



Factsheet 12: Drinking alcohol in public places

Drinking alcohol or carrying an open alcohol container is prohibited in or near some public places. The maximum penalty is \$750.¹

Public places where it is illegal to drink alcohol

It is an offence to drink alcohol, or have an open container of alcohol:

- At a bus interchange or bus station
- Within 50 metres of a bus interchange or station, a shop, or a licenced premises (such as a bar or café selling alcohol)
- In an area where there are signs saying that it is a permanent or temporary alcohol-free place.²

Seizure of alcohol in public places

If a police officer or investigator thinks you are drinking alcohol or have an open container of alcohol in one of the places listed above, they can take the alcohol and dispose of it. If they dispose of the alcohol, you cannot be charged with an offence or cautioned.³

Assumption that drink is alcohol

If you are carrying an open container with a label or mark describing the contents as liquor (for example, if the label says something like '2.6% Alc/Vol') then the police will assume the contents are alcoholic.⁴

Permanent alcohol-free places in Canberra

Permanent alcohol-free places are one type of place in the ACT where you are not allowed to drink alcohol or have an open container of alcohol.⁵ Permanent alcohol-free places include places in Civic and public skate parks.

1 *Liquor Act 2010* (ACT), ss 199, 200.

2 *Ibid* ss 199(1) and 200(1).

3 *Ibid* s201.

4 *Ibid* s201(5).

5 *Ibid* ss 199(4) and 200(3).