

## Alcohol related regulations during the corona pandemic in the Netherlands

- March 2020: First lockdown began 15 March. Closure of restaurants, bars and pubs. On-premise alcohol sales were forbidden, except in restaurants and bars in hotels. Take away and delivery of alcohol by restaurants, bars and pubs was allowed. During the first lockdown alcohol availability was regulated in local emergency ordinances.
- June 2020: Restaurants, bars and pubs reopened (with several restrictions) 1 June 2020. Except: nightclubs, discotheques and sport canteens.
- September 2020: 20 September the second Covid-19 wave began. Bars and pubs in the Western Part of the Netherlands had to close earlier, one week later (29 September) all bars and pubs in the whole country. Take-aways are prohibited to sell alcoholic drinks from 10 PM.
- October 2020: 14 October the second lockdown started, with again closure of restaurants, bars and pubs. On-premise alcohol sales were forbidden, except in restaurants and bars in hotels. Take away and delivery of alcohol by restaurants, bars and pubs during day time (before 8 PM) was allowed. Also no off-premise alcohol sales after 8 PM. Besides that no possession and consumption of alcoholic drinks in public after 8 PM. As of October 23 on-premise alcohol sales in hotels after 8 PM were forbidden.
- December 2020: 1 December a national law for all Covid-19 restrictions came into force. As of 14 December all on-premise sales in hotels are forbidden (even room service). Closure of non-essential shops (liquor shops were declared essential!).

April 2021: 28 April: Outdoor seating areas at restaurants and cafes may be open from 12 AM to 6 PM, under certain conditions. Outdoor seatings of sport canteens must remain closed.  
Re-opening of non-essential shops.

May 2021: 19 May: Outdoor seating areas of all catering venues (also sport canteens) may be open from 6 AM to 8 PM.

June 2021: 5 June: catering industry may open from 6 AM to 10 PM and admit a maximum of 50 guests per room, but with reservations, a health check, fixed seats and a maximum of 4 people at one table, 1.5 meters away. Nightclubs and discotheques remain closed.

Restaurants and eateries can serve dinner in a maximum of two sittings per table per evening. Self-service is not allowed. Entertainment such as live performances or television screens showing sporting events are also not permitted.

An exception applies for large venues with 1,000 permanent seats or more. These may admit up to 250 visitors, 1.5 metres apart.

Venues serving food and drink, cultural venues and organisers of professional sporting competitions can choose to make use of the “corona entry pass system”. If they opt to use the system, they can host as many people as they can accommodate as long as people are 1.5 metres from one another while seated.

The ban on on- and off alcohol sales moved up to 10 PM. That means no alcohol sales, no serving of alcohol and no home deliveries of alcohol after 10 PM. In addition, no one is allowed to consume alcohol or have it ready for consumption in the public area after 10 PM.

26 June: Catering venues are allowed to be open regularly, but under conditions.

The conditions are that guests must make a reservation, are subject of a health check and must be offered fixed seats, whereby the 1.5 meters must be observed.

If there are cough screens between the tables in the outdoor seating areas, the distance between guests can be smaller than 1.5 meters.

Nightclubs and discos are also allowed to open again, but the guests must be in possession of a “corona entry pass”.

The ban on on- and off alcohol sales after 10 PM is lifted, just as the ban on consuming alcohol in the public area after 10 PM.

July 2021:

10 July: Only two weeks after the reopening of all catering venues Dutch government decided to tighten the rules again. Restaurants and cafes must be closed from midnight until 06.00. Entertainment is prohibited. Discos and nightclubs must be completely locked again.

The 'coronavirus entry pass' scheme, which granted an exemption from the 1.5 metre distancing rule, is suspended for the catering sector until 13 August.

Sandra van Ginneken  
10 July 2021