

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



Wednesday, 30 June 2021

HELPING MELBOURNE'S NIGHTLIFE RECOVER SAFELY

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to reinvigorate our night-time economy and help hospitality venues to get back on their feet post-pandemic.

While the existing freeze guidelines on new late-night liquor licences will continue throughout the inner-city municipalities of Melbourne, Port Phillip, Yarra and Stonnington, the Government has extended the exemption criteria for these licences to support businesses on their road to recovery.

Venues with existing late-night licences can continue to trade as they always have, while other venues can still apply to trade past 1am if they meet certain exemption conditions.

Changes to the exemptions from 1 July include:

- increasing the maximum number of patrons in exempt late-night live music venues from 500 to 1,000;
- exempting major event licences where the event has all local government authority approvals; and
- expanding the types of limited licences that could be exempt from the freeze by removing the 'significant' and 'major' qualifiers for cultural, live music, charity or tourist events.

These additional exemptions will help Melbourne's much-loved live music scene continue to thrive, while also reducing red tape for traders and encouraging community and cultural events to be held throughout the city.

The freeze on late-night liquor licences was first introduced in 2008 as one of a range of measures to respond to alcohol-related harm and crime in inner Melbourne. Exemptions are available on request to businesses that meet certain criteria – such as providing food or accommodation and having a Venue Management Plan in place.

The changes to the exemption guidelines will ensure Melbourne continues to enjoy a strong and vibrant night-time economy, while continuing to combat alcohol-related harm.

An evaluation of the freeze will also be conducted into the effectiveness of the late-night liquor freeze and to assess alternative measures.

For more information on the late-night liquor freeze and exemptions, visit www.vcglr.vic.gov.au/late-night-freeze.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Gaming and Liquor Regulation Melissa Horne

"Melbourne's thriving night life is part of what makes this city so great – it's important we're able to support businesses without sacrificing community safety."

"These revised guidelines are a vital step to allow small businesses to begin to recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic and to give new venues a go."

"We're helping the businesses Victorians love to visit get back on their feet, while supporting measures to decrease alcohol-related harm."

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