

Access Canberra COVID-19 Business Engagement

This factsheet outlines the approach that Compliance Officers undertake during inspections at a business.

Why are proactive compliance checks occurring?

Businesses' compliance with the Public Health Direction (the Direction) is critical to supporting community safety. Access Canberra (together with the Health Protection Service and ACT Policing) continues to undertake proactive checks at businesses to support compliance with the restrictions.

Most businesses are doing the right thing and complying with the Direction. This is appreciated. It's important to note that non-compliance with the Direction can result in regulatory action and serious penalties can apply.

Does Access Canberra only check COVID-19 restriction compliance during inspections?

Inspectors will often undertake broader compliance checks in addition to checking COVID-19 compliance. This is to reduce disruption to businesses by minimising the number of inspections. For example, a visit to a liquor licensed premises may include a check of requirements in relation to the responsible

service of alcohol as required by the *Liquor Act 2010*.

How do inspectors undertake the checks?

When entering a premise, Inspectors identify themselves by name and produce the photo identification card(s) relevant to the purpose of the inspection, noting that they are from Access Canberra.

For example:

- If conducting a COVID-19 response inspection they will produce their Public Health Officer Card;
- If conducting a liquor inspection they will produce their Fair Trading Inspector Card; and
- If conducting a gaming inspection they will produce their Gambling and Racing Commission Authorised Officer Card.

If Inspectors are undertaking several checks at the same time, they will produce multiple cards.

Inspectors will then ask to speak to the licensee/manager or person in charge of the venue at the time of the visit. Inspectors will refrain from shaking hands due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Wherever possible, Inspectors will ensure they maintain a physical distance of 1.5m from venue staff. If the venue is noisy and it is hard to hear, the Inspector will suggest that the conversation be held outside or in a quieter area.

Inspectors will clearly identify the purpose of their visit, for example "We are conducting an inspection of compliance with the Public Health Direction as an appointed Public Health Officer".

Personal safety and recording of inspector details:

Inspectors may utilise sanitiser available at the venue, although most officers carry their own personal supply, noting their work. Inspector vehicles are also equipped with sanitisation stations for use between inspections.

For contact tracing purposes, Inspectors will, at a minimum, record "Fair Trading Inspector [number on their ID card]" and the Access Canberra number 13 22 81 in a venue's manual sign in register.

Inspectors do not provide their personal identification – such as a driver licence, when signing into a premise such as a club.

Inspectors seek to comply with any internal policy which may have been put in place by a venue in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (for example, temperature checks occurring upon entry).

During the inspection:

Inspectors will ask the licensee, manager or person in charge of the venue at the time a series of questions to understand and check compliance at a premise. Visual inspections may also occur.

Inspector will ask for the name and contact details of the person they speak to at the inspection. This is to support a record of the visit, as well as to enable any follow up activity (such as responding or providing information after the visit to occur).

At COVID-19 inspections, Inspectors will ask to see a copy of the venue's COVID-19 Safety Plan. It's important that venues have this readily available. Inspectors will also sight mandatory signage (around COVID-19 occupancy) which must be displayed at relevant premises as well as other requirements under the Direction.

Inspectors may also ask about a venue's displayed COVID-19 occupancy numbers, and how this number was determined.

It's important that venues are also aware of requirements through other legislation, such as liquor and gaming, and have any relevant documents available for inspection during such checks (such as Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificates [RSAs]).

Inspectors will give an indication at the visit if compliance is achieved, or if further action may occur – such as further education or a warning is to be given to the premise.

After the inspection:

Inspectors will follow up with the venue any questions or advice which may have been asked by a licensee/manager and was not answered by an Inspector during the visit. This will occur by phone or email.

On some occasions a follow up inspection or conversation may be organised to discuss an issue further. Education or warning letters to the licensee may also be provided following inspections where non-compliance was identified.

Any questions?

Access Canberra continues to take a risk based Engage, Educate and Enforce approach to its activities.

The Access Canberra Compliance team can be contacted directly by email at:

complianceandinvestigations@act.gov.au.

The ACT Government's COVID-19 website has information relevant for businesses at:

www.covid19.act.gov.au

The Access Canberra website is:

www.act.gov.au/accessCBR