

Police to close licensed premises that refuse to comply with advice

Police officers will serve emergency closure orders to licenced premises that refuse to comply to government advice to close.

Deputy Chief Constable Malcolm Graham, Police Scotland's lead for coronavirus, said: "There has been an exceptionally high level of compliance across Scotland with the UK and Scottish Government instruction for entertainment venues to close, with thousands of premises shutting.



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"However, I am aware that a small number of public houses are intent on defying this instruction and have indicated that they will remain open until legally ordered to close.

"This is absolutely reckless and endangers not only the lives of customers, but wider communities, in an extremely fast moving and unprecedented situation where both the health and safety of the nation is at stake.

“Therefore, I have obtained further legal advice today and Police Scotland will now instruct officers to serve emergency closure orders on any licensed premises which refuses to comply on the grounds of the threat posed to public safety.

“Officers are now visiting these premises today to have them closed.

“A compulsory closure under the Licensing Scotland Act remains in place for 24 hours but can be repeated as necessary.

“We will also report them to their relevant Licensing Board for further action to be considered.

“We are aware of the proposed legislation in relation to coronavirus, and are carefully considering the implications in this very fast moving situation.

“These are exceptional times and I would again urge everyone to stay safe and listen to the clear advice coming from health experts and government.”

Chief Constable Iain Livingstone QPM added: “I am fully supportive of the enforcement action taken today which is entirely proportionate to the threat posed to the safety of Scotland’s communities.

“I have a clear, positive duty to both protect life and improve the safety and wellbeing of people across Scotland, while supporting the government and health agencies in our fight against this pandemic.”