

## Circular to Councils

Subject	Updated Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol Free Zones
Circular Details	Circular 25-18 / 14 August 2025 / A958894
Previous Circular	N/A
Who should read this	Councillors / General Managers / All council staff
Contact	Sector Policy and Frameworks / (02) 4428 4100 / <a href="mailto:olg@olg.nsw.gov.au">olg@olg.nsw.gov.au</a>
Action required	Information / Council to Implement

### What's new or changing?

- The Ministerial Guidelines on Alcohol-Free Zones (the Guidelines) have been updated following an administrative review.
- The revised Guidelines incorporate updates to agency names, agency contact details and International Organization for Standardization references.
- The list of councils required to consult with the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board (the Board) on alcohol-free zone (AFZ) proposals has been removed from the Guidelines on advice from the Board.
- Guidelines headings and public notification requirements have been updated to align with the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act) and contemporary publication practices.
- The Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol Prohibited Areas in NSW Fact Sheet (Fact Sheet) has also been updated to reflect the minor changes to the Guidelines.

### What will this mean for council?

- The Guidelines have been prepared under section 646(1) of the LG Act and outline councils' obligations associated with establishment, operation and suspension of alcohol-free zones (AFZs).

- The Fact Sheet provides additional guidance to councils on both AFZs and Alcohol Prohibited Areas (APAs), including key differences and council best practice.
- The revised Guidelines do not list any councils that **must** consult the Board regarding AFZ/APA proposals under Section 644A(3) and 646(3) of the Act.
- The revised Guidelines provide guidance on public notification in line with contemporary publication practices.
- All councils may still consult with the Board regarding AFZ/APA proposals and continue to ensure that their actions, including in the management of AFZ/APAs, do not discriminate against individuals or groups, and should continue to consult with interested parties.

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## Key points

- The Guidelines have undergone an administrative update and replace the February 2009 Guidelines.
- The Guidelines outline councils' obligations associated with establishment, operation and suspension of AFZs.
- The Fact Sheet has also been updated, providing councils with additional guidance on both AFZs and APAs.

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## Where to go for further information

A copy of the updated Guidelines is available on the Office of Local Government (OLG) website at <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/policy-and-legislation/guidelines-and-policy-information-resources-for-councils/guidelines-codes-and-practice-notes/>.

A copy of the updated Fact Sheet is available on the OLG website at <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/council-infrastructure/services-to-communities/alcohol-free-zones-alcohol-prohibited-areas/>.

### NSW Office of Local Government

For further information on the Guidelines or Fact Sheet, contact OLG's Sector Policy and Frameworks Team on (02) 4428 4100 or by emailing [olg@olg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:olg@olg.nsw.gov.au).

### Anti-Discrimination NSW

Anti-Discrimination NSW (ADNSW) is the NSW Government body that administers *the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*. ADNSW provides free, confidential enquiries service is available for individuals and organisations seeking information about their rights and responsibilities.

For further information on ADNSW, contact the Enquiries and Complaints team on (02) 9268 5544 or 1800 670 812. ADNSW can also be contacted by emailing [complaintsadb@justice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:complaintsadb@justice.nsw.gov.au).

A blue ink signature of Brett Whitworth.

Brett Whitworth  
Deputy Secretary  
Office of Local Government