

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

ACT Liquor Reform

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On 11 May 2017, the *Liquor Amendment Bill* was passed by the Legislative Assembly.

The reforms improve the vibrancy of Canberra's nightlife precincts, remove unnecessary regulation for the liquor and hospitality industry, and reduce alcohol related harm.

The majority of amendments included in the Bill will commence the day after notification, other than provisions that require operational or system changes. These provisions will commence on 1 July 2017. The Bill's reforms to remove unnecessary regulatory burden on licensees and encouraging vibrancy and diversity in the ACT's nightlife, include:

- allowing up to six extended trading authorisations each year for licensees to trade beyond their standard hours for special events
- recognition of interstate responsible service of alcohol qualifications
- removal of unnecessary regulatory requirements for low risk licence types
- perpetual liquor licences
- removal of unnecessary signage requirements.

An improved fees structure will commence from 1 July 2017. This recognises the importance of small and low risk businesses. Venues with an occupancy loading of 150 people or less and licensed hours of 2 am or earlier will pay a reduced annual licence fee.

The ACT Government strongly supports the development of small businesses and unique, boutique style venues in Canberra. Fee reductions support those small businesses currently operating and promote the development of new, vibrant small venues.

Off-licensees who purchase between \$3 million and \$4 million in liquor per year will see a fee increase of 5 per cent. Fees will progressively increase for each additional million in annual purchases up to a cap of 20 per cent.

Additional off-licence fees in 2017-18 will be used to support a responsible consumption of alcohol education campaign.

Measures to reduce alcohol related harm include:

- a new statutory power for licensees and other authorised persons to evict or refuse entry to intoxicated, violent, quarrelsome or disorderly persons
- making it an offence for a person who is evicted from or refused entry to a licensed venue to remain within the vicinity of the venue or attempt to re-enter the venue, unless they have a reasonable excuse
- amending the definition of "intoxicated" in the Act to include intoxication arising from drugs, or a combination of drugs and alcohol

- an express power for the Commissioner for Fair Trading to impose a condition on a licence requiring the licensee to fit security cameras at or around a licensed venue
- clarifying the Commissioner can impose particular harm reduction conditions on a licence (for example, prohibiting the use of glass or sale of shots of alcohol after midnight);
- extending the Attorney-General's power to declare prohibited alcohol products, which will allow the sale and consumption of potentially harmful products such as powdered alcohol to be restricted.