

Need a new alcohol licence?

—
Here's everything you need to know and do



ccc.govt.nz/alcohol-licences

Are you...

- **Planning a new business?**
- **Changing your existing business?**
- **Taking over ownership of an existing business?**

If so you need to know what steps to take to get up and running.

Getting an alcohol licence step-by-step

This is a guide to the steps you need to take to get an alcohol licence. It's important that you follow each of these steps in the order outlined in the document. Start with answering a couple of questions about your proposed business

1 What is your business?

What type of premises are you proposing to open?

This is your primary overall business e.g tavern, hotel, florist, art gallery, theatre etc

What type of alcohol licence will you need?

E.g On, Off, Club

What will be your main style of operation?

E.g tavern, internet-based sales, bottle store, restaurant

2 Which of the following applies to your proposed business?

● Planning a new business

- a. existing business, currently unlicensed, but proposing to be licenced; *OR*
- b. existing building, new business proposing to be licenced; *OR*
- c. new building and new business proposing to be licenced

● Changing your existing business

- a. seeking changes to current alcohol licence
 - e.g. changing from a restaurant to a tavern; *OR*
 - licenced area changing; *OR*
 - increase in hours past 11pm (regional planning requirements); *OR*
 - rebuilding onsite; *OR*
- b. existing licence held but seeking an additional or different licence type
 - e.g. currently hold an on-tavern and proposing also to hold an off-tavern (takeaway alcohol purchases)

● Taking over ownership of an existing business

- a. Change of ownership only; *OR*
- b. Change of ownership and operational changes (e.g. type of licence, licenced area, hours)

Note: You can apply for a Temporary Authority, which, if granted, means you can operate under that existing licence for three months. You **MUST** apply for a new alcohol licence within six weeks of obtaining your Temporary Authority. If you are operating under a Temporary Authority, you cannot make these changes/operate differently until your new alcohol licence has been issued.

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Have a chat with us first

Before you apply for a Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol) or an alcohol licence we recommend that you talk with:

- **an Alcohol Licensing Inspector:** to confirm that an alcohol licence for the type of business you are proposing can be applied for under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012. They'll also explain any specific licensing requirements that may impact planning and/or building considerations.
- **a Duty Planner and/or a Building Control Officer:** If this is a new building or business, or you are making changes to an existing business.



Discussions with us early in your planning process, before you lodge your application, will streamline the process, save you time and money and avoid unnecessary processing delays.

Refer also to our [Information Sheet for Developers](#) for things to consider that may impact on how your business is proposing to operate.



My checklist

- Have you worked out what type of business you have?
- Are you planning a new business, changing your existing business, or taking over ownership of an existing business?

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Pre-application meeting

You can ask for a **pre-application meeting** to discuss what requirements you may need to fulfill.

- **Check District Plan** (Resource Management Act) requirements with a Duty Planner to see if what you propose will meet requirements or whether you need to apply for a resource consent first
- **Check building code requirements** with a Building Control Officer to see if what you propose will meet requirements or whether you need to apply for a building consent or change of use first
- **You may also need to talk with a Fire Engineer** (note any premises with a capacity of more than 100 must have a Fire Evacuation Scheme approved by Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ))
- **Will you be having music, DJ's, entertainment or outside areas** as part of your proposed business? Check noise management requirements and talk with an Environmental Health Officer about compliance expectations
- **Food registration** – check with an Environmental Health Officer in the Food Safety and Health Licensing Team about what is required and timelines.



My checklist

District Plan requirements

Zone: _____

Is the zoning correct for this type of premises? Yes No

Is a resource consent needed? Yes No

Is alcohol to be sold? *If Yes, a Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol) is required* Yes No

Is alcohol to be sold between 11pm – 7am? *If Yes, then resource consent may be required*
Note maximum default trading closing hours under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act is 4am. Yes No

Building control/consent requirements

Is a building consent required? *If yes, then:* Yes No

Is the whole building 'accessible'? Yes No

Are accessible toilets provided? Yes No

Is the fire egress for the whole building adequate? Yes No

Is this a 'change of use' under the building act? *If yes, then in addition to above:* Yes No

Are there sufficient toilet facilities for the building? Yes No

Is the structure of the building adequate? Yes No

Are the fire safety provisions of the building adequate? Yes No

Is a backflow prevention device required? Yes No

Is the ventilation adequate? Yes No

Is a grease trap required? Yes No

Is a Compliance Schedule/Warrant of Fitness required? Yes No

Is an Evacuation Schedule required? Yes No

Note: Clients should check with a Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ) Officer on the need for an Evacuation Schedule. FENZ requires these where for occupancy capacity over 100 persons or a working procedure for all other venues. Premises qualifying in these categories need a plan/scheme submitted and approved by NZFS within a month of opening: fireandemergency.nz



Noise management requirements:

All On-licences and Club licences are required to comply with the requirements of the noise provisions under the Resource Management Act. View online at ccc.govt.nz/alcohol-licences

Information about noise control and noise from businesses ccc.govt.nz/services/noise-control

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Consent application(s) (if required)

Apply for any **resource consent, building consent** or change of use that you have been advised you will need. Processing timelines can vary depending on what consents are needed.

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Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol)

Once all planning or building consents you require are approved, you can apply for a **Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol)**. All licensed premises must have a current certificate.

- This certifies that the proposed use of the premises meets the requirements of the building code and Resource Management Act 1991.

All applications for an alcohol licence require a current Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol) to have been approved. The District Licensing Committee can't accept alcohol licencing applications until a Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol) has been issued. This is a required document that must be included with any new licence application (and for some variations to existing licences).



Your application for a Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol) must include:

- The completed application form
- All required supplementary documents listed on the form
- Proof of payment (you will be given an invoice when you file). Your application can't be processed until payment is received.

Processing times for certificates can take up to five weeks.

The alcohol licensing team will do an initial vetting of your application and then refer it to the planning and building teams for assessment and approval. They may ask you for additional information or actions (if you do not have the identified consents needed for your proposed business).

A certificate will be issued once fully approved. This is not an alcohol licence but means that you can now apply for one.

Your certificate will have an advisory note about any final building clearances needed once your alcohol licence is granted and before you open to the public. This will be either a Code Compliance or Certificate of Public Use. You will need to apply for a building consent requesting these final clearances.



My checklist

Other requirements for some types of On-licences and Club -licences

Noise - is the premises suitable for the proposed purpose? Is the structure of the building and its windows/doorways sufficient to contain noise that is likely to be produced?

Yes No

Noise - are there outside areas? Generally there should not be outside speakers operating after 10pm at night.

Yes No

Smoking areas - Is the smoke free area large enough? (Speak with smoke free enforcement officer at Community and Public Health). Council has a "smoke free" dining policy for leased footpath areas.

Yes No

Footpath use - do you need a footpath lease? Contact the Council's property leasing team.

Yes No



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Apply for your alcohol licence



Processing time for alcohol licence certificates is about six weeks. If there is missing information, or the need for a hearing, then timelines will be longer.

Specific requirements for different licence types:

On licence

- **This applies to taverns, restaurants with a separate bar area, nightclubs, adult venues.** If you are requesting to trade beyond 1am you need a Alcohol Management Plan and possibly also noise and security or queue management plans. You will also need detailed plans of your layout and fit out – including outside areas and plumbed water stations.
- **Footpath leases** approved and plans provided
- **A business plan.** This shows how you intend to operate and develop your business operation in the future, along with identifying your risk category under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.

Off-licence

- **A business plan.** This shows how you intend to operate and develop your business operation in the future, along with identifying your risk category under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.
- **Remote sales** (e.g. website sales). Ensure your test website is set up for review and check that all requirements under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act will be met for these types of sales (see our [Remote Sales information sheet](#)).

Club licence

- All clubs will need to provide an up-to-date copy of your club charter and membership rules and a list of any affiliated members to be covered under the licence. This is so we can correctly identify your risk category under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.



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Lodgement meeting

A **lodgement meeting** is required with an Alcohol Licensing Inspector in order to file your application for a new premises alcohol licence or variation application.

The purpose of the meeting is for the inspector to confirm:

- your application is complete
- all requested documents have been provided
- the nature of your business and the outline of the area you are requesting to be licensed.

This information will enable the inspector to calculate the fees payable on your application and to issue you with an invoice for your application and annual fees, which must accompany your application. Applications will not be accepted unless they are complete and the correct fees have been paid.

Before you book your lodgement meeting you will need to

- Complete the relevant application form – **On-licence**, **Off-licence** or **Club licence**.
- Attach all the required supplementary documents listed on the form (this includes your Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol))

At the lodgement meeting

- An inspector ensures your documents are complete and explains the application process, including the responsibilities and expectations on licensees if your application is granted
- Pay your fee (you will be given an invoice at your lodgement meeting) and provide proof of payment. Your application cannot be processed until payment is received.

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Processing your application

• **There is 15 day public notification period.** During this time the public can view your application and file objections. The application is displayed on our webpage and you will be sent a copy to display in your main entrance.

• **Your application is then assessed based on the criteria in the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act and the information you have provided.**

• **Police and the Medical Officer of Health have 15 working days to report on your application.** They may ask for additional information, and can oppose your application.

• **An Alcohol Licensing Inspector will make inquiries and report on your application** and then compile the file for decision. There is no fixed timeline for this process.

• **The application is referred to the Council's Hearings advisor to obtain the District Licensing Committee's (DLC) decision.**

- If there are no agency or public objections, and the DLC is satisfied there are no matters to hear evidence on, then the application will be decided on its merits through a written decision. No public hearing is required.
- Public hearing – if there are public objections then the DLC must have a hearing. Applications opposed by one or more of the agencies are also usually decided through a hearing. The DLC must give at least 10 working days' notice of the hearing date.
- All DLC decisions determined by a hearing must be issued in writing after the hearing and are subject to a 10 working day appeal period to the Alcohol Licensing Regulatory Authority. If no appeals are filed, then the licence can be issued.

• **The alcohol licensing team will issue the licence to you once all final clearances have been completed.**



Do I need a manager's certificate?

We encourage all licensees to at least have complete the Licenced Controlled Qualification (LCQ) so that you have a good understanding of your responsibilities under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act as licensees, even if you are not intending to be hands-on or be the operational manager.

All permanent duty managers need to have a current manager's certificate.

How do I get my manager's certificate?

- Obtain your LCQ certificate from an education provider, have a job in the industry, appropriate experience and meet the suitability criteria.

Apply for your manager's certificate

This process can take about six weeks. You can time this to coincide with your licence application timelines.

- You must attend and pass an interview
- Police have 15 working days to report on your application. They may ask for additional information, and can oppose your application.
- An Alcohol Licensing Inspector will make inquiries and report on your application and then compile the file for decision. There is no fixed timeline for this.
- The application is referred to the Council's Hearings advisor to obtain the District Licensing Committee's (DLC) decision.
 - On the papers decisions – this will happen if there are no agency or public objections and the DLC are happy there are no matters to hear evidence on.
 - Public hearing – if there are public objections then the DLC must have a hearing. Applications opposed by one or more of the agencies are also usually decided through a hearing. The DLC must give at least 10 working days' notice of the hearing date.
- All DLC decisions determined by a hearing must be issued in writing after the hearing and are subject to a 10 working day appeal period to the Alcohol Licensing Regulatory Authority. If no appeals are filed, then the licence can be issued.

Appointment of duty managers

As a licensee you will need to complete a **duty manager appointment** for each person who will be working as a duty manager under the licence.

Food registration

Ensure you complete your **food registration** requirements about the time your alcohol licence is issued and you are opening to the public. Once your registration is received a Health Licensing/Environmental Health Officer will contact you directly about the a Verification visit.

The issuing of a new alcohol licence is subject to all final clearances which may include:

- Appointment of duty managers
- Licensing inspection of final fit-out for some types of businesses
- Final building clearances – through a Code Compliance or Certificate of Public Use
- Have required licencing signage displayed



My checklist

Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act (2012) requirements

If alcohol is to be consumed on the premises an alcohol licence is required. The steps are as follows:

Obtained a Premises Certificate of Compliance (Alcohol) for the proposed business use? Yes No
This will confirm that planning and building matters allow for the establishment of a licensed premises.

When you have this, then: Yes No

1. Apply for an alcohol licence (or variation to your existing licence).
All sale of alcohol applications can be downloaded from the Council website (ccc.govt.nz/alcohol)
2. Double check and prepare all the required documents (listed on the application form)
3. Book a lodgement meeting with an inspector to file your completed application.

A person who holds a duty manager's certificate is required to be on the premises at all times alcohol is available for sale. Yes No

1. Complete the LCQ, then
2. Apply for a new manager's certificate, then
3. Appoint duty managers

Before you open... have you...

Ensured your premises will comply with any approved resource consent conditions? Yes No

Obtained final building consent sign-off? Yes No

Obtained **Building Code of Compliance (CCC) or Certificate of Public Use (CPU)**? (safe to allow the public access?) Yes No

Received Notice of Registration (Food Act)? Yes No

Booked verification visit? (Food Act Registration) Yes No

Alcohol licence granted? (if applicable) Yes No

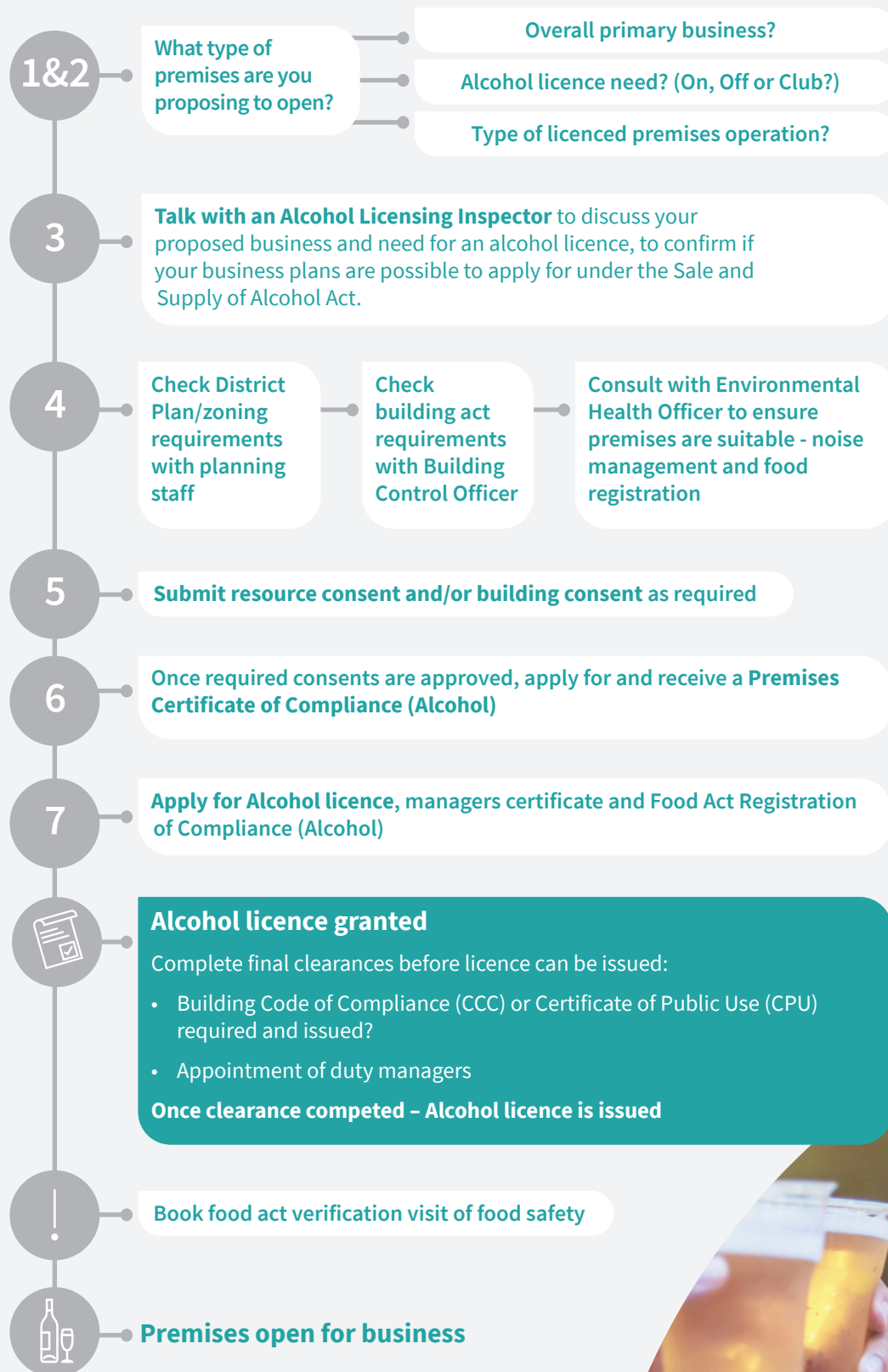
Before it can be issued you must satisfy any final "subject to" clearance requirements, e.g:

- Appointment of sufficient number of duty managers to cover hours open.
- Any "fit out" checks by the agencies
- CCC or CPU (see above), so public safely enter the building
- Have required licensing signage displayed



If yes to all of the above, you are ready to open for business!

Alcohol licensing process at a glance:



Alcohol licensing guidelines

January 2021

Questions?

Get in touch with us on **03 9418999**, or by email, if you have any questions or queries on your application.

- Alcohol licensing
alcohollicensing@ccc.govt.nz
- Food registration
healthlicensing@ccc.govt.nz
- Noise requirements
environmentalhealth@ccc.govt.nz
- Duty Planner
DutyPlanner@ccc.govt.nz
- Duty Building Consent Officer
DutyBCO@ccc.govt.nz