



Licensing Service
Late Night Levy Update
July 2020

1. Annual Fees

We recognise that the unprecedented arrangements that were put in place to address Covid-19 have created a particularly challenging environment for the majority of Hackney's licensees. Since the outset of the covid crisis, we have therefore been keen to take a considered and pragmatic approach to licensing and late night levy fees.

While the Government and the Mayor of London have endorsed taking a pragmatic and flexible approach there has been no sign, to date, to alter the legislative requirements surrounding the payment of fees. This means until such time as the legislation changes, we are unable to amend the annual fee. However, we will delay sending renewal letters and suspending licenses for non-payment of late night levy fees where the businesses have had to close under coronavirus regulations. This position will be reviewed again at the end of July and may well need to be extended further depending on the national picture at the time.

2. Current Projects

Hackney Nights

The LBBTQ+ Hate Crime campaign for June and training sessions have been cancelled due to Coronavirus.

The Hackney Nights Portal is in the final build stage of development. Online training, resources and Covid-19 related guidance will be available. The commissioned portal has been delayed because of issues with workforce but it is moving ahead at a fast pace, we should have a BETA version in July.

Work with Police

The Police are continuing to work with us throughout this crisis ensuring the security of our licensed premises and to prepare re-opening and enhance safe trading practices for all residents and businesses in Hackney. The most recent Police agreement of £150K started on April 1st and renewal is set for 31st of July. We have a balance that will carry over into the next agreement period as expenditure dropped significantly due to Covid-19. Police to provide a verbal update on their strategy.

Engagement with Licensees

We have sent letters to every late night levy licensee in April to provide an update and support throughout this crisis. LNL Manager has been holding “Open Office Hours” every Tuesday, taking calls and helping the licensees navigate a way forward. Working with business support, we have been reaching out and asking licensees to sign up to receive updates, etc.

Licensing Service has hosted three online advice sessions to engage with licensees ahead of re-opening and more sessions are planned for the 3rd week of July.

3. Financial Impact

Our current annual budget (November 2019 to the present), expenditure is at £354,256 and we have taken £214,139 in receipts (November 2019 to June 2020). We have a balance carried over of £287,306. We have undertaken a detailed financial analysis of different scenarios and loss of revenue due to Coronavirus. The balance carried over could possibly support a maximum of 6 month fee loss before the budget would have a deficit.

4. Reopening of the Night Time Economy

On July 4th, all bars, pubs and restaurants will be allowed to open under new government guidelines, summary of some key points is below. We have also been working with police, business support, communications, councillors, senior management, emergency control, enforcement, markets, highways and street scene to collaborate on a reopening plan.

- Gatherings of no more than 30 in a party
- Operators must gather names and contact details of everyone who attends the venue
- Staff rotation and staggering of working hours
- Encouraging use of contactless ordering from tables where available. For example, through an ordering app
- Indoor table service must be used where possible, alongside further measures such as assigning a single staff member per table. Outdoor table service should also be encouraged, although customers are permitted to stand outside if distanced appropriately. Where bar or counter service is unavoidable, preventing customers from remaining at the bar or counter after ordering.
- Encouraging use of outdoor areas for service where possible. For example, increasing outdoor seating or outdoor points of service such as stalls.
- Public toilets, portable toilets and toilets inside premises should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

- Where necessary, informing customers that police and the local authorities have the powers to enforce requirements in relation to social distancing and may instruct customers to disperse, leave an area, issue a fixed penalty notice or take further enforcement action.
- Risk Assessment must be conducted prior to opening
- At this time, venues should not permit live performances, including drama, comedy and music, to take place in front of a live audience.
- All venues should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. Communal dancing should also not continue.
- An assessment for all sites, or parts of sites, that have been closed, before restarting work. • Cleaning procedures and providing hand sanitiser before restarting work.
- PPE and face coverings are not essential unless premises deemed risky. Unclear about security and searching procedures.

Full Guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>