

OFFICE OF Liquor and Gaming REGULATION



Friday 20 March 2020

Dear Licensee

All licensees have a legislative responsibility to provide a safe environment and a social responsibility to mitigate the risks of the spread of COVID-19. We recognise the steps already taken by industry to protect their patrons, communities and workers.

The following information is based on frequently asked questions received through our call centre, inspectors and industry networks since Prime Minister Morrison's announcement of mass gathering restrictions.

The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation expects licensees to operate in a way that minimises community harm.

Liquor sales for off-premises consumption

In normal circumstances licensees are not permitted to sell liquor for off-premises consumption (e.g. from attached or detached bottle shops) if they are not selling liquor for on-premises consumption at the main premises.

However, if you have closed your main premises as a result of COVID-19 you will be able to continue to operate your attached and detached bottle shops. Please note that only licensees with the authority for takeaway sales are able to do this.

Hotel bottle shops must still operate in compliance with the Liquor Act and any other directions of government.

Approved managers

We understand that COVID-19 may result in increased work absences of staff, including approved managers.

Under the Liquor Act, licensees are required to take reasonable steps to ensure an approved manager is reasonably available at certain times and present at other times.

If, after taking reasonable steps, you are unable to ensure this because of COVID-19 absences, you may continue to operate. These absences should be recorded and include who was scheduled to work, why they are unable to work and who is in charge in their absence.

You must ensure that appropriately RSA trained and experienced staff are also present to take charge at the licensed premises.

If you are still concerned with access to an approved manager, consider having additional staff members apply for the approval. The applicant will need to have a current RMLV certificate complete the application form.

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Gaming licensees

We are aware a number of licensees with gaming machines want to support social distancing by restricting access to every second machine.

If you choose to restrict access, you need to place a sign on the display of every impacted gaming machine to explain that access has been temporarily prevented to support social distancing measures in response to COVID-19.

Do not turn off the machine at the internal switch inside the main door or at the wall or you may experience difficulties later powering up the machines.

These measures do not remove your compliance obligations, including the need to ensure all relevant Link Progressive Jackpots continue in accordance with their respective requirements such as the maintenance of at least two gaming machines on the link.

If you wish to take action other than outlined above, you must obtain the appropriate approval. It is recommended that you consult with your licensed monitoring operator.

Licence variation fee relief

Remember that liquor licence application fees associated with the following have been waived for six months to 31 July 2020, backdated from 1 February 2020.

- temporary or permanent change of licensed area
- temporary or permanent change of trading hours

Despite the fee waiver, you must still complete the application to vary your licence. If you have any questions about variation or any other aspect of your business operations, please call 13 QGOV (13 74 68) and ask to speak with one of our licensing team or visit the OLGR website.

Staying up to date

This is an unprecedented and evolving situation. Advice may change over time so it is important you stay up-to-date through reliable channels:

- Australian Government Department of Health
- Queensland Health's COVID-19 website

Call the National Coronavirus Help Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Regards,

Victoria Thomson
Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming