

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



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CUTTING RED TAPE AND MAKING IT EASIER TO DO BUSINESS

Victoria is open for business – with the Allan Labor Government slashing red tape to make it easier and cheaper for cafes, pubs, and restaurants to open their doors, serve more customers and grow their business.

Premier Jacinta Allan, Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny and Minister for Small Business Natalie Suleyman today visited the Peacock Hotel in Northcote to announce common sense changes to how businesses apply for liquor licences and permits, as well as outdoor dining.

As part of the *Economic Growth Statement*, the requirement to apply for a planning permit to serve alcohol will be abolished – saving venue owners time and money.

Good regulation helps keep Victorians safe and ensures fair outcomes for everyone. But heavy-handed and outdated red tape gets in the way – stifling growth and creating headaches for business owners.

It's why our Economic Growth Statement is making it simpler and easier to do business in Victoria.

Currently, hospitality businesses wanting to serve alcohol for consumption require a liquor licence from the Victorian Liquor Commission and a planning permit from their local council. This means that more than 14,000 business have gone through the same process twice for essentially the same licence – it's unnecessary duplication, costs money and wastes time for business and government. It just doesn't make sense.

By removing the double up, this reform will slash the time it takes for pubs, cafes and restaurants to get a liquor licence – enabling businesses to open up to six months earlier and saving them up to \$7,000.

Protections around amenity, noise and operating hours will remain in place, while zoning and planning permit requirements will continue to determine where restaurants and pubs can open their doors. Only now we won't ask businesses to prove the same things twice.

The decision to remove Clause 52.27 (Licenses Premises) followed consultation with multiple councils and will be implemented by 1 July 2025.

During the pandemic, we temporarily removed the need for a planning permit for outdoor dining on public land. Now, we'll make it permanent – making it easier for cafes and restaurants to serve patrons outdoors, while growing the footprint of their businesses.

The move will allow venues to serve customers in underutilised spaces including streets, footpaths and carparks without a planning permit – supporting more Victorians to enjoy dining outdoors at pubs, cafes, bars and restaurants without businesses facing unnecessary red tape.

This is the first in a series of announcements the Government will make this week that will help unlock new economic growth by opening doors, cutting red tape, building new skills and reaching every community.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"These changes send a clear message: Victoria is open for business."

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“Victoria’s already the food and culture capital of Australia. We want to see more bars, restaurants and pubs open their doors, and we’re going to help them do it sooner.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny

“Everyone is a winner with these changes – businesses save money and spend less time waiting to open, councils won’t get unnecessary permit applications and Victorians will get an even better food and drink scene.”

“These changes are about making it easier for our world-class pubs, cafes, bars and restaurants to do what they do best – serve great quality meals and drinks to more people.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business Natalie Suleyman

“Small business is the backbone of local economies and this will be a game changer – saving time and money for hardworking business owners.”