

Council needs feedback on two alcohol-related projects

1. Reviewing alcohol ban areas in the district

What is an alcohol ban area?

Alcohol ban areas are authorised under the council's [Alcohol Control Bylaw](#). In these areas it is prohibited to consume, bring in, or possess alcohol.

Why review the alcohol ban areas?

The council is currently reviewing whether new areas should be added to the list of alcohol ban areas.

How many alcohol ban areas are there?

Currently, there are 23 areas in the district where alcohol bans apply: Ahipara, Coopers Beach Reserve, Haruru Falls, Hihi, Kaeo, Kaikohe, Kaitāia, Kawakawa, Kerikeri, Kohukohu, Lily Pond, Moerewa, Ōkaihau, Ōmāpere, Ōpononi, Paihia, Pukenui, Rāwene, Russell, Taipā, Taupō Bay, Tokerau Beach, and Waipapa.

Why are alcohol ban areas needed?

Alcohol bans:

- Improve public safety – by reducing public intoxication, violence, and accidents linked to alcohol.
- Target problem areas – bans are only applied where there has been a history of alcohol-related crime and disorder.
- Support proactive policing – enables police to act early to prevent issues from escalating.
- Contribute to the council's goal of building "communities that are healthy and safe."

Who enforces the alcohol bans?

Alcohol bans are enforced by the New Zealand Police, which has the power to:

- Search vehicles, bags, and packages for alcohol.
- Seize and remove alcohol found in alcohol control areas.
- Ask people to leave an alcohol ban area.
- Issue infringement notices with a \$250 fine.
- Arrest people who commit offences or do not comply with police instructions.

Police have discretion under the bylaw – they are not required to act unless they believe there is actual or potential alcohol-related crime or disorder.

2. Making a Local Alcohol Policy

What is a Local Alcohol Policy (LAP)?

A Local Alcohol Policy (or LAP) is a set of guidelines made under the [Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012](#) about the sale and supply of alcohol. A LAP only applies to the licensing of places that sell alcohol.

Why make a LAP?

A LAP can ensure the sale and supply of alcohol occurs safely and responsibly in the Far North. Controlling availability can also reduce over-consumption and minimise alcohol-related harm.

What can be included in a LAP?

A LAP can include guidelines regarding:

1. The location of licensed premises, both overall and in relation to sensitive sites such as schools, marae and medical centres
2. Whether further licences should be issued in the district or in a town
3. Maximum hours that outlets can sell alcohol
4. One-way door rules - these mean that after a certain time, people can leave bars, taverns, and nightclubs but can't come back in. For example, if a bar closes at midnight, the rule might begin at 11pm
5. Discretionary conditions for licences, such as restrictions on advertising signs on the outside of alcohol outlets or requiring license holders to address the noise from bars or taverns