

**POLICY**

**Bars and Venues**

Ref No: **BaV-04**



## *Dispersal Policy*

April 2024

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## Introduction

It is our legal obligation to prevent crime and disorder and public nuisance, both when in session on our premises and when dispersing customers from the premises. Our reputation must be upheld by team members and adhered to by all. Customers must be respectful of our neighbours, particularly when exiting the premises.

We expect all our team members to commit to working with us in upholding safe, secure, peaceful, and orderly venues, free from crime, disorder, and nuisance. This policy is intended to guide you through that process and should be used in conjunction with all other policies.

## Expected Standards

There are 4 licensing objectives of equal importance:

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm

## Effective General Dispersal Steps

The following steps should play an equal part in the dispersal of customers:

- In England and Wales, there is no statutory drinking up time, but the internal policy is to do so for quieter events (at Phineas, Huntley/Mully's (always at the Institute)) no later than 5 minutes before the bar is to be closed especially if that is 5 minutes before the licence ends.
  - If a quieter, non-event led night, perhaps greet customers individually at their locations to inform them.
- Music levels should be reduced or silenced. Where they are reduced, more calming music should be played.
- Lighting levels should be increased.
- Staffing levels at service points should be reduced and staff redirected to other duties such as cleaning the bar, glass collection, or even helping security with actively dispersing.
- A limited period of 'drinking-up' time should be applied to assist with the gradual dispersal of all customers at the end of the evening. This should be communicated to all staff, security.
- Appropriate signage is placed at all exit doors reminding customers not to take any drinks vessels out of the premises – to do so would be in contravention of our license. If the signage is damaged or missing, please report this to member of venue management.
- There should be visible management and staff presence in the customer areas during closing time to ensure all customers leave quietly, and quickly in an orderly fashion.

## Staff Procedure and Responsibilities

Security staff members are expected to liaise with bar supervisors and management to determine the appropriate time to clear a building. There are many reasons to clear a building, but it is not often that they happen at once.

1. All staff should follow the guidelines below to safely clear the premises at closing time.
  - Staff should work together to effectively direct customers out of the premises.
  - Staff must consider the way in which customers may 'feel' at the end of an event regarding not leaving in a hurry. Intoxicants can lead to individuals feeling largely more emotional and erratic, and this should play a part in the way you approach dispersing.
  - Staff must be vocal, but come across as authoritative and understanding, as opposed to controlling and annoying.
  - Crowd management skills are needed to ensure a constant flow of people, avoiding bottle necks and back logs of customers leaving through the main egress point. If there are more than one member of security, then one should be positioned at the main egress point.
  - It is imperative to ensure all access areas are viewed for both crowd management and controlling disorder, and so where multiple security staff are booked and one is at the main egress point, other security staff should focus on clearing the main bar areas, toilet facilities, lobbies, and access points.
  - Security across the premises should be positioned to ensure customers do not exit the premises with any drinks or glassware as this would be in contravention of our licence.
2. Outside areas (Institute terrace, egress points) should be checked to ensure that they are clear of obstruction before the premises closes.
  - Security staff should try to reduce the number of 'unwanted' guests at the front doors, towards the end of the night – ideally once doors have closed in the first instance. These could include customers who haven't gained entry but are waiting for friends. Bear in mind that we do not want vulnerable individuals to be leaving alone and so if a friend is waiting there, be accommodating if this applies.
  - The security supervisor should ensure the outside area is safe of any items that could cause congestion or slow a moving crowd down. A-frames, physical signage etc.
  - Empty bottles and general rubbish should be cleared away by staff – whilst this is more productive to do during service and once customers have been cleared – it will reduce distance of clearance that has to be done – less going to the egress areas for example.
3. Managers should inform DJs/event organisers that they are asked to play an active part in customer dispersal out of the venue.
  - Staff should inform DJs/event organisers when the bar is taking last orders and when it is closed, so they can inform customers/attendees – possibly even audibly via a microphone.
  - DJs should be told to respect the closing time for dispersal of customers, amongst other reasons, and ensure their last song is their last song and on time. To continue playing/performing beyond the closing time is detrimental to the dispersal of the premises.
  - DJs can announce details of the next event and consider advising customers about getting home safely, not walking home alone etc.
4. Effort should be made to disperse the crowds outside the premises.

- Taking control of the outside areas and asking people to start deciding where they are going.
- Staff can actively encourage customers to head home, away from the venue, but by asking how they are getting home one can gauge who is possibly leaving unaccompanied and may therefore be more vulnerable.
- By extension, approaching anyone that looks like they may be on their own and asking where they are trying to get to and do they have anyone else with them.

## Dispersal in an Evacuation Situation

All instances of evacuation should be taken seriously and as such should adhere to the trained fire evacuation standards and as such should follow the Evacuations Policy.