

# **Sex on Premises Code of Practice**

December 2008

## Principles

- All patrons have the right to practice safe and consensual sex.
- All patrons and staff have the right to information about safe sex.
- All patrons and staff have the right to be treated with respect.
- Newly established SOPV's will be invited to participate in the Code and meet the minimum standard

## Acronyms

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**AIDS** Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

**HIV** Human Immunodeficiency Virus

**SOPV** Sex On Premises Venue

**STI** Sexually Transmissible Infection

**MSM** Men who have Sex with Men

**PEP** Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

## Definitions

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**Sex on Premises Venue** Any premises including sex clubs, backrooms and saunas where patrons pay for entry with the intention of having sex with other patrons.

## **Introduction**

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The development of this Code has been a collaborative process written by ACON in full consultation with sex on premises venue owners and managers.

The Code endorses components of the NSW Department of Health's Guidelines on Communicable Diseases and South Sydney Councils Sex Industry Policy. It is intended that the Code is read in conjunction with these documents.

Sex on Premises venues are invited voluntarily to sign up to the Code. Participating venues agree to abide by the principles set out below.

The Code will ensure a co-ordinated response to health issues by agencies and the gay community.

This document and the principles in it will be regularly reviewed and updated in collaboration with venue owners and managers.

### **Aim:**

The Code of Practice aims to maximise the health and well being of both patrons and staff in sex on premises venues and minimise the risk of communicable diseases.

### **Objectives:**

- Setting minimum standards for sex on premises venues in the areas of:
  - Condom and lube distribution
  - Adequate lighting levels
  - Provision of safe injecting equipment
  - Provision of resources
  - Training staff
  - Cleaning
- Monitoring venue's compliance with the Code on a regular basis.
- Regularly consulting with venue owners and managers and patrons.

*In order to meet minimum standards venues agree to the following:*

### **1. Condoms and Lube**

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- i. Condoms and lube will be freely available at all times, in all areas, where sex is likely to occur and preferably within 'hands reach'. People should not have to leave the area where sex is happening in order to locate condoms or lube.
- ii. Supplies of condoms and lube in areas where sex is likely to occur will be regularly monitored and replenished when low. It is recommended this is done hourly to ensure adequate maintenance.
- iii. Condoms and lube will be available in reasonably lit areas or located by a small light.
- iv. In saunas, condoms and lube will be placed just outside steam room/ sauna areas.
- v. Large and tighter fitting condoms and gloves will be available upon request at the counter.

### **2. Lighting**

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- i. Where safe sex information is provided lighting will be sufficient enough to decipher the information.
- ii. Where sex may occur, lighting will be of a sufficient level to locate condoms and lube.
- iii. Lighting will be of a sufficient level in all areas of the venue in order to ensure adequate cleaning standards are maintained (Australian Standard AS 1680).

### **3. Drug use**

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- i. At least one sharps bin will be provided and securely anchored to the wall.
- ii. Sharps bins will be provided in well-lit areas where injecting drug use is likely to happen.

#### **4. Resources**

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- i. ACON resource racks will be placed near exit areas or areas of high traffic. Resource racks will display information on safe sex, STIs including HIV and hepatitis, and information on alcohol and other drugs.
- ii. Resources will be prominently displayed in well-lit areas to enable accurate deciphering of information.
- iii. Sexual health information and information relevant to gay men and MSM will be displayed in toilets.
- iv. Additional safe sex messages/ posters will be left to the discretion of the venue operators. In appropriate circumstances ACON will advise venues on where these messages will have greatest effect.
- v. ACON will regularly (once a fortnight) supply and update campaign material and resources.

#### **5. Fostering a Safe Sex Culture**

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- i. Barebacking videos will not be played in the venue.
- ii. Advertising for theme nights should not promote the idea that unsafe sex or barebacking will or might occur at these events.

#### **6. Cleaning & Food Preparation**

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- i. Venue operators will follow NSW Department of Health and Council regulations on cleaning, infection control and food preparation. (see **Related Documents** pg.7)
- ii. The venue will be thoroughly cleaned at least once a day and spot checks shall be carried out when appropriate. Particular attention to spot cleaning will be given during peak hours, ie. weekends.

#### **7. Staff Training**

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- i. A handbook supplied by ACON with relevant referral information and basic information on HIV, STIs, Drug issues, emergency numbers, information on clinics, PEP and anything relevant to the gay community will be issued to all venues and updated when necessary.

- ii. ACON will provide adequate training opportunities for SOPV staff in the following areas:
  - Infection control (including cleaning)
  - Problematic drug Use
  - STIs including HIV
- iii. ACON or partnership agencies shall run courses throughout the year. SOPV operators will encourage staff to attend training courses.
- iv. The courses will be accredited with a certificate of attendance and attendance will be recorded.

## **8. Compliance**

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Compliance to the Code will be monitored by ACON (Information and Liaison Officer) every three months in the first year and every six months thereafter. Venue owners and managers have agreed that ACON will visit the venue within 24 hours of notification.

Venues failing to comply will be consulted with and advised on how to meet the standards.

If the minimum standard is not achieved then certification may be removed until compliance is met. Those venues persistently failing to comply will be monitored every three months until they meet the standard.

ACON will produce a report for the accredited venues every six months. The report will highlight venues continuing to abide by the minimum standards and what those minimum standards are.

## **9. Public Consultation**

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Patrons will be constantly consulted via a dedicated telephone line. Any views/ complaints will be recorded and reported back to venues in order that they may review their practice.

Advertisements publicising this dedicated phone number will appear in the gay press every six months. Venues will also be required to display the number.

## **10. Reviewing the Code**

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This code will be reviewed and updated 12 months after its release.

## APPENDICES

### Useful Contacts

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#### **ACON**

9 Commonwealth Street  
Surry Hills  
2010  
Tel: 9206 2000  
Fax: 9206 2069  
[www.acon.org.au](http://www.acon.org.au)

#### **Sydney South West Area Health Service**

Locked bag 7017  
LIVERPOOL BC NSW 1871  
Telephone: 9828 5700  
Fax: 9828 5769

#### **Better Health Centre**

Publications Warehouse  
Locked Mail Bag 5003  
Gladesville  
NSW 2111  
Tel: 9816 0452  
Fax: 9816 0492

#### **City of Sydney Council**

Sex Industry Liaison Officer  
City of Sydney Council  
Town Hall House  
456 Kent Street, SYDNEY 2000  
Telephone: 9246 7675

#### **South East Sydney/Illawarra Area Health Service**

Locked Mail Bag 8808  
SCMC NSW 2521  
Telephone: 02 4253 4888

### Related Documents

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#### **NSW Communicable Diseases Health and Safety Guidelines for Sex on Premises Venues**

NSW Health Department  
(August 2001)

#### **Sex Industry Policy**

City of Sydney Council  
(April 2000)

#### **Infection Control Policy**

NSW Health Department  
(1999)

#### **Public Swimming Pool and Spa Pool Guidelines**

NSW Health Department  
(1996)

### Acknowledgments

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**Victorian AIDS Council Sex on Premises Code of Practice (September 2001)**