

Licensing Service - Overview 30 June 2025

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Licensing Manager

Licensing Service

- Licensing Team is part of Regulatory Services within the Directorate of Place
- Located at Level 10, City Chambers and 33 Murrayburn Road
- Circa 70 staff: administrative officers, inspection officers and vehicle examiners
- We process up to 25,000 licence applications every year
- Support the Licensing Board in exercising its functions
- Licensing Sub-Committee and Regulatory Committee
- Training Centre – Taxi and Private Hire, Liquor Licence Training
- Purpose of licensing – **securing public safety**

Licensing Service – Types of Applications

- Alcohol and gambling: licensed premises, occasional licences (events), personal licences, casinos, bingo premises, betting shops etc.
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
- Civic and miscellaneous: short term lets, public entertainment, street trader, market operator, cinema, skin piercing and tattooing, second hand dealers, late hours catering, parades and processions, animal boarding, animal breeding, hypnotism...
- Taxi and Private Hire – driver, vehicle and booking office applications

Licensing Service – Application Process

- Applications are received via the licensing online portal
- Saved and allocated a reference number
- Checked by officer
- Processed and sent for consultation
- Once consultation has concluded, application is progressed to a decision
- Licence is issued (if applicable)

Licensing Service Consults with

- Police Scotland
- NHS
- Licensing Enforcement
- Environmental Health
- Public Safety
- Planning
- Building Standards
- Transport Network and Enforcement
- Parks and Green Spaces
- **Community Councils**
- Members of the public

Licensing Board

- Quasi-judicial body separate to the Council
- City of Edinburgh Licensing Board has 9 members
- Deals with applications under Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and Gambling Act 2005
- New premises licences and major variations of licence must be considered at a Board meeting (usually last Monday of the month)
- Depute Clerks have delegated authority to consider all other types of applications (except in some circumstances when objections are received)
- More information including Statement of Policy can be found here: <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licences-permits/edinburghs-licensing-board/1>

Licensing Board – new premises and major variations

- 21-day consultation period for new premises and major variation applications
- Statutory duty to notify the relevant Community Council
- Applications are advertised on the public register:
<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/download/13426/alcohol-licence-registers>
- At the same time, applicant is asked to display a site notice on or outside property
- Board must notify any neighbours within 4 metres of premises boundary (as prescribed by legislation)
- Anyone can object (in writing to licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk)
- Applicant must be provided with copies of all representations
- All interested parties are invited to a Board meeting

Licensing Board – occasional licence applications

- Occasional licences allow on and/or off sales of alcohol for a period of up to 14 days
- Routinely used to cover alcohol sales at events (weddings, markets etc.) but also to enable alcohol sales by premises which have yet to secure a full premises licence
- Consultation with Police Scotland and Licensing Standards
- Applications must be advertised on the public register for 7 days (or shorter if agreed by Depute Clerk, but minimum 24hrs)
- If an objection is received, application must be considered by a Board member
- 5,639 occasional licence applications were received in 2024/25

Licensing Sub-Committee of Regulatory Committee

- Considers applications under Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 and HMO applications under Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- For activities licensable under Civic legislation which are carried out from a fixed location (except Short Term Lets) – Licensing will notify Ward councillors, Council Libraries **and relevant Community Council** of any new application
- New and renewal licence applicants for premises-based licences must display a site notice on or outside the premises for 21 days
- Details of all licence applications are also published online:
<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licences-permits/licensing-registers>
- For HMO, objections must be received within 21 days
- Objections to Civic applications must be received within 28 days
- Important: the 1982 Act does not allow for public objections to temporary licence applications

Licensing Sub-Committee of Regulatory Committee

Committee may consider late objections in certain circumstances

Applicant must receive copies of representations. All interested parties will be invited to Sub-Committee meeting.

Important: your objection will still be considered if you do not attend, but your right to appeal the decision may be affected

Grounds for refusal include:

- that the applicant is not a 'fit and proper person' to hold a licence
- the premises are not suitable or convenient for the purpose; or
- other good reason (usually meaning that the application is at odds with a licensing policy agreed by the Council)

Important: Committee cannot refuse a licence on the grounds of loss of housing, title deeds, concerns there are too many businesses in one area etc. More information can be found on our website:

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licences-permits/objectioning-licence-application>

Licensing - Complaints

Licensing.Standards@edinburgh.gov.uk – complaints about premises licensed to sell alcohol

PRSenforcement@edinburgh.gov.uk – complaints about rented properties, including HMO and Short Term Lets

Licensing.Enforcement@edinburgh.gov.uk – complaints about other operators licensed under the 1982 Act – Late Hours Catering premises, Street Traders, Taxi and Private Hire etc.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/licences-permits/comment-complain-licensed-activity>

Licensing Service – Ways to Access Information

Licensing webpages:

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/business>

Licensing (City Chambers):

licensing@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 4208

Licensing Hub (Murrayburn) - Taxi and PHC:

licensinghub@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 4049

X (Formerly Twitter): **@Edin_Licensing**

Thank you