

Hōtoke Winter 2026

Alcohol licensing tips and reminders

Fans of warm fires, hot meals, cold beers and winter sports will be getting a warm Far North welcome this year, as always. This winter, change is in the air – namely changes to licence restrictions on our key public holidays. Read all about it below as well as a few reminders for our much loved local sports clubs. Check out all the winter tips your business needs to know in our newsletter...



Ch-ch-ch--ch-ch changes Public holiday licence restrictions

From 3 April 2026
businesses that hold an on-licence
can sell alcohol during normal trading hours
on

**Anzac Day,
Good Friday,
Easter Sunday,
and Christmas Day.**

**Previous licence restrictions on those days
no longer apply.**

For premises holding an off-licence,
alcohol cannot be sold on restricted trading
days, except for **cellar doors**
which may supply wine on
any day of the year.

*As licences come up for renewal, the
condition relating to sacrosanct days will be
removed.*



Need a Special Licence Don't risk non-compliance

Are you planning an event that sits outside
your current licence conditions?

A **Special Licence** may be required.

For things like longer trading hours,
a change to the licensed area,
or (for clubs) events involving
non-club members.

If you're unsure whether a Special Licence is
needed, check in with us early so it's clarified
well before the event.

This helps avoid last-minute hiccups and
supports operating in line with the
Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

Remember, events held outside licence
conditions may place a premises at risk of
non-compliance.



Being on the ball this winter

Red cards for sideline drinkers

It's great to see winter sports teams back on the fields doing their bit for their clubs.

Something no one wants to see though is drinking on the sidelines, because **most Far North fields aren't licensed.**

Drinking on sports fields is an offence, so sports clubs also need to keep an eye out for those bringing alcohol into the club room.

Another reminder – any one who isn't a club member, or a guest of a member or an affiliated club cannot be served.



500ml limit on spirits

We're seeing an increase in **premixed spirits being supplied via taps.**

This includes products like flavoured gins and other spirit-based mixes.

Regardless of the method of supply, spirits must not be sold or supplied in containers exceeding **500ml per serve.**

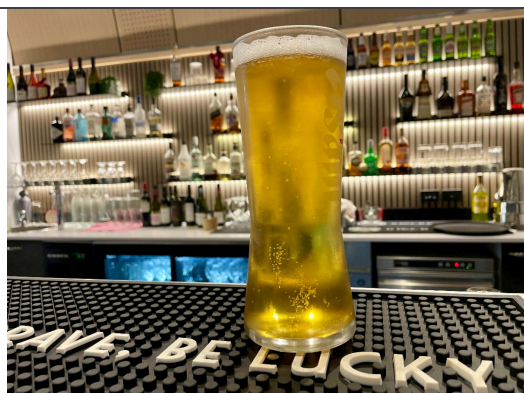
This applies to on-licences and club licences, whether alcohol is supplied from a tap, bottle, jug, carafe, or any container.

The **500ml limit** applies regardless of the strength or type of drink.

This includes cocktails, shared vessels, and products like fish bowls.



Licencees and managers should ensure staff understand pour limits and that systems preventing oversized serves are in place.



Where's your guest register at? Keeping it simple

Clubs are required to keep a register of guests who are on the premises.

This applies to anyone who is not a member or affiliated club member.

The register should include:

- Guest's full name
- Name of the hosting member
- Date and time of entry.

This helps ensure your club is complying with its licence conditions.

If you don't already have a guest register process in place, it's time to set one up.

It could be as simple as a school exercise book.



Licence conditions and low-alcohol options

A quick reminder to check in with your licence conditions and be familiar with how your premises is meant to operate.

Licence conditions apply whenever alcohol is being sold or supplied and set out what's required for your premises.

From time to time during inspections, we come across situations where low-alcohol options aren't available.

Where a licence includes a requirement to provide low-alcohol options, these need to be available whenever the premises is operating.

Not having required low-alcohol options available is considered a breach of licence conditions.



Changes to 'Club (Alcohol) Licence' Big ups to the clubs!

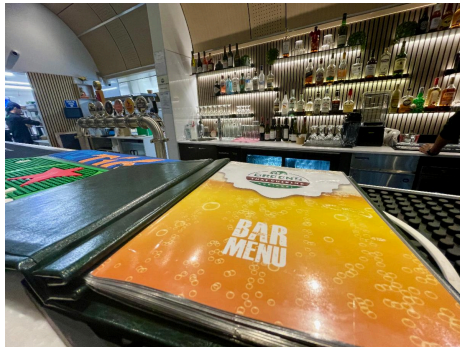
100

100% of clubs required to be registered under the new Incorporated Societies Act – Club (Alcohol) Licence got in before the **deadline of April 2026**.

🎉 Thank you very much 🎉
for sending through a copy of your **Certificate of Incorporation** confirming your registration under the new **Incorporated Societies Act 2022**.



You are all awesome
and we appreciate your mahi!



Full name of manager on display

Don't forget the full name of the **manager on duty** needs to be displayed.

This is a requirement under the **Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012** and applies whenever a manager is on duty.

Displaying the full name helps avoid confusion for staff, patrons, NZ Police, and inspectors.

This is particularly important when staff on the same premises share the same first name.

Keep us posted on staff changes

Some staff may come and go, but when a duty manager is hired or is no longer working you need to let us know.

Changes in management must be notified under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (**Section 231**).

Within two working days of the appointment of a duty manager, you must notify your local licensing committee and NZ Police of any changes in temporary and/or acting management.

Also, a timely reminder to ensure your acting and temporary managers meet the criteria of a manager (e.g. over 20 years of age).



Featured business

Green's Thai Cuisine Makana
504 Kerikeri Road, Kerikeri 0293

HOURS

Daily 11.30am to 9.30pm

[Website](#)
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Got a question? Ask your inspectors.

Send your questions to DLG@fndc.govt.nz

Include the following information:

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

Location: (e.g.) Kaitiāia

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



Any suggestions for our next newsletter?

Email us at ask.us@fndc.govt.nz or visit our website at:
www.fndc.govt.nz/Our-Services/Licences_and_permits



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