



Queenstown Lakes District Licensing Committee

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a District Licensing Committee (DLC)?

A District Licensing Committee (DLC) is a quasi-judicial committee of Council established under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (the Act). DLCs are responsible for considering and deciding applications relating to the sale and supply of alcohol within their district. DLCs operate independently of Council and have the powers of a Commission of Inquiry, with decisions appealable to the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority (ARLA).

What does a DLC do?

DLCs determine applications for alcohol licences, special licences, managers' certificates, temporary authorities and variations, suspensions or cancellations of licences. Unopposed matters may be decided "on the papers", while opposed matters are dealt with through public hearings.

How many are there on a DLC?

For a hearing, the DLC comprises a Chair or Commissioner acting as a Chair, and two members to make a quorum. Applications which do not require a hearing, only require a quorum of one DLC member to make a decision.

What is the role of the Chair?

The Chair presides over hearings, ensures fair process and compliance with natural justice, directs questioning for all parties. The Chair is responsible for procedural matters that arise around hearings, as well as being responsible for writing decisions of the DLC. The Chair can sit alone to determine unopposed applications "on the papers".

The position of Chair is only able to be appointed to the appropriately skilled and qualified elected member of Council.

What is the role of a Commissioner?

A Commissioner is appointed by Council and has the same powers and functions as a Chair. Commissioners may act as Chair in a hearing or when making on the papers decisions, and are engaged for their specialist skills, experience, and independence.



What is the role of a Commissioner/Member (List Member)?

Commissioners or List Members sit on hearing panels alongside the Chair (if one is appointed), consider evidence and submissions, participate in deliberations, and contribute to decisions made under the Act.

What qualifications are required to be on a DLC?

There are no mandatory formal qualifications. Members must have experience relevant to alcohol licensing matters. Chairs and Commissioners must be of good standing in the community and have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience relevant to matters before the Committee.

What are the eligibility requirements?

Applicants must be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents, of good standing in the community, able to act independently and impartially, and able to appropriately manage any conflicts of interest.

What is the recruitment and appointment process?

Council runs a transparent and objective recruitment process, typically involving public advertising, shortlisting, interviews, assessment against published criteria, and formal appointments by Council resolution.

What is the term of appointment?

Appointments are made for a fixed term of up to five years, with eligibility for reappointment. Appointments may be staggered to ensure continuity and experience.

How much time commitment is required?

Time commitments vary depending on the number and complexity of applications. Work is undertaken on an as-required basis. Chairs or Commissioners generally commit additional time for decision writing and determining unopposed applications. Some hearings can last an hour or more, up to several days.

During the current term, assessment and determination of applications has been undertaken in a shared capacity between Commissioners with one Commissioner normally "on duty" for one month with a new Commissioner taking over the responsibilities for the following month. Three Commissioners have shared this task.



Is there any remuneration for Chairs, Commissioners, and Members?

Yes, remuneration is set nationally by the Ministry of Justice in accordance with the Cabinet Fees Framework. DLC members are paid on a daily or hourly basis and may claim reasonable expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties. DLC members are engaged as independent contractors, not Council employees.

The rates are currently:

- Chair = \$78 per hour for part days (up to four hours), or \$624 per day
- Members = \$51 per hour for part days (up to four hours), or \$408 per day

Can elected members be appointed to a DLC?

Yes. Elected members of Council may be appointed to a DLC, provided conflicts of interest are carefully managed, and independence of decision-making is maintained.

Who cannot be appointed to a DLC due to conflicts of interest?

Police officers, Medical Officers of Health, Alcohol Licensing Inspectors, and Council employees cannot be appointed. Individuals with actual or perceived involvement in the alcohol industry that could compromise independence or create perceived bias are also ineligible.

Successful candidates may find they have a conflict of interest from time to time, and these are discussed with the DLC Secretary as they arise.

Who does the DLC report to within Council?

While a DLC is a committee of Council, it operates independently in its decision-making. The DLC is administered and supported by Council staff, but Council cannot direct or override individual decisions, which are subject only to appeal through statutory processes to the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority (ARLA).