the alcohol-related problems arising in the district:
- Between 2012 and 2021 Dunedin had the highest age-standardised rate of hospitalisations wholly attributable to alcohol in the country (160 per 100,000 people).

- North Dunedin comprises 7-8% of the total Dunedin population yet has contributed between 23% and 27% of all alcohol-related ED visits during the 2018-2024 period (Figure One).
- For the 2022-2025 period in Dunedin, Police reported 2,002 drink-drive offences and 3,255 incidents of alcohol-related family harm.
- ACC identified that in 2023 there were 216 claims specifically for alcohol-related harm in Otago; the second highest rate in New Zealand.

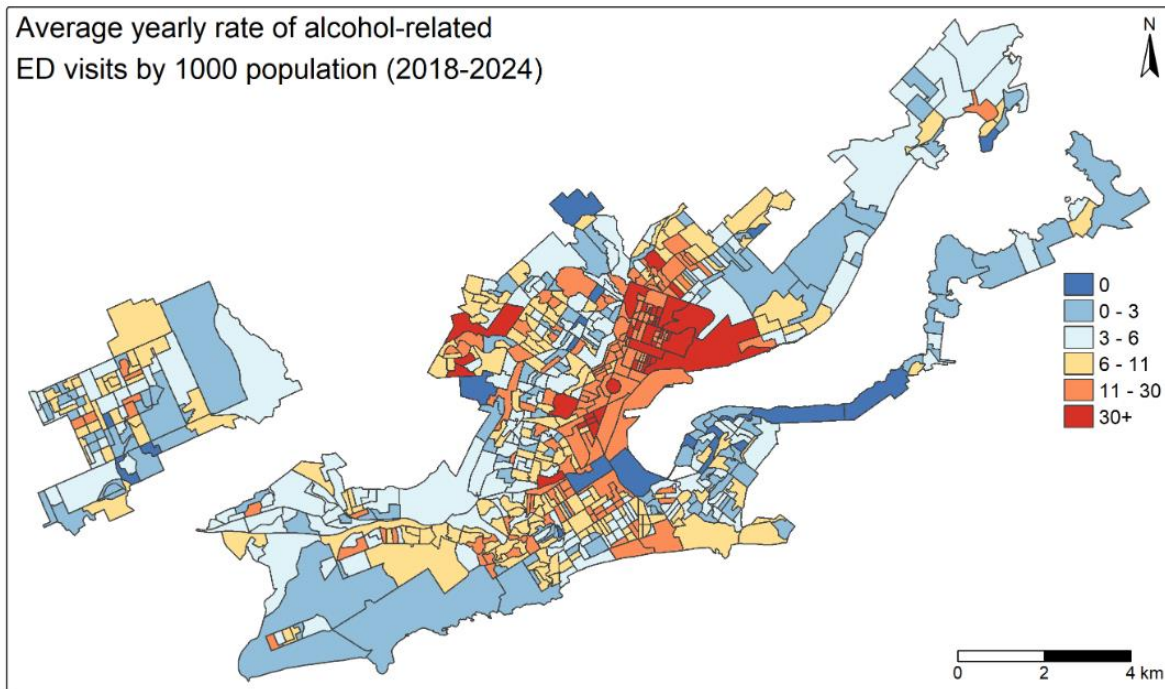


Figure One: Metropolitan Dunedin alcohol-related Emergency Department yearly visit rates by Statistical Area 1 level distribution, averaged over seven years (2018-2024, based on raw counts. Source: Te Whatu Ora, 2026).

15 It should be noted that the total volume of alcoholic beverages available for consumption was down 8.3% to 442 million litres in the twelve months to December 2025, having declined by 11.4% from a recent peak in 2021 (Stats NZ, 2026). On a per capita basis consumption, the number of standard drinks available has declined by 24.5% from 2011 to 2025 (i.e., 2.16 standard drinks to 1.63). LAPs are a means to build on these trends to reduce alcohol harm.

Evidence

- 16 A selected summary of the evidence received during the 2024 review as well as current updates from the tri-agencies is as follows (in addition to the points noted in paragraphs 14(f) and 14(g)):
- a) Alcohol causes significant harms to individuals, whānau, and communities, conservatively costing New Zealand an estimated \$9.1 billion each year.¹

¹ NZIER. Costs of alcohol-related harms in New Zealand: Updating the evidence with recent research. A report for the Ministry of Health. 2024.

| Current LAP | Possible Options | Other LAP Examples |
|--|---|--|
| Off-licence | | |
| No distance restrictions for new licences in relation to existing licences | 200m distance for new licence to an existing one | 1km for Waikato, other LAPs 100m or less |
| No location restrictions or limits outside District Plan limitations | No new off-licences in North Dunedin area from Moray Place to Botanic Gardens to University Oval | Auckland, Central Hawkes Bay, Hastings, Napier, Horowhenua, Tasman |
| | No new off-licences in NZ Deprivation Areas 7-10 | Waikato, Porirua, Christchurch |
| Trading hours 7am-10am | Trading hours 9am-9pm (9am same as on-licences option) | Hastings, Porirua, Wairoa (10am-9pm); many others either 9am opening or 9pm closing |
| Sensitive area location restrictions – 100m from educational or recreational facilities for new licences | 200m distance for new licences: to also apply to marae, places of worship, addiction services | 150m: Gisborne, Horowhenua, Selwyn (Vapes comparison: 300m from schools, marae) |
| On-licence | | |
| Opening time from 8am | Opening time 9am (same as off-licences) | Tauranga, Ōtorohanga, Horowhenua, Kawerau, Whakatane, Ōpōtiki |
| CBD entertainment venues close by 4am | CBD entertainment venues close by 3am (same as other CBD on-licences) | Gore, Southland, Invercargill |
| CBD One Way Door applies 2.30am | CBD One Way Door applies 2am | Waikato, Napier, Western Bay of Plenty, Mackenzie, Timaru |
| Club | | |
| No duty manager (discretionary condition) | Duty manager must be present where higher numbers of people are expected when hosting tournaments or holding club functions | Carterton, Masterton, Wairarapa, Central Hawkes Bay |
| Discretionary Conditions – Should Include: On-licence | | |
| Security requirements (CCTV, lighting, outside areas) | Include broader Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles | Twenty examples including Waikato, Gisborne, Rotorua Lakes, Tasman, Marlborough |
| Preventing intoxication | Maintain an incident register | Auckland, Thames-Coromandel, Waipa, Hutt, Horowhenua, Gore, Invercargill |
| Staffing requirements | Maintain staff training records | Ōtorohanga, Rotorua Lakes, Selwyn, Gore, Invercargill, |
| Discretionary Conditions – Should Include: Off-licence | | |
| No restrictions on off-licence single sales | No single sales of beer 5% or greater strength (excluding craft beer) and RTDs, in 500ml container or less | Gore, Hastings, Hauraki, Porirua, Rotorua Lakes, Tauranga, |
| No restriction on 'Buy now, pay later' | Ban 'Buy now, pay later' schemes | Rotorua, Waikato, Waipa, Whanganui |
| No restrictions on external advertising | No external advertising/promotion of alcohol visible from the exterior of the premises | Waikato, Carterton, Gisborne, Marlborough, Ōtorohanga, Porirua, Thames-Coromandel, Waipa |
| Discretionary Conditions – May Include | | |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| No time limit on serving rapid intoxication drinks | No sales of rapid intoxication drinks after 12am | Porirua, Timaru, Mackenzie, Waimate, Hastings |
| No restriction on alcohol delivery | No delivery of alcohol-only outside licencing hours | Porirua |
| Special licence requirements (several elements noted in current LAP) | In addition: | Central Hawkes Bay |
| | • Midnight cut-off time | |
| | • Limit of two drinks per serve for events over 1000 people | Whanganui, Carterton, Masterton, Wairarapa, Gisborne, Hurunui |
| | • Alcohol and event management plan for large events, i.e. over 400 people (Regulations definition) | Matamata, Hauraki, Waipa, Carterton, Masterton, Wairarapa, Kaikōura, Hurunui, Marlborough, Timaru |
| | • No sale of alcohol if high number of under 18 year olds | Carterton, Masterton, Wairarapa, Tasman |

Table One: Possible LAP Content Options

Stage Two Engagement

19 It is proposed to undertake broader engagement on the possible LAP content options to assist developing a draft for formal consultation. As well as the public, the following organisations have been identified as being likely to have a key interest in changes to alcohol licencing, or to be groups who may be disproportionately impacted by alcohol harm:

- Those stakeholders from Stage One
- ADL NZ
- Alcohol license holders (on-licence via Hospitality NZ)
- Āraiteuru Marae
- Disabled Persons Assembly NZ
- FENZ
- Health Coalition Aotearoa
- Hold On To Your Friends (HOTYF)
- Migrant and Former Refugee Women’s group
- Mirror Services
- Place-based groups (e.g. Brockville, Caversham, Corstorphine, Green Island, North East Valley, South Dunedin)
- Restaurant Association
- Salvation Army
- Sophia Charter
- Students for Sensible Drug Policy Ōtepoti (SSDP)
- Te Whare Tāwharau and Ōtepoti Communities Against Sexual Abuse
- Tūturu Ōtepoti
- Women’s Pasifika Network

20 The means of engagement will be to invite participation in a survey of the possible LAP content options, framed in terms of the objects of the Act, via the Council’s website.

21 Testing options to reduce alcohol harm is a key step to inform Council decisions on the content of the draft LAP that are reasonable, precautionary policy-based ones that take into account the preferences of the community.

- Stakeholder disappointment in not being given a second engagement opportunity as previously indicated.

NEXT STEPS

28 Proposed next steps and approximate timeframes are:

- Stage Two engagement on possible LAP content options – May 2026
- Analysis of feedback and developing draft LAP content – June
- Report to Council to adopt a draft LAP for formal consultation – 22 July
- Consultation on draft LAP – August
- Hearings and deliberations – September
- Report to Council to approve new LAP – 15 October

Signatories

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Author: | Kevin Mechen - Alcohol, Psychoactive Substances and Gambling Advisor |
| Authoriser: | Bonnie Wright - Manager Compliance Solutions Paul Henderson - General Manager Corporate and Regulatory Services |

Attachments

| | Title | Page |
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| ↓A | DCC LAP Review Issues and Options Table 2026 | 157 |

SUMMARY OF CONSIDERATIONS

Fit with purpose of Local Government

This decision enables democratic local decision making and action by, and on behalf of communities.
This decision promotes the social well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

Fit with strategic framework

| | Contributes | Detracts | Not applicable |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Social Wellbeing Strategy | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Economic Development Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Environment Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Arts and Culture Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| 3 Waters Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Future Development Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Integrated Transport Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Parks and Recreation Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Other strategic projects/policies/plans | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |

The proposal to undertake further engagement on the LAP aligns with the Social Wellbeing strategic priorities of vibrant and cohesive communities, and safe and healthy people.

Māori Impact Statement

Local runaka will continue to have the opportunity to contribute to the LAP review.

Sustainability

There are no implications for sustainability.

LTP/Annual Plan / Financial Strategy /Infrastructure Strategy

There are no identified implications for the LTP/Annual Plan, Financial or Infrastructure Strategies.

Financial considerations

There are no financial considerations identified.

Significance

Although the LAP is an important document that has a statutory basis, this decision to approve further engagement is considered to be low significance in terms of the Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy.

Engagement – external

The organisations that have been engaged with are noted in paragraph 16.

Engagement - internal

DCC’s regulatory team has been engaged with.

Risks: Legal / Health and Safety etc.

Legal risks are being managed through undergoing a three-step engagement process. DCC’s Legal Team or external lawyers will provide legal advice as required and as the review progresses.

Conflict of Interest

There are no known conflicts of interest.

Community Boards

There are no implications for Community Boards.

Table One: Dunedin City Council Local Alcohol Policy Review - Issues and Options April 2026

| Overarching issue | Examples and impacts of the issue | Issue raised by (via 2025/26 engagement, 2024 submissions) | Possible option(s) to mitigate issue |
|--|---|---|---|
| Alcohol harm in Dunedin is higher than other areas of the country | Dunedin has the highest rate of hospitalisation wholly attributable from alcohol-related harm in the country | Medical Officer of Health Safe and Well Ōtepoti | Tighter restrictions for on- and off-licence trading hours |
| | Otago has higher hazardous drinking and heavy episodic drinking than the national average | | |
| | Dunedin has the second highest rate for alcohol related harm ACC claims | | |
| The impacts of alcohol harm on Māori are disproportionate | Māori are twice as likely to die from alcohol-related causes than non-Māori | Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou Medical Officer of Health | Expanding the definition of 'sensitive sites' to include marae |
| | Areas with a high Māori population have nearly 50% more outlets, with density linked to harm | Safe and Well Ōtepoti Health Coalition NZ | No external advertising/ promotion of alcohol visible at on or-off licenses from the exterior of the premises |
| The impacts of alcohol harm on low-income communities/those living in high-deprivation areas are disproportionate | In Dunedin, 71% of all alcohol-related Emergency Department visits were from people who resided in areas of high deprivation (North Dunedin are 23-27%, yet 7-8% of population) | Safe and Well Ōtepoti Medical Officer of Health | No new off-licences in NZ Deprivation 7-10 areas |
| | Harm is caused by the clustering of premises | Police | No new off-licences in North Dunedin area from Moray Place to Botanic Gardens to University Oval |
| | Proportionally more off-licenses in high-deprivation areas | Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou | Banning of buy-now-pay-later schemes for purchasing alcohol |
| | In New Zealand, adolescents who live in the most deprived areas typically consume the greatest quantity of alcohol | Salvation Army Health Coalition NZ | 200m distance restriction of new off-licence to an existing one |
| | Buy-now-pay-later schemes encourage people (including students) to live beyond their immediate means, may lead to debts | Alcohol Healthwatch OUSA Kimberly Cousins (Dunedin alcohol | |

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| | | researcher and academic – 2024 submission) | |
| Alcohol harms are wide ranging, and impact wider families and communities | Impact on wider family and communities, including through family violence (and the impact on children) | Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou Safe and Well Ōtepoti | Include broader Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, e.g. monitoring of outdoor areas of on-license premises trading after 12am 200m distance restriction on new off-licences opening near sensitive areas (including community libraries and pools, schools, marae, addiction services) Requirement for sports clubs to have a certified duty manager present when hosting tournaments or holding club functions |
| | Links of alcohol to sexual violence | Disabled Persons Assembly NZ | |
| | Micro-aggressions from intoxicated persons towards people with disabilities around George Street and the Octagon | | |
| | Currently no safe zones for families and young people | | |
| | Some clubs are at a higher risk of alcohol-related harm occurring | | |
| Alcohol advertising contributes to further consumption and harm | Alcohol advertising impacts on youths and contributes to the normalisation of drinking | Chief Licensing Inspector (2024 submission) | No external advertising/ promotion of alcohol visible at on or-off licenses from the exterior of the premises |
| | Students are often specifically targeted by advertising | Medical Officer of Health (2024 submission) | |
| | Advertising can trigger people with alcohol use disorders, making it harder for them to stay sober or reduce their drinking | Police (2024 submission) | |
| | Children in New Zealand are exposed to substantial alcohol marketing | Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou | |

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| | | <p>Safe and Well Ōtepoti</p> <p>Wellsouth Primary Health Network</p> <p>Salvation Army</p> <p>OUSA</p> <p>Healthcare Coalition NZ</p> <p>Alcohol Healthwatch</p> | |
| Alcohol harm occurs in and around on-licences | District Plan definitions of residential and non-residential areas may have unintended consequences such as preventing the opening of a new on-licence in North Dunedin that could provide a safer space for students | Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou | Moving forward the one-way-door time to 2am for all on-licences in the CBD, to allow for gradual release of patrons into the community |
| | There are regular occurrences of alcohol-related assaults in and around the Octagon | Police | Reduction of on-licence hours |
| | People can be asked to leave one establishment due to being intoxicated, but may still be able to enter a different establishment and be served | Medical Officer of Health | Include broader Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, e.g. monitoring of outdoor areas of on-license premises trading after 12am |
| | Incident registers are not currently mandatory meaning harm is not always recorded and/or tracked | Chief Licensing Inspector | Requirement that all premises keep an incident register to be made available to a Licensing Inspector or Police upon request |
| | Queues outside of CBD premises pose issues and potential risks to pedestrian and road user safety | OUSA | No sales of rapid intoxication drinks after 12am |
| | There is less evidence of host responsibility/harm minimisation in city venues | Kimberly Cousins | |

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| Alcohol harm causes a strain on emergency services | Incidents of alcohol harm in and around the Octagon require limited emergency resources | Police Medical Officer of Health | Moving the one-way-door time to 2am in the CBD to stagger exits, which and can help reduce the number of incidents emergency services need to attend |
| | Wider secondary alcohol harm includes pre-emptive call outs for ambulances, which impact genuine call outs | Safe and Well Ōtepoti Emergency Department Senior Medical Officer | |
| | Resources at Dunedin’s emergency department are very stretched, compromising the quality and treatment of care provided to other patients | Kimberly Cousins | |
| | Presenters aged 15 – 24 consistently have the highest number of alcohol-related ED visits, accounting for over half of all alcohol-related visits | | |
| Harm associated with off-licence purchases | 72% of drinking occasions among high-risk drinkers occurs at locations outside of on-licenses | Medical Officer of Health Police | No new off-licenses in NZ Deprivation 7-10 areas |
| | Established relationship between trading hours, consumption and harm | Chief Licencing Inspector | No single sales of beer 5% or greater strength (excluding craft beer) and ready-to-drinks (RTDs), in 500ml container or less Restrictions on the trading hours of off-licenses |
| | There are issues of alcohol harm being caused by pre-loading before heading into town, often due to cheaper alcohol prices at off-licenses | Safe and Well Ōtepoti Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou | |
| | Single-sales can encourage impulsive drinking, particularly for people who struggle with alcohol dependence or have limited finances | Salvation Army | Requirement that all on-and-off licenses keep staff training records and make these available to a Licencing Inspector and Police upon request |
| | Alcohol harm often happens at home before going to on-licenses, with alcohol purchased from off-licenses | Healthcare Coalition NZ Alcohol Healthwatch | |
| There is a city-and-country-wide cost of alcohol harm | Across New Zealand, the cost of alcohol harm is estimated to be \$9.1 billion each year | Medical Officer of Health Safe and Well Ōtepoti | Restrictions on the trading hours of on-and-off-licenses |
| | There is a social and financial cost of alcohol harm to Dunedin, including from specific student events such as St Patrick’s Day, Hyde Street | | |
| Accessibility and access to alcohol can increase the likelihood of harm | Alcohol accessibility and affordability impacts the ability of recovery for people who may struggle with alcohol dependence | Medical Officer of Health Chief Licencing Inspector | All off-licensed premises, unless endorsed under Section 40 of the Act as a remote seller, be prohibited from delivering alcohol (including via the use of a third-party delivery |
| | Hazardous drinking increases with longer hours of access and greater availability of alcohol | Police | |
| | Incidence of alcohol related harms linked to longer trading hours | Safe and Well Ōtepoti | |

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|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| | Uber deliveries have been found to be 73% non-compliant for age requirement checks | Alcohol Healthwatch | company) outside of their allowable licensing hours |
| | Remote delivery services fail to provide drivers with the necessary training to assess customer intoxication or protect drivers from intoxicated customers | Salvation Army | Moving entertainment venue closing times forward from 4am to 3am to align late night closing times |
| | Higher alcohol density associated with higher rates of harm | OUSA | |
| | | Healthcare Coalition NZ | |
| | | Kimberly Cousins | |
| Special licence terms can go further to minimising alcohol harm at events | Currently non-licenced premises can run an event until 1am, but licenced premises can only run an event until midnight | Chief Licencing Inspector | All special licenses to have the same midnight cut-off time |
| | People at large events are not always assessed for signs of intoxication before purchasing additional units of alcohol | Police | Limit of two drinks per serve where 1000 patrons or more are expected at an event |
| | The current LAP defines large-scale events as being 150 people or more, which doesn't align with the special licence definition of '400 people or more' | Medical Officer of Health | Requirement of an alcohol and event management plan for any special licence event of 400 people or more |
| | The sale of alcohol at events where a significant proportion of the attendees are under the age of 18 normalise and expose children to alcohol use | Safe and Well Ōtepoti | Banning the sale of alcohol at events where a significant proportion of attendees are under the age of 18 (e.g., school events) |
| | | Alcohol Healthwatch NZ | |