# Availability

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## Why is this important?

Alcohol availability is one of the key drivers of alcohol harm. [The greater the availability](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1530-0277.1993.tb00723.x), the greater the levels of alcohol use and the higher the levels of harm. This includes increases in assaults, family and domestic violence, road crashes, child maltreatment and risky alcohol use.

At on-premise licenced venues, such as pubs, clubs and bars, [research shows](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2011.03643.x) that for every additional hour of trading there is a 16-20 per cent increase in assaults, and for every hour of reduced trading at these venues, there is a 20 per cent reduction in assaults.

At off-premise licenced venues, such as bottle shops where alcohol is sold for takeaway, reducing trading hours as well as the type of venues permitted to hold this type of licence has also been linked [with reduced alcohol harm](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21515005/).

[The higher the density of licensed premises](https://www.saxinstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Community-impact-of-liquor-licences-1.pdf) in an area the greater the harm in the community, particularly, increased rates of assault and family violence.

The volume of alcohol sold by an outlet is also related to levels of harm. For example, higher volumes of alcohol sold at off-premise outlets are linked to an increase of violence in the home. In Western Australia, [research](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/add.13063)found that for every 10,000 additional litres of pure alcohol sold at an off-licence liquor outlet, the risk of violence experienced in residential settings increased by 26 per cent.

The number of liquor licences, licenced premises and alcohol sale trading hours have increased dramatically in recent decades. These increases have resulted in alcohol becoming more readily available than it ever has been.

By working together, we can reduce the physical availability of alcohol through strategies such as reducing the number and density of alcohol outlets, the volume of alcohol available for sale, and trading hours.

## What do we want?

* Communities having a say in the assessment of liquor licence applications. Genuine consultation with the community will help decision-makers understand the environment that the proposed store would be in and determine whether a liquor outlet would increase the risk of harm within the community.
* Introducing independent decision-making on licence applications and renewals, to provide a robust process that is free from undue influence
* Establishing time-limited licences that are subject to review at least every three to five years, with community views, density changes and levels of alcohol harm considered in review.
* Ensuring that liquor licensing systems reflect the risk of harm posed by liquor outlets, where higher risk outlets pay higher annual fees and outlets are held accountable for non-compliance with legislation.

## How can I help?

Are you or your organisation interested in this issue and happy to advocate for reform with decision-makers? Send an email to FARE’s Policy and Research Team at [info@fare.org.au](mailto:info@fare.org.au).

[Sign-up](https://eepurl.com/hoqIBP) to be kept in the loop on the latest news, information and actions you can take to support this and other causes to tackle alcohol harms in Australia.

Follow us on social media and share our online sale advocacy content with your colleagues, friends, and networks.

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[Chip in](https://fare.org.au/donate) to help support this important work, and our other projects working towards an Australia free from alcohol harm.

## Read more

## Join our community

Will you join the community taking action on alcohol?