

Pubs can no longer be left in limbo

Most pubs have been unable to trade for 140 days and counting

Call for Government to either open the pubs or come up with a “meaningful compensation package”

Pubs can no longer be left in limbo around if and when they will be able to trade, according to the Licensed Vintners Association (LVA).

With the majority of pubs across the country having been closed for 140 days and counting, the LVA says the Government either needs to open the pubs next week or come up with a “meaningful” support plan for the sector.

NPHEA are to pass their advice to the Government on the reopening of pubs on Tuesday, with a decision then due from the Government as to whether pubs will be able to trade from 10th August.

This is the second time in three weeks that pubs have been left uncertain about whether they will reopen with less than a week’s notice.

Pubs are also yet to receive the guidelines that will inform their reopening preparations. The absence of clarity means pubs don’t know whether they should have staff lined up to work from next week, order and purchase stock or how they should be organising their premises to account for any measures that will be contained in the unpublished guidelines.

“Pubs across the country can’t continue to be left in limbo,” said Donall O’Keeffe, LVA Chief Executive. “It is creating intolerable pressure for publicans, their staff and suppliers. With less than seven days to go until the pubs are due to reopen, we still don’t know what is happening. This is exactly the same situation we were in three weeks ago. We can’t just keep going from three week period to three week period. How many times are the Government going to walk an entire industry up that hill of uncertainty?”

“The Government can’t keep kicking the can down the road when it comes to tackling the future of the pub sector. Either they are going to let us trade or they won’t. If they won’t they need to come up with a meaningful compensation package for the sector. No other industry is facing this level of insecurity and no other sector has been singled out in a way that the pubs of this country have been.

“We believe the vast majority of the sector have shown great responsibility during this public health crisis. Pubs all over Ireland supported the closure back in March. Our industry has supported measures which have fundamentally altered the pub experience and which severely damage our future prospects. Yet we still are uncertain about whether we will be allowed to reopen.

“11 pubs have already closed for good in Dublin alone since this crisis began. The Government either needs to give the industry the opportunity to open our doors or they need to get specific about what they will do to protect the future of this sector and the approximately 50,000 jobs it provides,” Mr. O’Keeffe concluded.