



# Guide to services

## Are you having problems with a bar, club or other licensed premises near your home?

Do you think a business that should have a licence doesn't have one?

**You can make a complaint to us about noise, late night activity or other anti-social behaviour. One of our licensing enforcement officers will investigate your complaint and take appropriate action.**

Help us maintain a safe and prosperous night-time economy that balances the needs of residents, businesses and visitors to the borough.

### What can the Council do?

We can work with the premises to sort out the problem.

Our enforcement officers will visit the premises which may involve several late night visits over six to eight weeks. If the business is breaking the terms and conditions of their licence or doesn't have one, they will receive a warning and be given the opportunity to put things right. This is usually enough to put a stop to most problems.

If the problem persists, we can take more formal action which could result in a caution or prosecution. However, more formal procedures can take up to six months to go to court.

As a licensing authority we must follow legislation in the Licensing Act 2003, we do not have powers to close a premises or remove a licence without a full investigation. We work closely with other services, such as the Police and the Council's Noise Prevention Service as they have different enforcement powers.

They may be able to take quicker action against the premises to sort the problem out. Only the Police can take immediate action and temporarily close the premises where necessary.

## How to complain

Contact Hackney Licensing Service, please provide the following information

- your name and contact details
- the premises name and address
- as much information as possible about your complaint, include dates and times of the problems
- whether it is one-off problem or ongoing
- whether you have reported the problem to another service such as the Police or the Noise Prevention Service

Please note we will not reveal your identity to the premises without your permission. There may be occasions where we ask complainants to give evidence at a court hearing, but we will discuss this with you before progressing.

## What happens next?

Within 48 hours we will write to you to confirm a licensing enforcement officer will be investigating your complaint and how the investigation will be carried out.

Every complaint is investigated. We will keep you informed on progress as well as letting you know the result of our investigation. It can take up to eight weeks to complete an investigation allowing us to monitor the premises to make sure the problem has been fully resolved. If you need to check progress at any time, or tell us anything more about the problem, do contact the officer, their contact details will be in your letter.

## What do I do if the problem starts up again?

You should make another complaint to us straightaway and we will open a new investigation. Previous complaints and actions will be taken into account as part of the new investigation.

Keep a record of issues and problems such as a diary, photographs, correspondence, results of any previous complaints you made to the Council or the Police and the outcome, police reports, crime statistics or other data. Get the support of your neighbours or other businesses in the area, ideally with written accounts of their experiences and concerns.

If we decide to prosecute the premises, all details will be included as evidence wherever possible.

You may want to call for a review of a licence, this is a more formal route and will result in the premises being reviewed by the Licensing Sub Committee, made up of local councillors. See guide on 'How to call for a review of a licence.'

You may also want to raise your concerns with your ward Councillors if the problem persists or you are unhappy with the responses you receive.

## How do I know if a premises has a licence?

You can search the public licensing register on our website at [www.hackney.gov.uk/licences-public-register](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/licences-public-register) or call Hackney Licensing Service and we will check for you.

## What about places holding one-off events?

An unlicensed premises or outdoor area can use up to 12 Temporary Events Notices (TENs) a year to sell alcohol or put on entertainment for small scale events with less than 500 people. Only the Police can object to an event or stop it if it has already started. In this instance, make your complaint on the day directly to the Police.



### How to contact us

Call **020 8356 2431** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm  
**020 8356 4455** for our Noise Prevention Service at weekends  
Email **licensing@hackney.gov.uk**  
Web **www.hackney.gov.uk/licensing**  
Write **Licensing, Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, London E8 1DY**



### Lets us know how we're doing, especially if we get it wrong so we can put it right

Call **020 8356 3000**  
Email **info@hackney.gov.uk** or **complaints@hackney.gov.uk**  
Web **www.hackney.gov.uk/feedback** or **www.hackney.gov.uk/complaints**