



Ministry for Regulation  
Te Manatū Waeture

# Hospitality Regulatory Review

## Initial Sector Engagement

October 2025



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# What is the Hospitality Review

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The Ministry for Regulation regularly conducts regulatory reviews. These reviews investigate whether existing regulation is achieving its goals, and identify improvements. The Hospitality Review is a review into regulation that applies to the hospitality sector; restaurants, bars, cafes, food stalls, food trucks, catering businesses, and hotels.

## Why a Hospitality Review?

The hospitality sector (the sector) is a significant part of the New Zealand economy, generating \$15.7 billion in sales in 2024 and employing over 145,000 people.

The sector is subject to a range of diverse and overlapping regulatory systems. Sector stakeholders have identified that the regulations (including the combination and volume of requirements) can be disproportionate to the risks and are introducing unnecessary costs and barriers to market entry, expansion, and innovation for hospitality businesses.

## Purpose of the Hospitality Review

The Hospitality Review (the Review) will identify pain points for the sector and look at removing barriers where they are no longer justifiable and constraining growth or threatening sustainability of the sector.

### The Ministry for Regulation's role

As a central agency, the Ministry for Regulation's role is to strengthen New Zealand's regulatory management system and improve the quality of regulation, including improving the experience of complying with regulation.

We have four key functions:

- ensure the quality of new regulation
- improve the functioning of existing regulatory systems
- raise the capability of those who design and operate regulatory systems
- provide continuous and enduring improvements to the Regulatory Management System.

It is important that New Zealand has sound regulatory settings to support a modern, open market economy. We want rules and regulations to enable New Zealanders to do more – leading to more productive use of people's time, and better outcomes for those who want to get things done.

To do this, we will assess whether the regulatory systems (and the regulations within them) applying to the sector are:

- creating unnecessary costs and/or administration burden
- effective, efficient and proportionate to any risk posed
- adaptable and can evolve over time
- easy to comply with, and
- aligned with good regulatory practice.

The Review will then recommend actionable change to improve regulation and reduce unnecessary requirements.

## **Timeframes**

We expect to deliver a final report by April 2026. We understand December and January is a busy period for the hospitality sector, and we will endeavour to minimise engagement during this period. Further information on the three key stages of the Review, can be found in the Review's [Terms of Reference].

There are two phases of sector engagement:

- Initial sector engagement – which is what this document relates to. We are engaging with the sector to test and confirm the Government's view of the regulatory problems in the sector. This stage runs between October and November 2025
- Testing findings and options – once we have investigated the issues and potential solutions

# What we have already heard from the hospitality sector

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The government regularly engages with hospitality businesses, workers, representative groups, and the wider sector as part of policymaking and delivering reform. This review won't start from scratch – we will consider the problems and solutions already identified by the government and the sector, and take into account ongoing changes.

## Overall requirements

We have heard that finding out about, understanding, and demonstrating compliance with the full range of regulatory requirements that apply to a hospitality business can be difficult – requirements for each regulatory system (e.g., food, alcohol, building) may be reasonable if considered in isolation, but the volume and overlap of requirements requires disproportionate effort from small businesses.

Stakeholders also say that information for hospitality businesses is dispersed across various sources and can be contradictory.

## Broader regulatory settings

We have heard that there are broader regulatory settings that can negatively affect hospitality businesses and workers, including education and training, immigration, and employment rules.

### The Hospitality Summit December 2024

The Hospitality Summit was held at the Parliament Buildings on 12 December 2025. The event provided a platform for sector stakeholders to engage directly with each other and government representatives and to contribute solutions to help shape future policymaking.

As part of the summit, Hospitality New Zealand and the Restaurant Association, in collaboration with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, conducted a survey of the organisations' members, as well as the wider sector. Participants were invited to share their insights, experiences, and opinions on various aspects of running a hospitality business.

A report was generated from the submissions. This report is a key source of information and starting point for the Review. We are keen to understand to what extent these issues remain, and what other issues we need to be aware of.

## Day-to-day requirements

We have heard that there are day-to-day requirements across multiple regulatory systems that may be ineffective, inefficient, inconsistent, or not proportionate to the risks.

### Food safety requirements

- The cost of registration and verification is increasing, and smaller, lower-risk businesses face similar registration costs to larger businesses.
- There is no national consistency in registration and verification timeframes.
- Record-keeping (especially paper-based record keeping) is onerous and can be ineffective.
- Requirements introduce barriers to innovation (e.g., prevent businesses from introducing delivery services or take-home meal kits).



*This is not a comprehensive view of the issues experienced by the sector. The Review will consider other issues raised through this engagement and other sources.*

### Requirements for the sale and supply of alcohol

- The licensing process is overly complicated and time-consuming.
- There is no consistency in decisions about licensing and licence renewal over time, creating uncertainty for businesses.
- Requirements are becoming increasingly out-of-step with how customers like to consume alcohol (e.g., serving alcohol outside or above a premise).
- The responsibilities of a duty manager can be impractical, especially if a business operates multiple locations.



### Building requirements

- Requirements are difficult to understand, and the building classifications can be unclear.
- Consent and ongoing inspection requirements are overly complex for simple fitouts.
- Delays in issuing consents can mean delays to opening a business.
- Food trucks can be subject to both building and transport requirements and inspections.





# Have your say

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We want to hear from hospitality business owners, workers, regulators, and representative groups in the hospitality sector. The information you give us will inform the Review's priorities and recommendations.

## Making a submission

The best way of making a submission to the Review is through one of our questionnaires.

These questionnaires will ask about your views on the current regulation of the hospitality sector - what works well; what could be changed; what gaps there may be; and where there is duplication or inconsistency in requirements. We have tailored these questionnaires so we only ask you questions relevant to your role. There is also an opportunity to upload documents at the end.

You can access these questionnaires via our [website](#).

**Submissions close at 23:59 on 12 November 2025**

If you would like to meet with us in person or online about this Review, please contact us at:

[\*\*HospitalityReview@regulation.govt.nz\*\*](mailto:HospitalityReview@regulation.govt.nz)