



**BELIZE**

**PUBLIC HALLS REGULATION ACT  
CHAPTER 141**

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## CHAPTER 141

## PUBLIC HALLS REGULATION

*[10th December, 1912]*

Ch. 65,  
 R.L. 1958.  
 CAP. 112,  
 R.E. 1980-1990.  
 38 of 1963.  
 13 of 1966.

Short title.

**1.** This Act may be cited as the Public Halls Regulation Act.

Interpretation.

**2.** In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,

“church” means any building, room, booth, tent or other structure whether of a permanent or temporary nature exclusively used for religious services, meetings or purposes;

“hall” means any building, room, booth, tent or other structure whether of a permanent or temporary nature other than a church;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for Local Government and Rural Development;

“owner” means the owner, whether the sole or part owner, a lessee, the occupier or other person in actual possession or having the management or control of any hall or having the collecting or receiving of the rents, issues or profits thereof.

Licence to be obtained to use halls for certain purposes.

**3.** Every person who uses or permits the use of, or who aids or takes part in the use of, any hall for,

- (a) the public performance of stage plays;
- (b) public dancing;
- (c) music to which the public are admitted by ticket or otherwise;

- (d) any public meeting, entertainment or amusement;
- (e) any instructional class or classes of whatever tenor, the average attendance at which exceeds thirty; and
- (f) any friendly society meeting,

unless and until the owner thereof is the holder of a valid and subsisting licence, in relation thereto obtained in accordance with this Act, is guilty of an offence.

4. All applications for licences under this Act shall, except as provided in section 8, be made by the owner to the Commissioner of Police who may grant or refuse such licence as in his discretion he may think fit.

Application for licence how made.

5. The Commissioner of Police or any person appointed by the Commissioner of Police for the purpose, may enter and inspect any hall in respect of which an application for a licence is made, and no such licence shall be granted unless and until the Commissioner of Police is satisfied that such hall is suitable for the purposes in respect of which such licence is desired and is provided with proper and sufficient fire fighting apparatus and exits.

Power of entry for inspection.

6. The Commissioner of Police may grant any licence under this Act subject to such conditions, restrictions, exemptions and provisos, which shall be stated in such licence, as he thinks to be reasonable in the particular circumstances.

Power to grant licences.

7.—(1) Every licence granted under this Act shall be liable to be revoked at any time by the Commissioner of Police, but until so revoked it shall, unless otherwise specified in the licence, remain in full force and effect from the date of the taking effect of such licence up to and inclusive of the 31st December of the year in which that licence was granted; but a licence for public dancing may be granted in respect of a single occasion on which a hall is to be used for public dancing.

Revocation of licence.

(2) The following fees shall be payable to the Commissioner of Police in respect of licences granted under this Act,

13 of 1966.

- (a) any licence other than for public dancing \$5.00
- (b) a licence for public dancing,
  - (i) in Belize City \$50.00
  - (ii) elsewhere \$35.00
- (c) subject to subparagraphs (1) and (ii) of paragraph (b) of this subsection, a licence for public dancing on a single occasion \$2.50

Provisions for licence of short duration.

**8.** In districts other than the Belize district, applications for licences under this Act may be made to the magistrate of the district in which the hall to be licensed is situated, and the magistrate may exercise in respect of such application all the powers conferred on the Commissioner of Police under sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 11 of this Act.

Contravention of licence.

**9.** Any person who contravenes, or aids, encourages, or in any way assists in the contravention of the provisions of any licence under this Act, or of any condition, restriction or proviso contained in any such licence, is guilty of an offence.

Liability for offences under Act.

**10.** The owner of any hall in respect of which any offence under this Act is committed shall, if unlicensed, be liable to be precluded from ever obtaining a licence, and if holding, whether as the original holder or as transferee, a valid and subsisting licence, shall be liable to have such licence revoked and to be precluded from ever obtaining another licence.

Transfer of licence.

**11.**—(1) No licence granted by the Commissioner of Police under this Act shall be transferable without the sanction of the Commissioner of Police which shall be indorsed on any such licence.

(2) Any person who contravenes this section is guilty of an offence.

Exits to churches.

**12.**—(1) Whenever it appears to the Minister that any church,

- (a) is not provided with sufficient fire fighting apparatus to ensure the safety from fire of the congregation attending it; or 38 of 1963.
- (b) is not provided with sufficient exits to ensure the free egress of the members of the congregation in case of accident or necessity,

the Minister may order that such church be provided with such fire fighting apparatus or exits as appears to him to be necessary for the purposes aforesaid within a certain time specified in such Order.

(2) A copy of the Order made pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, which need not be addressed to any person by name, duly certified by the Permanent Secretary, shall be served personally on any person who has within one month prior to the date of such Order conducted any service or meeting in such church and shall be posted on some conspicuous part of such church.

(3) If any Order made under subsection (1) is not complied with within the time specified in the Order, the Minister may, by notice which shall be published in the *Gazette*, and a duplicate of which shall be posted on some conspicuous part of such church, direct that no services or meetings of any sort be held in the church until the Minister's permission is obtained. 38 of 1963.

(4) Any person authorised by the Minister for the purpose, may post, stick or fasten any such Order or notice on any such church. 38 of 1963.

(5) Every person who conducts, presides at, holds, assists or takes part in, any service or meeting in any church described in this section after the publication of a notice as aforesaid and before the sanction of the Minister is obtained as required by this section, and every person who tears down, obliterates, renders illegible or removes any such Order or notice as mentioned in this section which is posted, stuck or fastened to any such church as aforesaid, while such Order or notice is in full force or effect, is guilty of an offence.

- Penalty. **13.** Every person who commits any offence under this Act shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars.
- Saving clause. **14.** Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to affect the provisions of the Cinematographs Act, Cap. 241.