

# Sale and Supply of Alcohol (Sales on Anzac Day Morning, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas Day) Amendment Act 2026 – Explanatory note

*This explanatory note is for information only and does not constitute legal advice. Licence holders may wish to seek their own independent legal advice about the changes to the law and how a local alcohol policy or specific licence conditions may apply in their circumstances.*

## Purpose

This explanatory note summarises changes to the law for alcohol trading on restricted days, following the passage of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol (Sales on Anzac Day Morning, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas Day) Amendment Act 2026. The changes come into force on 3 April 2026.

The Act was a member's bill in the name of Hon Kieran McNulty. Following public submissions, the Justice Committee recommended some amendments, and Amendment Paper No 532 was passed at the Committee of the Whole House.

The Committee's report, public submissions and MPs' speeches are available on Parliament's website: <https://bills.parliament.nz/v/6/4d9ebb89-9a83-4c10-5318-08dd514abaa2>

## Types of licence

A person or business may only sell or supply alcohol if they hold one of the four types of alcohol licence:

- An **on-licence** which allows the sale or supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises for premises such as pubs, hotels, restaurants, bars or cafes.
- An **off-licence** which allows alcohol to be taken off the premises for consumption elsewhere and can include bottle stores, supermarkets, or by remote delivery.
- A **special licence** which allows the sale or supply of alcohol at certain events.
- A **club licence** which allows the sale and supply of alcohol for consumption on the club's premises

but generally only to club members, their guests, and reciprocal club members. The Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association (RSA) is an example of a club.

Licence holders must comply with any conditions on their licence and the requirements of any local alcohol policy (LAP) set by their district or city council.

Trade is restricted on 3.5 days a year: Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and until 1pm on Anzac Day (see the Shop Trading Hours Act 1990).

## The changes in the Amendment Act

These changes come into force on 3 April 2026.

All on-licences can now open and sell alcohol as per their normal trading hours on Anzac Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas Day. Any condition on an individual licence which specifies that no alcohol is to be sold or supplied on these days no longer applies.

The change includes removing the requirement that alcohol may only be served to people dining or lodging at on-licensed premises.

All other licence conditions and any LAP requirements continue to apply. Licence holders must also continue to meet all obligations under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012, including requirements relating to minors, intoxication, and responsible service.

A breakdown of the changes and how the new law may affect licence holders is summarised on the next page.

## Summary of changes by licence type

Under the previous law	Under the new law <i>Subject to any LAP requirements and all licence conditions not related to restricted trading days</i>
On-licensed premises such as bars, restaurants, and cafes could sell alcohol for consumption on site on restricted trading days but only to customers who were “on the premises to dine” or who are “residing” on the premises (e.g., people staying in a hotel).	All on-licence premises can sell alcohol to be consumed on site on any day of the year. Customers do not have to be dining or residing in order to be served alcohol.
Some on-licensed premises could not sell alcohol on restricted trading days e.g. those who do not cater for “diners” such as nightclubs. Some were not permitted to be open under the Shop Trading Hours Act 1990.	On-licence premises no longer need to close at midnight before a restricted trading day.  Premises with an on-licence can choose to open and operate as normal on Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Anzac Day, and Christmas Day.
Off-licensed premises could not sell alcohol on restricted trading days –  <b>except</b> for holders of an off-licence selling or supplying wine made either on the premises or from produce harvested from land on which the premises are situated (known as “cellar doors”) – who could serve the wine on Easter Sunday.	Off-licensed premises cannot sell alcohol on restricted trading days –  <b>except</b> for cellar doors who may supply their wine on any day of the year.
RSAs could not serve members of the public who were not members of the club.	RSAs may serve members of the public on Anzac Day, so long as a duty manager is on site during the hours that members of the public are on the premises.
Special licences and club licences (other than RSAs) are not affected.	