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**Safety Measures - Venue**

This document provides a list of suggested safety measures that can be used by a venue to reduce the risk of harassment in the workplace in the context of a live music event.

**How to use this document**

This document has been developed to provide small or big small or big venues, whether a festival, greenfield, arena or club venue, with ways of reducing the risk of harassment in the workplace, in public areas and in other work-related areas.

If this document looks complicated or unfamiliar don’t panic – you can just have a look over the tools and ideas and pick those that might be useful or applicable for you in the context of your event and venue.

This document outlines specific safety measures, but it is not in itself a complete framework. For example, it does not address who is responsible for each measure on the day or the escalation process for an event or venue. These issues need to be worked out separately. As venue you need to cooperate and coordinate with the promoter and other businesses working on the event to decide who will be responsible for what and communicate that to all workers.

This document has been prepared from the perspective of a venue and there is a similar document addressed to promoters and artists. However, it’s important to note that the promoter and venue (and sometimes artist) will have overlapping duties with respect to a live music event and this document doesn’t determine who is legally responsible for which aspects. For further guidance on this see the Venue and Promoter section of the [SoundCheck Aotearoa website](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/promoters-and-venues) and the [Show Checklist](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/s/show-checklist.docx).

Ideally these safety measures would be implemented along with a [Sexual Harassment Policy](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/sexual-harassment-policy) which outlines your commitment to preventing sexual harassment and includes a framework for reporting concerns. If you are already operating within a wider health and safety framework and an existing sexual harassment policy, you can integrate this document or parts of it into your overall health and safety risk assessment to ensure that sexual harassment is considered and addressed.

Finally, the measures below are not a list of requirements. Venues should consider budget, demographic, crowd size, work environment and all other aspects of a project when establishing what safety measures to use.

This diagram outlines the different types of safety measures available, 1 being the most effective and 4 being the least effective. This is illustrated further in the diagram at the end of this document. A practical approach should be taken when considering what is appropriate to implement. If promoters are unsure, they should seek advice from a health and safety consultant.

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| **Area of influence** |  | **Safety measure** | **Details** |
| Backstage Area | 1 | Team Composition | Establish a diverse, inclusive team that brings together a broad range of demographics. This encourages a positive, balanced culture, and reduces the chances of potential power imbalances. |
| Alcohol Management | Removing alcohol from areas to stop any further intoxication can indirectly reduce the risk of sexual harassment. Where people are identified as a potential high intoxication risk, a management plan should be established. This could include removing the person or removing alcohol. |
| Permanent/Temporary Ban | Banning of people can be an appropriate method for eliminating the risk of harassment, whether in the interim or permanently. This gives people the ability to ban dangerous individuals, caution should be taken, security used where possible and stakeholders notified – if appropriate to do so, companies involved should be made aware of the action to be taken. |
| Backstage Area | 2 | Checkpoints/Security Measures | Security checkpoints with clear accreditation and ID checking could be implemented if practical. Methods should be used to ensure venue policies are upheld and people are not put in vulnerable situations. This could include a guard stationed inside a greenroom, or checking inside every 15-30 minutes - reporting to the head manager updates or concerns. Methods should be used to ensure venue policies and promoter expectations are upheld collectively backstage. |
| Cameras | Cameras can act as a suitable deterrent. When placed in corridors or entryways, they can be a reassuring presence and improve the sense of safety in the environment. All privacy laws must be upheld when implementing such measures. |
| Alcohol Licensing/Staff | Ensure appropriate licensing is in place and a proven supplier used, with competent staff. Staff should be briefed and given the necessary tools to manage expectations and supply of alcohol. Clear reporting channels should be explained to all key staff. |
| Allocation of roles | Allocation of roles should be considered, ensuring appropriate staffing that reflects the nature of the team, workplace, incoming promoter or tour party. All staff should be reviewed to avoid hiring anyone who, following a risk assessment, is considered to present a risk of sexual harassment or assault. Communicate the final team composition to all members, seek their feedback if appropriate to do so and ensure comfort levels are suitable. |
| Backstage Harassment Rep | This could be a key person on the team or a designated person, such as the artist liaison or Merlin’s Pass Holder. This should be someone who holds peer respect and has strong relationships in the industry, and who has the ability to manage difficult spaces and people. This person can be given the responsibility to monitor intoxication levels and activity backstage, and identifying/eliminating any people early who may be a risk. Where a promoter also has a person in this role, coordinate with them in developing best practises. For more information on the specific role and expectations of a Merlin’s Pass Holder please refer to the [Merlin’s Pass Guidance](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/s/merlins-pass-guidance.docx). |
| Backstage Area  Backstage Area | 3 | Posters | This may consist of posters in areas such as corridors, toilets and other high flow spaces managed by the promoter. These posters should bring positive awareness to harm prevention/sexual harassment, while also providing support options and ways of reporting harassment. Where there is overlap with a promoter, coordination around poster use and messaging should be used. Examples and template posters of various sizes can be found on the [Soundcheck Aotearoa website.](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/visual-resources-and-posters) |
| H & S signage | General H&S signage can be used to also bring awareness to sexual harassment. This should be used in general workplace areas such as the loading dock or entry points, and should include zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace. |
| Induction | An electronic induction can be sent to all contractors, venue staff and promoter, prior to starting works onsite, this should include expectations around harassment in the workplace. |
| Briefing | Briefings should be carried out daily. Briefings should include venue expectations and policies towards sexual harassment, including channels of reporting any such incident. |
| High level briefing | Key back of house staff such as catering, managers and security guards should be briefed in a more detailed manner around sexual harassment in their respective spaces. All specific or immediate risks should be raised at this time with management. Detailed briefings for key staff backstage should be requested from the promoter, with clear expectations and reporting channels. |
| Merlin’s Pass | A [Merlin’s Pass](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/s/merlins-pass-guidance.docx) is a green laminate that’s identifiable to all workers across any site in New Zealand that have this system in place. It identifies the Pass Holder as someone who is able to receive disclosures and reports of sexual harassment and assault. Pass Holders should be approachable in nature, and familiar with the Venue’s Sexual Harassment Policy so that colleagues can solicit advice and support. They should be competent in managing harassment issues and respected by their peers as a neutral person. This should be coordinated with the incoming promoter in case they have a similar role on their own team. |
| Wallet Info Card | Pocket-sized collateral with information about harassment, bystander intervention, and disclosures. Can be found on the Soundcheck Aotearoa website and can be a great way of sharing information with other people who work with you, increasing positive awareness of the issue and knowledge retention. |
| Guest Expectations | A guest policy outlining behaviour expectations, methods of risk management and good vibe checks can be effective mitigators. A person for staff to communicate issues to should be established, with a clear response plan in place. Coordination across this area with incoming promoters should be carried out. |
| Wellbeing Check | Simple, regular check-ins with all individuals backstage can be an effective deterrent and means of identifying at-risk or high-risk individuals. For example, requesting a ‘thumbs up’ from everyone in a room every 30 minutes, suggest such ideas to promoters when discussing backstage plans |
| Access Control | Establish clear identification from the promoter and for staff, covering access backstage and other key areas, including separate passes or identification to reduce access. |
| Security | Use security if appropriate to assist with artist arrival and public access to areas such as the stage or greenroom if practical to do so. Risk levels should be assessed as to whether this is an appropriate measure for an artist., security for the artist could extend to after show functions or any situation where the artist may be at risk. Thorough briefings should be requested from the promoter regarding expectations. |
| Regular Meetings | Regular stakeholder meetings throughout a show or show build can allow regular monitoring of risk levels and adaptation in this area. |
| Annual H & S | Annual H & S meetings and training that includes sexual harassment can be an effective tool for awareness and reducing the risk in this area. |
| Artist Background | Gain a prior understanding of the performing artist, typical tour party behaviour and their typical guests backstage or side of stage, culture around drinking or substance use and any other aspects that might affect what resources are planned prior. |
| Post Show Briefings | Request a briefing on post show activity and any coordination around alcohol management, establishing clear channels of communication and expectations around conduct, intoxication levels, consent and chain of reporting across the two. |
| Stage Area | 1 | Alcohol Management | The venue operator is the liquor license holder and as such should exercise its duty of care to ensure appropriate alcohol management across all environs. Establish appropriate staff for alcohol management that takes into consideration the artist performing and the expected audience. |
|  | Team Composition | Diverse team composition can help with rapport across a broader range of artist and audience demographics, as well as creating a more positive and inclusive culture for the venue. |
|  | 2 | Barrier/crowd management | Establish expectations around crowd handling by briefing security managers and establishing promoter expectations. Any relevant additional security measures including whether the artist might go into the crowd should be communicated at this stage. Further discussions around what methods the artist might use to alert the crowd or security to an individual in distress should also be conducted at this stage. |
|  | Isolated Artist Area | Isolated areas for artists to place drinks or belongings away from public and other people can reduce security risks like, drink spiking while artists perform. Methods of isolation can be in the form of security, regular checks from staff, bar leaners, tables or barriers restricting access into an area. |
| Stage Area | 3 | Merlin’s Pass | A Merlin’s Pass is a green laminate that’s identifiable to all workers across any site in New Zealand that have this system in place. It identifies the Pass Holder as someone who is able to receive disclosures and reports of sexual harassment and assault. Pass Holders should be approachable in nature, and familiar with the Venue’s Sexual Harassment Policy so that colleagues can solicit advice and support. They should be competent in managing harassment issues and respected by their peers as a neutral person. This should be coordinated with the incoming promoter in case they have a similar role on their own team. |
|  | Posters | This may consist of posters in areas such as corridors, toilets and other high flow spaces managed by the promoter. These posters should bring positive awareness to harm prevention/sexual harassment, while also providing support options and ways of reporting harassment. Where there is overlap with a promoter, coordination around poster use and messaging should be used. Examples and template posters of various sizes can be found on the [Soundcheck Aotearoa website.](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/visual-resources-and-posters) |
|  | Briefings | Briefings should be carried out daily with promoters and contractors. Briefings should include venue expectations and policies towards sexual harassment, including channels of reporting any such incident, alcohol management, public stage access and security posture. |
|  | Artist Background | Gain a prior understanding of the performing artist, typical tour party behaviour and their typical guests backstage or side of stage, culture around drinking or substance use and any other aspects that might affect what resources are planned prior. |
|  | Regular Meetings | Regular stakeholder meetings throughout a show or show build can allow ongoing monitoring of risk levels and adaptation in this area. |
|  | Annual H & S | Annual H & S meetings and training that includes sexual harassment can be an effective tool for awareness and reducing the risk in this area. |
| Public Areas | 1 | Evictions | Outline clear expectations with the venue and contractors around punter behaviour, thresholds and processes for management of harassment incidents. |
|  | 2 | Security Checkpoints | Key security should be briefed and competent in handling any harassment incident. This should include general expectations, the need for regular security presence and continual static and dynamic risk assessments for areas of concern, adjusting security posture to reflect the risk level. |
|  | Cameras | Cameras can act as a tool to identify punters of concern and also act as a deterrent. These can be positioned in the mosh pit, barrier area or other high-risk areas. Signage should be used at the entry gates to bring attention to the use of cameras at the event, as all privacy laws must be upheld. |
|  | Liquor Management | Ensure appropriate licensing is in place and a proven supplier used, with competent staff. Staff should be briefed and given the necessary tools to manage expectations and supply of alcohol. Suitable security should be present in all alcohol serving areas, monitoring intoxication levels and punter concerns. |
|  | Safer Spaces | Establish alternative zones/areas for punters looking to remove themselves from the crowd or from highly intoxicated people. These spaces should be easily identifiable and accessible. Offering calm spaces away from general flow where people can seek sanctuary, with competent personnel present, capable of dealing with emotionally difficult situations including sexual harassment. This could range from:   * Small cordoned off areas using barrier, bike rack, rope, or alternative marker * Opening up of unused seating areas * Using existing platforms or spaces unoccupied small or large * Place security guards in particular locations to establish a presence. * Build or create specific platforms for safe zones * Signposted areas * Clearly identifiable areas for support such as, Medics, Crowd Care Tent, Red Frogs, Consent Club and other organisations that public can access if feeling unsafe. |
| Public Areas | Lighting | Ensure suitable lighting is used across the venue. Light tests should be carried out prior to showtime. Eliminating any high-risk black spots can reduce the risk of harassment. |
|  | Toilets | Ensure there are sufficient toilet facilities available for your audience, including gender-neutral options, where possible increase space between male/female/neutral toilet blocks. This will reduce any risk of cross mingling, ultimately reducing the risk of sexual harassment. This can be further reduced by adding additional security staff as a deterrent and presence. |
|  | Intoxication Area | Alcohol management locations can be used with staff experienced in monitoring intoxicated punters, such as crowd care tents, Red Frogs or Medics. |
|  | Water Stations/Runners | Use water stations and runners such as the Red Frogs and other organisations to provide hydration and easily available alternatives to alcohol. This can reduce general intoxication levels at events and indirectly reduce harassment. |
|  | Accessible Facilities/Announcements | Coordinate with promoters and make use of available messaging mediums during breaks between sets. Such as audio or video announcements, to communicate information such as locations of water stations, Crowd Care tents, security, medics, consent organisations and safer spaces. |
|  | Show Culture | Establishing a safe, ‘look after each other’ culture at venues can have a positive effect on general safety levels at venues. Creating positive messaging, marketing, communication and inclusive environments can have a positive impact on the venue culture. |
|  | 3 | Posters | This may consist of posters at the entry gates, front house, toilets and other high flow areas. These posters should bring positive awareness to harm prevention/sexual harassment, while also providing support options and ways of reporting harassment. Examples and template posters of various sizes can be found on the [Soundcheck Aotearoa website.](https://www.soundcheckaotearoa.co.nz/visual-resources-and-posters) |
|  | Party Cards | ‘Party Cards’ with information on how to report harassment or assault, bystander intervention, and the venue’s code of conduct can be a helpful and more discreet way to communicate this information to attendees. These can be placed strategically around the venue in places like bathrooms, on the bar, at the door, and available for staff to give out over the bar or at the door. Examples can be found on the Soundcheck Aotearoa website. |
|  | Video messaging | Video messaging can be used in between acts, bringing positive awareness to particular aspects. |
|  | Conditions of entry | Ensure clear conditions of entry are visible to punters. This should clearly outline expectations around attendee behaviour and the consequences to breaching conditions e.g. removal or refusal of entry. These conditions should be discussed with all stakeholders. |
|  | Ticketing | Ticketing should have clear information on promoter expectations and conditions of entry. Harassment policies can be incorporated into the event information or the terms and conditions of ticket purchase. |
|  | Signage | Clear signage is crucial in making the key areas identifiable to all punters, such as Crowd Care and medical areas. |
|  | Police Coordination | Establish crowd demographic with the promoter and determine police presence if practical to do so. Police presence at events can act as a positive deterrent. |
|  | Concert culture | Establishing a safe, ‘look after each other culture’ at venues can have a positive effect on general safety levels at venues. Creating positive messaging, marketing and inclusive environments can have a positive impact on the venue culture. |
|  | Communication | Communication points between the punter present an opportunity to outline venue harassment policies and other conditions, whether via email, marketing, social media or ticketing. |
| Public Areas | 4 | PPE/Uniform | Key personnel should be easily identifiable, whether security, medics, consent organisations, water runners or any other company key to reducing the risk of harassment at an event. For example, using a different uniform for specific Crowd Care teams, or fluorescent for security in public areas |

Establishing a safe workplace is an ongoing system that requires static, dynamic and specifically timed assessments. Risk levels of harassment should be assessed prior to starting any project or job. It is possible certain aspects may change in the workplace, and therefore these safety measures may need amending as situations evolve or as new risks are identified.

For example, if intoxication levels were too high or the standards for entry were not being met, the risk of harassment could be reduced by placing additional security staff beyond the entry gates to vet high-risk punters and reduce risk inside the venue. Or, if new information is received indicating that an incoming artist or tour party are likely to engage in high-risk behaviour, the risk of harassment could be reduced by adding security to the artist area, adjusting the availability of alcohol, tightening access control for guests, etc.

If harassment happens in your workplace, respond using the processes in your sexual harassment policy and establish whether additional control measures need implementing to reduce the risk of future incidents. All duty of care must be taken when removing any person from a workplace or event. When someone has been harmed, ensure follow up contact is carried out to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the person harmed.

If you are ever unsure how to proceed, seek professional advice from a health and safety consultant.

**Hierarchy of Control**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Eliminate:** |  |  | **Most effective methods**    **Least effective methods** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **1. Eliminate sexual harassment**  Remove it completely from the workplace  *e.g. Permanent ban* | If this isn’t possible then…. | |  |  |
| **Minimise:** |  |  |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **2. Substitute the hazard**  Wholly or partly with a safer alternative  *e.g. Temporary ban*  **Isolate the hazard**  Use physical barriers, time or distance  *e.g.*  *Redeploy/New role*  **Use engineering controls** | Minimise the risk if practical, by taking one or more of these actions, if not then… | | **3. Use administrative controls**  Develop methods of work, processes and procedures  *e.g. Agreements/Signage* | If not then…. | | **4. Use personal protective equipment**  Highly unlikely to be used but can be hi-visibility clothing | If a significant risk still remains, decide if it’s safe to proceed. | |  |  |
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