

WHY

Is There A NEED For This Ordinance

- This ordinance was enacted to prevent underage drinking parties and to hold the hosts of such parties accountable since many youth obtain alcohol through social sources such as older friends, siblings, parents and/or strangers.
- It is worded carefully to target chronic offenders whose guests' behavior disturbs their neighbors, damages property and/or jeopardizes their own or others' safety.

WHY

Is Underage Drinking A PROBLEM?

- National research shows that 57% of persons under 21 reported drinking at friends' homes.¹
- Underage drinking is a factor in nearly half of all teen automobile crashes and 50% – 65% of youth suicides.² Alcohol abuse is linked to as many as two-thirds of all sexual assaults and date rapes of teens and college students.³
- Research shows people who begin drinking alcohol as adolescents are more likely to become chemically dependent.
- Underage drinking parties pose a high risk to young people because of the number of drinkers involved and the large quantities of alcohol consumed. These parties often result in alcohol poisoning, traffic crashes, property damage, sexual assault, and other crime and violence.

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies, 2008; National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2002; and American Medical Association, Office of Alcohol/Drug Abuse, 2001.

² National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse.

³ American Medical Association, Office of Alcohol/Drug Abuse, 2001.

⁴ www.udetc.org/UnderageDrinkingCosts.asp

IMPORTANT

Telephone Numbers

- **AMBULANCE, FIRE, POLICE EMERGENCY** 9-1-1
- National Addiction Assistance Helpline 800-559-9503
- Alcoholics Anonymous 925-939-7455
- National Dating Abuse Hotline 1-866-331-9474 (Mostly for adolescents)
- Contra Costa Crisis Center 1-800-808-6444 Suicide Prevention (Also assists with crisis homeless situations)
- Reach Project 925-754-3673 Address: 1915 D Street, Antioch, CA 94509 (Substance abuse help for teens/adults)
- Access Line 1-800-846-1652 (Resources/referrals for alcohol/substance abuse)
- Pacific Community Services 925-439-1056 Address: 329 Railroad Ave., Pittsburg (Housing Resource)
- Parents of Murdered Children 510-232-2798 Contra Costa Chapter
- MADD 1-877-623-3435

USEFUL

Websites

- MADD www.madd.org
- Center for Disease Control www.cdc.ca.gov
- National Institute on Drug Abuse www.nida.nih.gov
- For Teenagers www.abovetheinfluence.com



Pittsburg Police Department
65 Civic Avenue - Pittsburg, CA 94565
925-252-4980

THOSE WHO HOST LOSE THE MOST

Don't be a **party** to **underage drinking.**
It's against the law.

A Guide On What **YOU NEED TO KNOW** about Pittsburg's **SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE**

Brian Addington
Chief of Police



WHAT

Is The SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE ?

The Social Host Ordinance holds individuals (social hosts) criminally responsible for hosting or allowing an event or gathering on private or public property where persons under 21 years of age possess or consume alcohol, regardless of who supplied the alcohol.

This ordinance applies to situations in which:

- The social host knows or reasonably should know that alcohol is being possessed or consumed by persons under 21 years of age at their residence or premises.
- The social host fails to prevent possession or consumption by the underage person(s) at any event that s/he is hosting on public or private property. Under this ordinance, the social host does not have to be present at the party, event or gathering to be criminally responsible.

WHAT

Is An "EVENT Or GATHERING" ?

An "event or gathering" means a group of persons who have assembled on private property or in a public place for a social occasion or a social activity.

ISN'T

Underage Drinking Already Illegal ?

- Yes. California law prohibits minors under age 21 from purchasing, possessing or consuming alcohol. It also prohibits adults from furnishing alcohol to minors.

WHAT

STEPS Should I Take To Be A RESPONSIBLE SOCIAL HOST ?

The steps you take to protect your guests, yourself and others will reduce your exposure to alcohol-related liability. If you are hosting a party where persons under 21 years of age are present, you should...

1. Verify the age of guests.
2. Control access to alcohol.
3. Control the quantity of alcohol.
4. Supervise persons under 21 years of age.
5. Be courteous to your neighbors and keep the party noise down.
6. Refuse entrance to uninvited guests, especially the ones who arrive at the door with alcohol or are already intoxicated.
7. Call the Police for assistance with uninvited guests.

ARE

There Any EXCEPTIONS ?

The ordinance does not apply to...

- Conduct solely between an underage person and his/her parents in the parent's household.
- Legally protected religious observances.
- Facilities otherwise licensed (bars, liquor stores, etc.).
- Situations where underage persons are lawfully in possession of alcohol during the course of employment.
- Law enforcement activities supervised by a law enforcement agency.

WHAT

Is The PENALTY For VIOLATING This Ordinance ?

A violation of this ordinance is a misdemeanor, subject to a maximum penalty of 6 months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.

CAN

I Be Held LIABLE If I'm AWAY For The Weekend & My Kids Have A PARTY At My Home?

- **No.** If you did not know about the party, event or gathering.
- **Yes.** If you knew about the party or had reason to know that underage drinking was occurring and did nothing to prevent it.

CAN

I Be Held LIABLE If My HOUSEMATE Hosts A PARTY In Our Apartment While I'm AWAY?

- **Maybe.** It depends on what knowledge you have about the party and what actions if any you took to prevent it.

CAN

I Be Held LIABLE If My TENANT Has An UNDERAGE DRINKING PARTY On My PROPERTY?

- **Maybe.** It depends on whether or not you actually participated in hosting or allowing the party where alcohol was present.