

## 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 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 4.52 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, if subject to immigration control, must have permission to work in a licensable activity (see paragraph 4.8);
  - 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 2005<sup>2</sup>);
  - 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

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

- 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.
- 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 4.31 to 4.38 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.
- 4.7 For applications made after 6 April 2017, applicants who are subject to UK immigration control must be entitled to work in a licensable activity. Section 192A of the Licensing Act 2003 defines 'entitlement to work' for the purposes of the Act

## **Entitlement to work in the UK**

- 4.8 Individuals applying for a personal licence must be entitled to work in the UK. The Immigration Act 2016 amended the Licensing Act 2003 with effect from 6 April 2017 so that an application made on or after that date by someone who is not entitled to work in the UK must be rejected. Licences must not be issued to people who are illegally present in the UK, who are not permitted to work, or who are permitted to work but are subject to a condition that prohibits them from doing work relating to the carrying on of a licensable activity. In order to discharge this duty, from 6 April 2017, licensing authorities must be satisfied that an applicant has the right to work in the UK and should require applicants to submit one of the documents listed at Annex A, to show that the applicant has permission to be in the UK and to undertake work in a licensable activity. This also applies to individuals who apply for premises licences. The purpose of this is to prevent illegal working in the UK.
- 4.9 The list of documents which an applicant may provide to demonstrate their entitlement to work in the UK is published on gov.uk and at Annex A of this guidance.
- 4.10 For applications made on or after 6 April 2017, where an applicant's immigration permission to live and work in the UK is time-limited, a personal licence may be issued but will become invalid when the immigration permission expires. In the event that the Home Office cuts short or ends a person's immigration permission (referred to as curtailment or revocation), any licence issued in respect of an application made on or after 6 April 2017 will automatically lapse (see paragraph 4.15 below).
- 4.11 A person is disqualified from applying for a personal licence or a premises licence by reason of their immigration status if:
- The person requires leave to enter or remain in the UK and has not been granted it;
  - or

- **The person's leave to enter or remain in the UK:**
  - is invalid,
  - has ceased to have effect (whether by reason of curtailment, revocation, cancellation, passage of time, or otherwise), or
  - is subject to a condition preventing the person from doing work of that kind.

A person is also disqualified from holding a licence if they are subject to a condition on their permission to be in the UK preventing them from holding a licence, for example they are subject to an immigration restriction that does not permit them to work.

- 4.12 The requirements to demonstrate immigration status are not retrospective. This means that licensing authorities do not need to check the immigration status of those people who already hold a licence which was issued before 6 April 2017.
- 4.13 Applicants may provide photocopies or scanned copies of the documents, which do not need to be endorsed as a copy of the original. Applicants should not be encouraged or required by licensing authorities to submit original copies of documents. The licensing authority must be satisfied that the applicant is entitled to work in the UK, but the licensing authority is not required to check the validity of any document submitted by the applicant to demonstrate the right to work. The licensing authority should establish whether or not an applicant has a lawful immigration status in the UK or is prohibited from working because they are in the UK illegally or is subject to a condition that prevents them from holding a licence.
- 4.14 To ensure that licensing authorities do not discriminate against anyone, all licence applicants should be treated in the same way after 6 April 2017 during the licence application process. This will also demonstrate a fair, transparent and consistent application process. Assumptions should not be made about a person's right to work in the UK or their immigration status on the basis of their nationality, ethnic origin, accent, the colour of their skin, or the length of time they have been resident in the UK.
- 4.15 If an applicant has restrictions on the length of time they may work in the UK, a premises licence or personal licence may still be issued, but the licence will cease to have effect when the right to work lapses. Migrants who are subject to UK immigration control may be granted permission to enter or remain in the UK, with a condition permitting employment, on a time-limited basis or on an indefinite basis. When the person's stay is time limited, this will be shown in their immigration documentation. It is possible for a migrant to apply to extend their stay, and if they do so before their previous status expires, they continue to have any right to work that they previously had while their application and any associated administrative review or appeal is outstanding. In such cases, a person's status may be confirmed by the licensing authority contacting the Home Office Status, Verification, Evidence and Checking (SVEC) Unit.
- 4.16 In most cases the licensing authority should be able to make an assessment that the applicant is not disqualified from applying for a premises or personal licence based on any information provided with the application. This will include all cases where the applicant is a British citizen. An immigration status check may be made by contacting the Home Office SVEC Unit in the following circumstances to verify that someone has the right to hold a premises or personal licence:

- the applicant provides a copy of a Certificate of Application which is less than six months old and indicates that work is permitted; or
- the applicant has not provided any acceptable documents because they have an outstanding application for permission to remain in the UK with the Home Office which was made before their previous immigration leave expired or has an appeal or administrative review pending against a Home Office decision that grants them a right to work and, therefore, cannot provide evidence of their right to work.

In these two circumstances the SVEC Unit will confirm the individual's immigration status.

- 4.17 Assistance on this process may be obtained from Home Office Local Partnership Managers, or by email [I&SDLPMSsupportTeam@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:I&SDLPMSsupportTeam@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk). In most cases, a Local Partnership Manager or local Immigration, Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team will be the first point of contact for licensing authorities.
- 4.18 A premises or personal licence issued in respect of an application made on or after 6 April 2017 will lapse if the holder's permission to live or work in the UK comes to an end. This could be because their permission to be in the UK has time-expired or because the Home Office has brought it to an end (for example, the Home Office has curtailed their permission to live and work in the UK). The licensing authority is under no duty to carry out on-going immigration checks to see whether a licence-holder's permission to be in the UK has been brought to an end, and the Act does not place a duty on the licensing authority to withdraw or revoke the licence if this occurs. The migrant will be aware when their time-limited permission has come to an end and the Home Office will inform them if their permission to be in the UK is curtailed. If the individual is subsequently granted leave to work in the UK and wishes to once again hold a personal licence they must make an application for a new personal licence.

## **Criminal record**

- 4.19 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 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.
- 4.20 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.

- 4.21 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.
- 4.22 Civil penalties received after 6 April 2017 for immigration matters are treated in the same way as relevant offences. Licensing authorities are required to notify the Secretary of State for the Home Department (through Home Office Immigration Enforcement) when an applicant declares that they have been issued with an immigration penalty or convicted of an immigration offence or a foreign offence comparable to an immigration offence. The Home Office may object to an application on grounds that granting the personal licence would be prejudicial to the prevention of illegal working in licensed premises. Civil penalties for immigration matters were added to the Licensing Act with effect from 6 April 2017, and penalties received before that date cannot be taken into account in respect of grant, revocation or suspension of a personal licence.
- 4.23 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. The applicant is also entitled to a hearing if the Home Office (Immigration Enforcement) object to the application on the grounds of the prevention of illegal working where the applicant has an unspent conviction for a relevant immigration offence or has been required to pay an immigration penalty. If the police or Home Office (Immigration Enforcement) do not issue an objection notice and the application otherwise meets the requirements of the 2003 Act, the licensing authority must grant it. Home Office (Immigration Enforcement) can object only with respect to convictions and civil immigration penalties received on or after 6 April 2017.
- 4.24 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.
- 4.25 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 or an objection from the Home Office (Immigration Enforcement), the chief officer of police or Home Office are 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.

## **Issuing of personal licences by Welsh licensing authorities**

- 4.26 All application forms in Wales should be bilingual. Proceedings before a court must be capable of being conducted in Welsh at the request of the applicant. There is a panel of Welsh speaking magistrates so this can be arranged if necessary. Licensing authorities in Wales should consider issuing personal licences in a bilingual format.