



THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS AND MEETINGS ACT

(CHAPTER 257)

(Original Enactment: Ordinance 40 of 1958)

REVISED EDITION 2001

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Public Entertainments and Meetings Act

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An Act to provide for the regulation of public entertainments and meetings.

[35/2000]

[15th January 1959]

Short title

1. This Act may be cited as the Public Entertainments and Meetings Act.

[35/2000]

Interpretation

2.—(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“approved place” means —

(a) in the case of any place required to be licensed under any regulations for the control and supervision of places that may be used for public entertainment made under the provisions of any written law, a place so licensed; and

(b) in any other case, a building, tent, street or place whether open or enclosed that is approved for the purposes of this Act by the Licensing Officer;

“Licensing Officer” means the officer appointed by the Minister under section 4 and includes an Assistant Licensing Officer;

“public entertainment” has the same meaning as in the Schedule.

[9/79; 35/2000]

(2) The Minister may at any time, by order published in the *Gazette*, amend, add to or vary the Schedule.

[35/2000]

(3) Any order made under subsection (2) shall be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after publication in the *Gazette*.

[35/2000]

Prohibition

3. No public entertainment shall be provided except —

(a) in an approved place; and

(b) in accordance with a licence issued by the Licensing Officer.

Appointment of officers

4. The Minister may by notification in the *Gazette* appoint an officer to be the Licensing Officer for the purpose of this Act and may similarly appoint such number of Assistant Licensing Officers as may be necessary.

Application for licence

5. Every application for a licence shall be in the prescribed form.

Applicants may be joined

6. If the Licensing Officer is satisfied that the responsibility for the observance of the conditions of a licence is intended to be shared between 2 or more persons he may require the application to be made in the names of as many such persons jointly as he thinks fit.

Additional information

7. On receipt of an application for a licence the Licensing Officer may require the applicant to furnish him with such additional information or document as he may require.

[35/2000]

Contents of licence

8. Every licence shall be in the prescribed form and shall set out the conditions subject to which it is issued and the date on which it will expire.

[35/2000]

Licence not renewable as of right

9. A licence shall not be renewable as of right.

[35/2000]

Conditions

10.—(1) In issuing a licence the Licensing Officer may impose such conditions as he thinks fit.

[9/79]

(2) The Licensing Officer may at any time add to, vary or revoke any of the conditions of a licence imposed under subsection (1).

[35/2000]

(3) In deciding whether to add to, vary or revoke any condition of a licence under subsection (2), the Licensing Officer may take into consideration the total number of demerit points awarded against the licensee under section 15 in respect of the licence.

[35/2000]

(4) The Licensing Officer shall, before proceeding to add to, vary or revoke any condition of a licence under subsection (2), give the licensee —

- (a) notice in writing of his intention to do so; and
- (b) an opportunity to be heard, within such time as may be specified in the notice, as to why the condition should not be added to, varied or revoked.

[35/2000]

(5) Any person who is aggrieved by the decision of the Licensing Officer under this section may, within 14 days of being notified of the decision of the Licensing Officer, appeal in writing to the Minister whose decision shall be final.

[35/2000]

Security

11.—(1) In respect of such classes of public entertainment as the Minister may from time to time prescribe by notification in the *Gazette* and subject to such limits as may be thereby prescribed, the Licensing Officer may, before issuing a licence, require —

- (a) the applicant; or
- (b) if there are 2 or more applicants, each applicant named by the Licensing Officer for the purpose,

to give security in such form as the Licensing Officer may determine that the provisions of this Act and the conditions of the licence issued will be duly observed.

[35/2000]

(2) Where a licensee has been awarded such number of demerit points as may be prescribed under section 15(1), the Licensing Officer may require a licensee to give security in such form as the

Licensing Officer may determine that the provisions of this Act and the conditions of the licence issued will be duly observed.

[35/2000]

(3) Where any applicant is required under subsection (1), or any licensee is required under subsection (2), to enter into a bond, the Licensing Officer may require not more than 2 sureties to enter into the bond with the applicant or the licensee, as the case may be.

[35/2000]

(4) Any security given under subsection (1) or (2) shall be liable to forfeiture in whole or in part at the discretion of the Licensing Officer —

- (a) on the cancellation of the licence;
- (b) where the licensee has been awarded such number of demerit points as may be prescribed under section 15(1); or
- (c) where the Licensing Officer is satisfied that the public entertainment has been carried out in contravention of this Act.

[35/2000]

(5) The Licensing Officer shall, before proceeding under subsection (4), give the licensee —

- (a) notice in writing of his intention to do so; and
- (b) an opportunity to be heard, within such time as may be specified in the notice, as to why the security should not be forfeited.

[35/2000]

(6) Any person who is aggrieved by the decision of the Licensing Officer under subsection (4) may, within 14 days of being notified of the decision of the Licensing Officer, appeal in writing to the Minister whose decision shall be final.

[35/2000]

Licence to be displayed

12. At all times while the public entertainment described in a licence is being provided the licence shall, where the public entertainment is held in a building or tent, be prominently

displayed at the building or tent and in all other cases the licence shall be kept in the possession of the licensee.

Refusal of licence

13.—(1) The Licensing Officer may, in his discretion, refuse to issue or renew any licence.

[35/2000]

(2) The Licensing Officer shall, if so required by the applicant or the licensee, as the case may be, furnish the applicant or the licensee within 7 days of being so required with the grounds of such refusal in writing.

[35/2000]

(3) Any applicant or licensee who is aggrieved by the refusal of the Licensing Officer may, within 14 days of the furnishing to him of the grounds of the refusal, appeal in writing to the Minister whose decision shall be final.

[35/2000]

(4) Where the Minister decides to grant the appeal for the issue or renewal of a licence, he may impose such conditions as he thinks fit.

[35/2000]

Suspension or cancellation of licence

14.—(1) The Licensing Officer may, in his discretion, suspend or cancel a licence, as the case may be, if he is satisfied that the public entertainment for which it was issued —

- (a) has been the cause or is likely to be the cause of a breach of the peace;
- (b) has been or is likely to be wholly or in part of an indecent, immoral, offensive, subversive or improper nature;
- (c) has caused or is likely to cause unnecessary suffering or any injury to any person or animal taking part in it, or to any member of the audience; or
- (d) has been provided or is likely to be provided otherwise than in accordance with the conditions of the licence or is contrary to the public interest.

[9/79]

(2) The Licensing Officer may, in his discretion, suspend or cancel a licence, as the case may be, if he is satisfied that the licensee is not a fit and proper person to hold such licence.

[35/2000]

(3) The Licensing Officer shall not suspend or cancel a licence under subsection (1)(d) on the ground that the public entertainment for which it was issued has been provided otherwise than in accordance with the conditions of the licence unless the licensee has accumulated such number of demerit points as may be prescribed under section 15(1).

[35/2000]

(4) The Licensing Officer shall, if so required by the licensee, furnish the licensee within 7 days of being so required with the grounds in writing of the suspension or cancellation of his licence.

(5) Any person aggrieved by the suspension or cancellation of his licence by the Licensing Officer may, within 14 days of the furnishing to him of the grounds of the suspension or cancellation, appeal in writing to the Minister whose decision shall be final.

(6) Where the Minister decides to restore a licence, he may impose such conditions as he thinks fit.

Demerit points

15.—(1) The Minister may, for the purposes of sections 10, 11 and 14(3), make rules to establish a system of awarding demerit points against a licensee for the commission of an offence under section 19(1)(c).

[35/2000]

(2) For the purposes of this section, demerit points may be awarded against a licensee notwithstanding that the licensee has accepted an offer by the Licensing Officer to compound the offence concerned.

[35/2000]

(3) Where a licence is cancelled under section 14, every demerit point awarded against the licensee in respect of the licence shall be cancelled.

[14A
[35/2000]

Exemption

16. The Minister may by order exempt any public entertainment or series or class of public entertainments from all or any of the provisions of this Act.

[15]

Powers of entry and inspection

17. Any Licensing Officer or police officer may enter any place where a licensed public entertainment is being provided with a view to ascertaining whether the conditions of the licence and the provisions of this Act are being complied with.

[16]

Powers of arrest

18.—(1) Any Licensing Officer or police officer may arrest without warrant any person —

- (a) whom he reasonably suspects of committing or attempting to commit, or abetting any person to commit, any offence under this Act; and
- (b) who refuses to furnish his name and address or who furnishes a name and address reasonably suspected of being false or who furnishes an address outside Singapore or who is reasonably suspected of being likely to abscond.

(2) Every person so arrested shall be taken to a police station and shall thereafter be dealt with as if he had been arrested under section 65 of the Criminal Procedure Code 2010.

[17]

[15/2010 wef 02/01/2011]

Penalties

19.—(1) Any person who provides or assists in providing any public entertainment —

- (a) without a licence issued under this Act;
- (b) while the licence is suspended;
- (c) in contravention of any condition of a licence; or

(d) in contravention of this Act,
shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000.

[9/79; 35/2000]

(2) For the purposes of this section, no person shall be deemed to have provided or assisted in providing public entertainment merely by reason of his having taken part in the public entertainment provided.

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Service of documents, etc.

20.—(1) Any notice, order or document required or authorised by this Act to be served on any person may be served —

- (a) by delivering it to the person or to some adult member or employee of his family or household at his last known place of residence;
- (b) by leaving it at his usual or last known place of residence or place of business in an envelope addressed to the person;
- (c) by sending it by registered post addressed to the person at his usual or last known place of residence or place of business; or
- (d) in the case of a company, partnership or body of persons —
 - (i) by delivering it to the secretary or other like officer of the company, partnership or body of persons at its registered office or principal place of business; or
 - (ii) by sending it by registered post addressed to the company, partnership or body of persons at its registered office or principal place of business.

[35/2000]

(2) Any notice, order or document sent by registered post to any person in accordance with subsection (1) shall be deemed to be duly served on the person at the time when the notice, order or document, as the case may be, would in the ordinary course of post be delivered.

[35/2000]

(3) When proving service of the notice, order or document referred to in subsection (2), it shall be sufficient to prove that the envelope containing the notice, order or document, as the case may be, was properly addressed, stamped and posted by registered post.

[18A
[35/2000]

Composition of offences

21.—(1) The Licensing Officer may, in his discretion, compound any offence under this Act which is prescribed as a compoundable offence by collecting from the person reasonably suspected of having committed the offence a sum not exceeding \$1,000.

[35/2000]

(2) The Minister may make rules to prescribe the offences which may be compounded under this section.

[35/2000]

(3) On payment of such sum of money, no further proceedings shall be taken against such person in respect of the offence.

[18B
[35/2000]

Onus of proof

22. In any proceedings under this Act the onus of proving that the public or any class of the public did not have access to any public entertainment shall lie on the person alleging the fact.

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Rules

23.—(1) The Minister may make rules for any of the following purposes:

- (a) to prescribe the fees to be charged in respect of licences;
- (b) to prescribe the form of applications for licences, of licences and of the books to be kept;
- (c) to prescribe the hours during which public entertainment may be provided;
- (d) generally to give effect to the provisions of this Act.

[35/2000]

(2) All rules made under this Act shall be presented to Parliament as soon as possible after publication in the *Gazette*.

[20
[35/2000]

THE SCHEDULE

Section 2(1)

MEANING OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT

1. In this Schedule —

“ad hoc performance” means any variety act or performance of music, singing or dancing which is provided on one or more occasions within a period not exceeding 3 months;

[S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

“arts entertainment” means any of, or any combination of, the following:

- (a) any play, opera, pantomime, puppet-show, ad hoc performance or tableaux;
- (b) any display of set pieces, commemorative decorations or representations of real or mythical creatures;
- (c) any exhibition of models, reading matter, pictures, photographs or of statuary or other forms of representation of human or animal figures;
- (d) any display or exhibition of other still objects or art generally; or
- (e) any play-reading, poetry-reading or recital,

in any place to which the public or any class of the public has access whether gratuitously or otherwise;

[S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

“film” means —

- (a) any cinematograph film;
- (b) any video recording;
- (c) any record, however made, of a sequence of visual images, which is a record capable of being used as a means of showing that sequence as a moving picture; or
- (d) any other material, record or thing on which is recorded or stored for immediate or future retrieval any information that, by the use of any computer or electronic device, is capable of being

THE SCHEDULE — *continued*

reproduced or displayed as wholly or partly visual moving pictures;

“pin-table” means any table, board or other appliance operated by hand or by coin, disc, electricity or any other means which is designed to enable the operator to play a game, success in which is measured by the propulsion of one or more movable objects towards targets or goals or by the attainment of a number of points or by both;

“video recording” means any disc, magnetic tape or solid state recording device containing information by the use of which one or more series of visual images may be produced electronically and shown as a moving picture.

2. “Public entertainment” includes —

(a) any variety act, performance of music, singing, dancing, gymnastics, acrobatics and legerdemain, demonstration, display or parade (other than ad hoc performances);

[S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

(b) [Deleted by S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

(c) any circus or any exhibition of animals;

(d) any amusement centre;

[S 349/2011 wef 01/07/2011]

(e) any computer games centre;

(f) [Deleted by S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

(g) any exhibition of film, or any peep-show;

[S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

(h) any reproduction or transmission otherwise than in association with a film, by any means other than telephony or radio telephony, of any music, song or speech;

(i) any machine or device by the manipulation of which chances are given of obtaining prizes in money or kind;

(j) any pin-table;

(k) any sporting contest of any kind between any number of persons or animals, other than that organised by any registered society, trade union, company or association;

(l) any organised competition at games of skill or chance;

(m) [Deleted by Act 15/2009 wef 09/10/2009]

THE SCHEDULE — *continued*

(*ma*) any arts entertainment; or

[S 292/2002 wef 01/07/2002]

(*n*) any combination of any of the above forms of public entertainment, in any place to which the public or any class of the public has access whether gratuitously or otherwise.

3. “Public entertainment” does not include —

(*a*) public entertainment at gatherings and celebrations officially arranged by the official representative in Singapore of any government;

(*b*) public entertainment provided by or under the auspices of the Government or any department of the Government or any authority constituted under any written law relating to local government;

(*c*) ceremonies, rites, services and celebrations lawfully conducted by priests or ministers of religion in premises consecrated generally or specifically for the conduct thereof where any discourse, sermon, lecture, talk or address at such ceremonies, rites, services and celebrations is only given by persons who are citizens or permanent residents of Singapore;

[S 671/2001 wef 01/01/2002]

(*d*) addresses, debates and discussions at meetings of public companies, chambers of commerce, registered trade unions, registered political associations or exempted or registered societies from which persons who are not shareholders or members, as the case may be, are excluded;

[15/2009 wef 09/10/2009]

(*e*) public entertainment provided by or under the auspices of any statutory board constituted by or under any written law for a public purpose; and

[S 589/2004 wef 27/09/2004]

[15/2009 wef 09/10/2009]

(*f*) any lecture, talk, address, debate or discussion in any place to which the public or any class of the public has access whether gratuitously or otherwise.

[15/2009 wef 09/10/2009]

[35/2000]

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY
PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS AND MEETINGS ACT
(CHAPTER 257)

This Legislative History is provided for the convenience of users of the Public Entertainments and Meetings Act. It is not part of the Act.

1. Ordinance 40 of 1958 — Public Entertainments Ordinance 1958

Date of First Reading	:	22 April 1958 (Bill No. 130/58 published on 6 May 1958)
Date of Second Reading	:	11 June 1958
Date of commencement	:	15 January 1959

2. 1970 Revised Edition — Public Entertainments Act (Chapter 259)

Date of operation	:	31 July 1971
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3. Act 34 of 1973 — Statutes of the Republic of Singapore (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 3) Act 1973

Date of First Reading	:	11 July 1973 (Bill No. 27/73 published on 14 July 1973)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	25 July 1973
Date of commencement	:	24 August 1973

4. Act 9 of 1979 — Public Entertainments (Amendment) Act 1979

Date of First Reading	:	5 March 1979 (Bill No. 13/79 published on 12 March 1979)
Date of Second and Third Readings	:	30 March 1979
Date of commencement	:	4 May 1979

5. 1985 Revised Edition — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act (Chapter 257)

Date of operation	:	30 March 1987
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6. Act 35 of 2000 — Public Entertainments (Amendment) Act 2000

Date of First Reading	:	9 October 2000 (Bill No. 29/2000 published on 10 October 2000)
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- Date of Second and Third Readings : 13 November 2000
- Date of commencement : 1 March 2001
- 7. 2001 Revised Edition — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act**
- Date of operation : 31 July 2001
- 8. G. N. No. S 412/2001 — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act (Amendment of Schedule) Order 2001**
- Date of commencement : 1 September 2001
- 9. G. N. No. S 562/2001 — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Order 2001**
- Date of commencement : 16 November 2001
- 10. G. N. No. S 671/2001 — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 3) Order 2001**
- Date of commencement : 1 January 2002
- 11. G. N. No. S 292/2002 — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act (Amendment of Schedule) Order 2002**
- Date of commencement : 1 July 2002
- 12. G. N. No. S 589/2004 — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act (Amendment of Schedule) Order 2004**
- Date of commencement : 27 September 2004
- 13. Act 15 of 2009 — Public Order Act 2009**
(Consequential amendments made to Act by)
- Date of First Reading : 23 March 2009
(Bill No. 8/2009 published on 23 March 2009)
- Date of Second and Third Readings : 13 April 2009
- Date of commencement : 9 October 2009
- 14. Act 15 of 2010 — Criminal Procedure Code 2010**
(Consequential amendments made to Act by)
- Date of First Reading : 26 April 2010
(Bill No. 11/2010 published on 26 April 2010)
- Date of Second Reading and Third Readings : 19 May 2010

Date of commencement : 2 January 2011 (Item 84 of the
Sixth Schedule – Amendment of
Public Entertainments and
Meeting Act)

**15. G.N. No. S 349/2011 — Public Entertainments and Meetings Act
(Amendment of Schedule) Order 2011**

Date of commencement : 1 July 2011

COMPARATIVE TABLE
PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS AND MEETINGS ACT
(CHAPTER 257)

The following provisions in the 1985 Revised Edition of the Public Entertainments Act have been renumbered by the Law Revision Commissioners in this 2001 Revised Edition.

This Comparative Table is provided for the convenience of users. It is not part of the Public Entertainments and Meetings Act.

2001 Ed.	1985 Ed.
13—(3) and (4)	13—(3)
14—(3)	14—(2A)
(4)	(3)
(5) and (6)	(4)
15	14A
16	15
17	16
18	17
19	18
20	18A
21	18B
22	19
23	20