

The Guidelines for Safer Dance Parties provide a general overview of the key points to consider when organising and conducting a dance party. The Guidelines provide dance party promoters who plan, manage, and operate dance events with guidance to assist in complying with their commitments. The Guidelines will also assist those who engage with promoters by highlighting key points to consider when interacting with promoters who intend to operate dance parties, and provide pointers for patrons as to what to expect for a safer dance party.

It is recommended that dance parties be held in licensed premises. It is recognised that these events may also be held in varied settings, which may include unlicensed venues. These Guidelines have therefore been developed for application in the broad settings in which dance parties are held. For this reason, the Guidelines are presented in two sections, with the first section (Guidelines for All Venues) being applicable to all parties, including those held in licensed venues, while the second section (Guidelines for Non-Licensed Venues) is applicable to parties held in unlicensed venues specifically.

Developing a safer dance party involves close co-operation and collaboration between promoters and representatives of all relevant agencies. The Guidelines, together with cooperation and careful planning, should lead to safer dance parties for patrons and a better night out for all involved.



## Guidelines for Safer Dance Parties

operate  
manage

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### Basic safety

- Ensure exits are clearly identified, well lit, easily located, and kept clear on both sides of the exit door. Doors should be able to be opened without a key.
- Access to dangerous sites (such as balconies/speaker boxes) should be restricted.
- Ensure that all spaces within the event environment are monitored regularly, including the perimeter.
- To address the issue of drink spiking, inform patrons that unattended drinks will be cleared.
- Check electrical systems for safe operation.
- Provide bins and regularly remove broken glass and rubbish.
- Ensure visibility is adequate at all times – provide adequate lighting and limit the use of smoke machines, especially in basements.
- Keep all thoroughfares clear at all times.
- Limit noise output to below excessive/ allowable levels to avoid hearing damage. Consider selling earplugs at events.
- Consider the impact on nearby residents of excessive noise and unruly patron behaviour.
- Ensure that marquees are treated with a fire retardant substance.

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### Temperature & ventilation

- Temperature control and ventilation systems should work and be able to handle the maximum capacity of the event.
- Ensure that temperature and ventilation are monitored and controlled for the comfort and safety of attendees.
- Consider dress codes that allow patrons to remove outer clothing and stay cool when dancing.
- If possible, provide a secure cloakroom for the safe storage of additional clothing removed during the event.

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### Chill-out areas

- A chill-out area (an area for patrons to rest and recover) should be provided at the venue. This area should be supervised by a staff member with First-Aid training.
- Chill-out areas should be well ventilated and cool, well lit, provide adequate seating, and be quieter than dance areas.
- Drinking water should be available at the chill-out area.

### Availability of drinking water & food

- To address potential heat exhaustion and dehydration among patrons, ensure that cold, clean drinking water is affordable and accessible.
- Never shut off cold water supplies at the event.
- Consider providing food for patrons at the venue and ensure that it is hygienically prepared, stored and served. For guidance and advice regarding the sale of food contact your local council (see contact details). Penalties may apply for the non-sanctioned sale of food.

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## Guidelines for All Venues

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### Alcohol licensing

- A licence must be issued to sell or supply alcohol, including an 'all inclusive' ticket. Alcohol can only be sold and served under certain circumstances by law. Event organisers who wish to sell alcohol should contact the Office of the Liquor & Gambling Commissioner (see contact details).
- If conducting an unlicensed event, ensure that no alcohol is brought into the venue.



venues

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### Security / door staff

- Security and door staff should be licensed, clearly identifiable, trained and briefed on areas relevant to their roles at the event.
- Security and door staff should be aware of:
  - safety/First-Aid provisions
  - emergency evacuation procedures/designated exits
  - appropriate responses to medical emergencies (including overdose, heat stroke, collapse and seizure)
  - the need to report accidents/incidents to venue management and to maintain an incident register

### Venue capacity and crowd management

- Never exceed the maximum capacity of the venue (use one person per square metre of clear floor space as a guide).
- Continually monitor the number of patrons during the event, ensuring that overcrowding does not occur.
- Avoid localised overcrowding within the venue, especially in areas where people may congregate and in chill-out areas.
- Consider providing security in the immediate area surrounding the venue to facilitate safe access to and from the venue for patrons.
- Staff should allow efficient venue access and strive to create a supportive environment for patrons, free from hostility.
- Don't sell tickets before the venue is finalised and consultation has occurred with relevant agencies, as a change in venue may mean a change in capacity.

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### Communication systems

- Reliable communication systems (preferably utilising headsets) are essential.
- Communication systems should be operational throughout the event and should not be dependent on mains power (in case of power failure).
- Effective communication links should be established between security, venue staff, First-Aid and relevant agencies (police, ambulance and fire service). The key First-Aider should be on the same communications network as security.
- If using a mobile phone to contact emergency services, be clear on the location of the event and include the name of the state where the event is held (ensure that mobile coverage is available).

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### First-Aid / medical emergency

- First-Aid should be provided at the event – ensure adequate coverage. Contact the SA Ambulance Service for advice (see contact details).
- First-Aid should be provided by individuals possessing a First-Aid certificate obtained from a registered First-Aid training provider, or by current emergency health professionals (emergency department nurse, ambulance officer or doctor).
- There should be a dedicated First-Aid location (a First-Aid tent is ideal for outdoor venues). This should be away from the main thoroughfare, well lit and accessible from outside the venue, as an ambulance/ambulance officer should be able to access the venue and reach the First-Aid location freely (without going through the crowd). The location should also be quiet enough to hear breathing.
- As a guide, seek medical assistance if a person is:
  - complaining of shortness of breath, dizziness, pounding or racing heartbeat, or chest pain
  - drowsy and cannot be roused
  - behaving abnormally (e.g. confused, disoriented)

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- Consider providing the following First-Aid gear for a large capacity event:
  - free fluids (for oral rehydration)
  - general First-Aid equipment (such as a standard First-Aid kit)
  - oxygen
  - auto defibrillator
- In case of a medical emergency the best response is to call the ambulance service early (the police do not attend drug-related medical emergencies unless the ambulance officers call for help or a death occurs).
- For emergency attendance only phone: 000



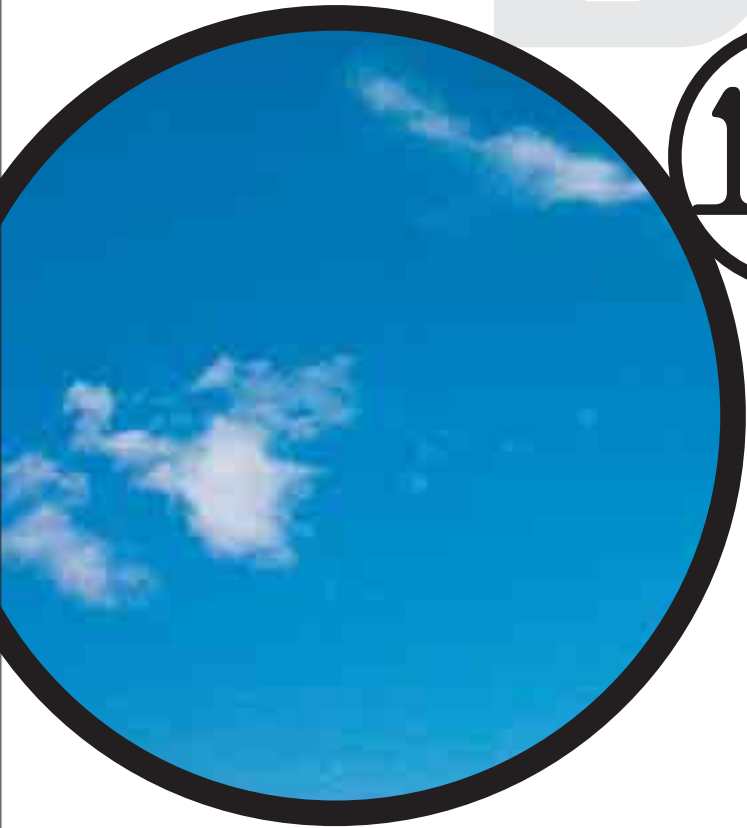
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### Community education

- Consider providing clearly displayed drug harm reduction related information at the event, as some patrons may choose to use drugs at dance parties. Information on the recommended level of fluid consumption should also be provided at the event to avoid excessive fluid consumption or dehydration. The resource *Illicit Drugs & Licensed Premises* provides relevant information and realistic strategies that address illicit drug use. For more information visit [www.dassa.sa.gov.au/goto/licensed\\_premises](http://www.dassa.sa.gov.au/goto/licensed_premises)
- To address illicit drug use, ensure that all possible efforts are applied to discourage use, i.e. through front door signage and promotional materials.

# Danger

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## Toilets

- Provide adequate toilet facilities for the number of people expected at the event. Consider hiring portable toilets if there are not enough toilets available at the venue.
- Ensure that toilets are well lit, clean and functional for the entire length of the event. Monitor regularly.
- Sanitary disposal facilities should be provided in toilets.
- Consider providing sharps disposal bins in toilets for the safe disposal of needles and syringes. Contact the Needle Clean Up Hotline for more information (see contact details).

## Emergency Service consultation (Police, Ambulance, Fire Service, State Emergency Service)

- Contact emergency services early to discuss planning, event details and procedures for attendance (see contact details).
- Ensure that emergency services are aware of event details, including the exact location of the venue.
- Contact the Fire Safety Department (see contact details) for advice regarding compliance with fire safety requirements (such as exit provisions, venue access, adequate water supply and fire extinguisher provisions).
- For advice on First-Aid and emergency medical response, contact the SA Ambulance Service (see contact details).
- To advise police about the event or to get further information, contact the local police station and ask for the Drug Action Team Sergeant or the Planning Officer.
- The Department of Health provides a booklet setting out guidelines for major events. Contact the Department's Environmental Health Service on 8226 7107 or view the document at:  
[www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/publications/public-events-guidelines.pdf](http://www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/publications/public-events-guidelines.pdf)
- In case of an emergency at the event, call 000 for attendance by emergency services.

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### Cleaning Up

- Event organisers/promoters must ensure that the venue is left clean and tidy following a party.
- Cleaning up could be done by contractors or the promoter's team.
- Consider obtaining sharps disposal containers and safe handling advice in case needles and syringes are found – call the Needle Clean Up Hotline for further info (see contact details).

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### Transport options, traffic management and signage

- Consider arranging transport to and from the venue for patrons, especially if the venue is isolated, and informing taxi companies of the event, as this can reduce traffic problems and minimise the risks of people driving while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs or when fatigued.
- Adequate, well-lit parking should be provided close to the venue – check with the local council and the police (see contact details).
- Avoid venue access routes that pass through quiet streets.
- If considering signage for the event, seek appropriate approval prior to fixing signs on a public space – contact the local council (see contact details).
- Consider providing patrons with a site map providing details of exits, toilets, First-Aid, food and water.
- Patrons should be encouraged to plan safe transport options to and from the event.

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### Consultation

- Consider keeping the community informed about the event to avoid potential hassles. Make a contact number available for the public to find out more about the event.
- Consider obtaining feedback from the community and relevant agencies following the event. Evaluation may be useful for organising future events.

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### Insurance

- Arrange comprehensive insurance coverage well before the event and find out what liabilities there may be – ensure that legal/licensing requirements are complied with.



## Guidelines for Unlicensed Venues

Safe

## Relevant Agency Contact Details

Prior to conducting an event, please contact these agencies:



### Police

Please contact the local police station in the area where the event will be held (see White Pages), prior to conducting the event and ask for the Drug Action Team Sergeant or the Planning Officer.

Police Attendance: 131 444

### Ambulance

South Australian Ambulance Service

For advice phone: 136 272

### Fire Service

Metropolitan and Country

Fire Safety Department – phone: 8204 3611

### Local Councils

Visit the Local Government Association website for contact information about local councils: [www.lga.sa.gov.au/](http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/)

### Office of the Liquor & Gambling Commissioner

Phone: 8226 8410 or visit the website: [www.olgc.sa.gov.au](http://www.olgc.sa.gov.au)

### Needle Clean Up Hotline / Alcohol & Drug Information Service

Phone: 1300 13 1340

Your comments/feedback on the Guidelines are welcomed – please contact Steve Lymb at the Drug & Alcohol Services South Australia.  
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This resource was produced by the *Reducing Drug Harm in the Dance Party Scene* project, a collaborative project between DASSA and SAPOL. The project is an initiative of the South Australian Drug Summit 2002, funded by the South Australian Government.

#### Disclaimer

The Guidelines provide an overview of the major requirements to consider when operating a dance party. However, while the Guidelines are designed to provide dance party promoters with guidance when organising and conducting a dance party, the agencies involved in the development of the Guidelines for Safer Dance Parties accept no responsibility for decisions made on the basis of this document.

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This resource was produced by Drug & Alcohol Services South Australia, Southern Adelaide Health Service in collaboration with SA Police, Office of the Liquor & Gambling Commissioner, Australian Hotels Association (SA), SA Ambulance Service, Local Government Association of South Australia, Rave Safe, Youth Affairs Council of South Australia, Fresh FM and Royal Adelaide Hospital, Central Northern Adelaide Health Service.

contact