

4. Personal licences

- 4.1 This chapter provides advice about the framework for personal licences. It also contains guidance for decision-making on applications by those managing community premises (church and village halls etc.) to remove the usual mandatory conditions that relate to personal licences and the requirement for a designated premises supervisor (DPS). The Deregulation Act 2015 has removed the requirement to renew a personal licence with effect from 1 April 2015.

Requirements for a personal licence

- 4.2 The sale and supply of alcohol, because of its impact on the wider community and on crime and anti-social behaviour, carries with it greater responsibility than the provision of regulated entertainment and late night refreshment. This is why sales of alcohol may not be made under a premises licence unless there is a DPS in respect of the premises (who must hold a personal licence); and every sale must be made or authorised by a personal licence holder. The exception is only for those community premises which have successfully applied to remove the DPS requirement (see paragraph 4.34 below).
- 4.3 Any premises at which alcohol is sold or supplied where the requirement for a personal licence holder does apply may employ one or more such licence holders. For example, there may be one owner or senior manager and several junior managers holding a personal licence. However, the requirement that every sale of alcohol must at least be authorised by a personal licence holder does not mean that the licence holder has to be present on the premises or oversee each sale; it is sufficient that such sales are authorised. It should be noted that there is no requirement to have a DPS in relation to a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) or club premises certificate, and sales or supplies of alcohol authorised by a TEN or club premises certificate do not need to be authorised by a personal licence holder.

Who can apply?

- 4.4 In the case of an application for a personal licence under Part 6 of the 2003 Act, the requirements are that:
- the applicant must be aged 18 or over;
 - the applicant possesses a licensing qualification accredited by the Secretary of State (or one which is certified as if it is such a qualification or is considered equivalent) or is a person as prescribed in the Licensing Act 2003 (Personal licences) Regulations 2005²).
 - the applicant must not have forfeited a personal licence within five years of their application;
 - the applicant has paid the appropriate fee to the licensing authority; and
 - in a case in which the applicant has an unspent conviction for a relevant offence or a foreign offence, the police have not objected to the grant of the application on crime prevention grounds or the licensing authority has considered their objection but determined that the grant of the application will not undermine the crime prevention objective.

² Currently persons prescribed in regulations are: a member of the company of the Master, Wardens, Freemen and Commonalty of the Mystery of the Vintners of the City of London; a person operating under a licence granted by the University of Cambridge; or a person operating premises under a licence granted by the Board of the Green Cloth.

- 4.5 Any individual may apply for a personal licence whether or not they are currently employed or have business interests associated with the use of the licence. The issues which arise when the holder of a personal licence becomes associated with particular licensed premises and is specified as the DPS for those premises are dealt with at paragraphs 4.19 to 4.26 below. Licensing authorities may not therefore take these matters into account when considering an application for a personal licence.
- 4.6 Applicants for personal licences who are ordinarily resident in a licensing authority's area are required to make the application to that licensing authority. An applicant who is not ordinarily resident in a licensing authority's area (which may include persons living outside England and Wales), may apply for the grant of a personal licence to any licensing authority in England and Wales.

Criminal record

- 4.7 Regulations made under the 2003 Act require that, in order to substantiate whether or not an applicant has a conviction for an unspent relevant offence, an applicant for the grant or renewal of a personal licence must include a criminal conviction certificate, a criminal record certificate or the results of a subject access search of the Police National Computer by the National Identification Service to the licensing authority.
- 4.8 The requirement for an individual to establish whether or not they have unspent convictions for a relevant offence or foreign offence applies whether or not the individual has been living for a length of time in a foreign jurisdiction. It does not follow that such individuals will not have recorded offences in this country. All applicants are also required to make a clear statement as to whether or not they have been convicted outside England and Wales of a relevant offence or an equivalent foreign offence. This applies both to applicants ordinarily resident in England and Wales and any person from a foreign jurisdiction. Details of relevant offences as set out in the 2003 Act should be appended to application forms for the information of applicants, together with a clear warning that making any false statement is a criminal offence liable to prosecution.
- 4.9 Licensing authorities are required to notify the police when an applicant is found to have an unspent conviction for a relevant offence defined in the 2003 Act or for a foreign offence. The police have no involvement or locus in such applications until notified by the licensing authority.
- 4.10 Where an applicant has an unspent conviction for a relevant or foreign offence, and the police object to the application on crime prevention grounds, the applicant is entitled to a hearing before the licensing authority. If the police do not issue an objection notice and the application otherwise meets the requirements of the 2003 Act, the licensing authority must grant it.
- 4.11 A number of relevant offences never become spent. However, where an applicant is able to demonstrate that the offence in question took place so long ago and that the applicant no longer has a propensity to re-offend, a licensing authority may consider that it is appropriate to grant the application on the basis that doing so would not undermine the crime prevention objective.
- 4.12 If an application is refused, the applicant will be entitled to appeal against the decision they make. Similarly, if the application is granted despite a police objection notice, the chief officer of police is entitled to appeal against the licensing authority's determination. Licensing authorities are therefore expected to record in full the reasons for any decision which they make.