

Cabinet decision and President signing legislation for reopening indoor hospitality is positive for sector – LVA

Operational Guidelines Now Urgently Required

The Licensed Vintners Association (LVA) has described the Cabinet's decision to confirm the reopening of indoor hospitality and the President's signing of the Health (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill into law as "positive", but cautioned businesses urgently need the updated public health guidelines to be published to finalise their preparations to open next Monday.

The LVA has also called on all hospitality businesses and members of the public to ensure they carefully follow the regulations once they are confirmed.

"The Cabinet's decision and the signing of the legislation into law is a very positive step towards reopening but businesses will not be in a position to make their final preparations until the guidelines are published," said Donall O'Keeffe, Chief Executive of the LVA. "We are aware that Fáilte Ireland and the relevant Government departments are working hard to finalise these guidelines against an extremely tight timetable. We acknowledge their commitment but it is obviously critical for a successful indoor reopening that the guidelines are available as soon as possible.

"We know everyone in hospitality will still have a lot of questions as to what they will be required to do to facilitate indoor service. Many of those won't be clarified until the guidelines are formally published by the Government and Fáilte Ireland.

"We remain concerned flashpoints may occur at the entry to indoor hospitality. We hope this will be carefully monitored and should any trouble arise the authorities will be available to assist the hospitality business in question. We are also calling on all hospitality businesses and members of the public to ensure they carefully follow the new system. This is the only means that indoor hospitality will be permitted so it is up to everyone involved to do everything they can to make it work.

"We would also like to see an active and visible inspection regime implemented across all hospitality businesses from Monday. Any business that flouts the law and does not limit indoor service to vaccinated customers must face harsh sanctions immediately. This is too important, the health of the public and the future of the entire hospitality sector is dependent on everyone making this work so anyone who does not comply needs to face severe consequences," Mr. O'Keeffe concluded.