

PLAY ZONE

Sex on premises venue code of practice

$$\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{TEST} \\ \text{OFTEN} \end{array} \right] + \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{TREAT} \\ \text{EARLY} \end{array} \right] + \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{STAY} \\ \text{SAFE} \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{ENDING} \\ \text{HIV} \\ \text{2020} \end{array} \right]$$



Introduction

Sex on premises venues include sex clubs, backrooms, saunas and other commercial venues where patrons pay to enter to meet and have sex with other customers.

The development of this Code has been a collaborative process in consultation with Sex on Premises Venue (SOPV) owners and managers. The partnership works with the intention of ensuring that there is a minimum standard by which venues will adhere to.

The Code makes the goals in the NSW Ministry of Health's HIV Strategy 2012-2015, related policy directives and guidelines and the City of Sydney Council's Sex Industry Policy.

SOPVs are invited to voluntarily sign up to the Code. Participating venues agree to abide by the principles and standards set out in this document.

Compliance with the Code will ensure that patrons of SOPVs have a right to be treated with respect while in the venues, to practice safe, consensual sex and have access to sexual health information.

This document and the principles in it will be regularly reviewed and updated in collaboration with venue owners and managers.

SOPV owners, managers, staff and their customers will have the opportunity to make recommendations on a regular basis during the review periods.

The Code also highlights that venue staff and customers require accurate and up to date information about safe sex, HIV/AIDS and STI prevention and education.

A staff booklet accompanies this Code. The staff manual is intended to give staff information on training opportunities, the Code itself and steps that they need to take in order for the venue to achieve minimum standards.

For more information visit www.acon.org.au/playzone

Aim

The Code is intended for use by SOPV owners and managers and aims to maximise health, increase the level of awareness around sexual health and help to reduce new HIV and STI infections within the gay community.

Objectives

The code aims to set minimum standards for SOPVs in the areas of:

- Condom and lube distribution and access
- Lighting at the venues
- Drug and alcohol awareness and the provision of safe injecting disposal equipment
- Sexual health information and education resources
- Staff training and vaccinations
- Cleaning
- Monitoring venue's compliance with the Code

Regularly consulting with venue owners, managers and customers

Principles

- Customers have the right to practice safe and consensual sex
- Customers and staff have the right to information about safe sex and sexual health
- Customers and staff have the right to be treated with respect

Newly established SOPVs will be invited to participate in the Code

The Code incorporates information provided by the City of Sydney's "Sex Industry and Adult Entertainment Premises Development Guidelines" (City of Sydney, 2013) and the NSW Communicable Diseases "Health and Safety Guidelines for Sex on Premises Venues" (NSW Health 2002). The Code also includes information from WorkCover NSW and the Australian Red Cross Save-A-Mate program.

www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0013/142042/Guidelines_SexServices-AdultEnt_DCP2012.PDF

Ending HIV

The Code of Practice is critical to help us virtually end HIV transmission in NSW by 2020.

The campaign seeks to educate gay men about three key activities they need to undertake to help end the epidemic:

Test More – sexually active gay men need to get tested for HIV at least two to four times a year, as this is the only way that undiagnosed infections can be decreased and access to treatment can be increased.

Treat Early – advances in HIV medicines offer improved health benefits for people with HIV and can reduce the amount of virus in their body to an undetectable level, significantly reducing the likelihood of onwards transmission of HIV.

Stay Safe – condoms and other risk reduction strategies remain central to the fight against HIV so gay men need to maintain a culture of safe sex.

This is where the code of practice plays a critical role.

Launched in 2013, the campaign forms a key part of the NSW HIV Strategy 2012-2015, a plan to reduce HIV transmission among gay men in NSW by 80% by 2020.

Find out more about our Ending HIV initiative at www.endinghiv.org.au



1. **Customer Safety**

a. Condoms and Lube

- i. Condoms and lube will be freely available at all times, in all areas where sex is likely to occur and preferably within 'arms reach'. People should not have to leave the area where sex is happening in order to locate condoms or lube.
- ii. Supplies of condoms and lube in areas where sex is likely to occur will be regularly monitored and replenished when low. It is recommended this is done hourly to ensure adequate maintenance.
- iii. Condoms and lube will be available in reasonably lit areas or located by a light.
- iv. In saunas, condoms and lube will be placed near the entrance to the steam room and sauna areas.
- v. Large sized and tighter fitting condoms and gloves will be available upon request at the venue counter.

b. Education Resources

- i. ACON education resource racks will be placed near exit areas or areas of high traffic. Resource racks will display current information on safe sex, HIV, STIs, PEP, PrEP and information on alcohol and other drugs relevant to gay and other homosexually active men.
- ii. Resources will be prominently displayed in well-lit areas to enable accurate deciphering of information.
- iii. Sexual health information and information relevant to gay men and other homosexually active men will be displayed in toilets and washing areas.
- iv. Additional safe sex messages/posters will be left for the venue operators. In appropriate circumstances ACON will advise venues on where these messages will have greatest effect.
- v. ACON will regularly (up to once a fortnight) supply and update campaign material and education resources.

c. Drug use

- i. Venue will provide at least one sharps bin, securely anchored to a wall.
- ii. Sharps bins will be located in well-lit areas.

2. Venue Safety

Workcover NSW, NSW Ministry of Health and Local Government health and safety legislation are legal requirements and all staff and managers must comply with the relevant legislation at all times.

a. Lighting

- i. Where sexual health education and information is provided lighting will be sufficient enough to read the information.
- ii. While darkrooms are meant to be dark, there should be sufficient lighting near the condoms and lube so the customers can access them easily.
- iii. There will be enough light in the toilets so the customers can wash properly.
- iv. Lighting will be of a sufficient level in all areas of the venue in order to ensure adequate cleaning standards are maintained.

Cleaning and Food Preparation

- i. Venue operators will follow NSW Ministry of Health, NSW Food Authority and Local Government standards and legal requirements on cleaning, infection control and food preparation.
- ii. Hot and cold running water is available to staff and customers at all times.
- iii. There is proper cleaning equipment and detergents available for dealing with spillages and general cleaning. It is important that venues can be properly cleaned and areas which can get messy (e.g. darkrooms, toilets) should only be furnished using washable materials. Cleaning should be carried out regularly to keep them hygienic.
- iv. The venue, especially the dark room and toilets, are cleaned thoroughly each day.

3. Staff Safety

a. Vaccinations

- i. It is strongly advised that all staff have the full course of relevant vaccinations, including hepatitis A and hepatitis B injections and tetanus. Venue staff are encouraged to visit their local sexual health clinic or GP for a course of hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccinations or booster.

b. Staff Training

- i. A staff booklet supplied by ACON with relevant referral information and information on HIV, STIs, drug issues, emergency numbers, information on HIV testing and clinics, PEP & PrEP and the gay community will be issued to all SOPVs and updated when required.
- ii. ACON will offer training for SOPV staff in the following areas:
 - Infection control (including cleaning);
 - Problematic drug use;
 - HIV & STI prevention and testing;
 - PEP and PrEP; and
 - Current ACON education activities.
- iii. ACON and partner agencies shall conduct training and information sessions throughout the year. SOPV operators will support staff to participate in the training and information sessions.
- iv. The training and information sessions will be accredited with a certificate of attendance and attendance will be recorded by ACON.

c. First Aid

- i. Venues are required to comply the NSW Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011 and the guidelines outlined in the NSW WorkCover *First Aid In The Workplace Code Of Practice* this includes:
 - The provision first aid equipment and access to first aid facilities
 - Staff access to first aid equipment
 - An adequate number of staff trained to administer first aid.

4. **Compliance**

- a.** Compliance to the Code will be assessed by ACON (Venues Liaison Officer) every three months in the first year and every six months thereafter.
- b.** Venue owners and managers have agreed that ACON will visit the venue within 24 hours of notification.
- c.** Venues failing to comply with the Code will be consulted with and advised on how to meet the standards.
- d.** Venues that persistently fail to comply will be assessed every three months until they meet the minimum standards.
- e.** If after 1 year the standard outlined in the Code is not achieved the certification will be removed until compliance is met.
- f.** Venues may leave the Code at any time but in doing so certification will be retracted and use of the branding prohibited.

5. **Branding**

- a.** Once venues comply with the minimum standards, they will receive certification and branding material; posters, the Code of Practice, staff booklet and customer information.
- b.** A copy of the certification will be made available for the venue to display.

6. **Public Consultation**

- a. Customers will be able to provide feedback, compliments, complaints or suggestions via a dedicated ACON email address. Any feedback will be recorded and reported back to venues in order that they may review their practice.
- b. Advertisements publicising this dedicated email address will appear in the gay press every six months. Venues will also be required to display the address.

7. **Reviewing the Code**

- a. This code will be reviewed and updated every 12 months after its release.

Acronyms

AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus

SOPV - Sex on Premises Venue

PEP - Post Exposure Prophylaxis

PrEP - Pre Exposure Prophylaxis

STI - Sexually Transmissible Infection

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Acknowledgments

Victorian AIDS Council *Sex on Premises Code of Practice* (2001)

Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) *PlayZone A Code of Good Practice for Sex on Premises Venues in London and Brighton* (2008)

