

Alcohol licensing infosheet

Duty to Collaborate

What is the Duty to Collaborate?

Section 295 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (SSAA) requires Police, licensing inspectors, and Medical Officers of Health within each territorial authority to *“establish and maintain arrangements with each other to ensure the ongoing monitoring of licences and the enforcement of the Act, and work together to develop and implement strategies for the reduction of alcohol-related harm.”*

While each agency has a specific role to play and its own particular focus, all must work together to develop and implement strategies for the reduction of alcohol-related harm.

Fulfilling the ‘duty to collaborate’ provisions of SSAA means more than simply collaborating with other regulatory agencies during the licensing of premises. It is about developing joint strategies, where appropriate, to reduce alcohol-related harm in your region and carrying these out on a day-to-day basis.

What does working in collaboration mean?

It is likely that regulatory agencies in your area already work together. However, this might not be formally documented, and SSAA does not define or prescribe how this will be carried out. There are some clear indications about how working in collaboration can be achieved.

These include:

- developing local/regional alcohol strategies – agencies should work together to develop alcohol management plans that identify and address their key priorities and reflect the region’s particular characteristics, and enforcement plans that show how they will be enforced
- developing combined agency agreements that set out how the strategies will be put into action and clearly describe the agreed role of each agency. This might include development of a standard operating procedure detailing how the agencies will work together around monitoring and compliance work
- developing a shared accountability framework that shows how the progress of the strategy will be measured and monitored
- taking note of indications that a single agency should take the lead in matters such as opposition to licences, for example as per judicial comment (without losing sight of it being each tri-agency’s responsibility to enforce the legislation)

- becoming familiar with the roles each agency needs to play in monitoring and enforcement and how intelligence and data are shared.

The collaborative interagency model (below) shows how the strategic planning, resource allocation and activity planning aspects of collaboration may work together.

Collaborative interagency model

STRATEGIC PLANNING	AGREED EXPECTATIONS	COORDINATED ACTIONS
Defined agency roles and responsibilities	Agreed agency roles and responsibilities	Effective, co-ordinated agency responses in licensing activities
Coordinated planning	Alignment of agency expectations and priorities	Minimal duplication and maximum efficiency in activities
Communication and information sharing	Assignment of appropriate resources and expertise	Consistent region-wide approach
Ongoing review to inform planning		

What are the benefits to working in collaboration?

It's not always easy to work with others, especially when trying to solve complex and difficult problems where drivers and desired outcomes might differ. But the benefits outweigh the costs, when you can collectively ensure that the sale, supply, and consumption of alcohol is managed safely and responsibly, thereby reducing the alcohol-related harm in your community.

The benefits of a collaborative approach include:

- an ability to make the best use of organisational knowledge and resources (including financial savings)
- an ability to solve complex or difficult problems because no single group or agency can fix these alone
- the 'issue or problem' is correctly identified by looking at the big picture, considering different perspectives, and drawing on the biggest pool of knowledge and experience available
- a shared responsibility for decision-making, management, and enforcement
- the creation of a well-connected, cohesive approach
- a strong, united voice to reduce alcohol-related harm
- fostering consistency
- professional development and networking.

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For more information visit alcohol.org.nz