

Kōanga Spring 2026

Alcohol licensing tips and reminders

There's something about longer days, warmer weather and a little extra sunshine that gets people out and about again. Spring is the ideal time to catch up with friends, make the most of outdoor fun, and raise a glass to the new season. So shake off any winter blues and read on for some handy tips and reminders to help you and your business make the best of spring.



Attention to detail

Clear ways to apply

Easy-to-read, clear plans speed up the licence application process. Remember to include:

- ✓ Areas where alcohol will be consumed
- ✓ Designated areas – restricted, supervised, or undesignated
- ✓ The main entrance to the premises
- ✓ An interior layout
- ✓ Any food outlets
- ✓ All alcohol point-of-sale locations.

Don't forget to:

- ✓ Complete ALL sections on the form
- ✓ Provide all supporting information
- ✓ Check that everything is clear, legible, and easy to understand.



Something special?

Don't miss the boat

Planning a special event? Get your Special Licence application in pronto - at least 20 days beforehand.

Top tip: Once the details are confirmed, get cracking. Lodging your application early gives us time to review it, request any extra information, and complete the process ahead of the big day.

Creating an event?

- 🍷 Check if you need a Special Licence
- 🍷 Plan for extra customer numbers
- 🍷 Check your occupancy limits
- 🍷 Ensure your premises meet building, fire and health requirements
- 🍷 Don't assume your existing licence or licences cover a new event.



Play by the rules

Guidelines on breaches

The **Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority** (ARLA) has updated its penalty guidelines for alcohol licensing breaches from 1 July 2026.

The changes provide a clearer picture of the penalties for first-time breaches. For example, a failed control purchase operation (CPO) may result in a **three-day suspension** for on-licences, club licences, and stand-alone bottle stores, or a **five-day suspension** for supermarkets and grocery stores.

But penalties are not automatic. ARLA will consider the circumstances of each case, including factors that may affect the seriousness of the breach.



Do your duty

Manage your managers

Duty managers are your first line of defence in ensuring alcohol is supplied responsibly. To avoid any compliance issues, make sure:

- 🎯 Manager appointments are completed correctly
- 🎯 Temporary and acting managers are correctly authorised
- 🎯 The full name of the duty manager is clearly displayed.

Staying on top of your procedures helps ensure your business operates in accordance with the **Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012**.



Signs of the times 📋

Take a moment to check that your signs are in place, up to date and easy for customers to see.

This includes **manager-on-duty signs**, **prohibited persons notices**, and information about your **food and low-alcohol options**.

A quick once-over now could help you spot damaged, hard-to-read or missing signage before it becomes a problem.



Put the brakes on drink driving

Licensed businesses can play an important role in helping customers make safe choices.

- 🚗 Encourage customers to plan their transport home
- 🚗 Ensure staff promote taxis, rideshares, or designated drivers
- 🚗 Remind customers that alcohol can remain in your system the following morning.



Don't forget fire safety 🔥

- Keep emergency exits clear
- Understand and comply with occupancy limits
- Check outdoor areas don't create access or safety issues
- Ensure temporary structures have the required approvals.



Featured business

The Pioneer Bar & Restaurant
2 Skippers Lane, Waipapa

HOURS

Mon - Closed

Tues - Sun 12pm - late

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Include the following information:

Subject: (e.g.) Q&A Newsletter

Location: (e.g.) Kaitiāia

Question: (e.g.) Where should my ON Licence be situated?



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