

**BALLROOMS AND PUBLIC DANCE HALLS, LICENSED AND REGULATED**  
**Act of May 16, 1919, P.L. 193, No. 120**  
AN ACT

Cl. 11

To provide for the licensing and regulation of public dance halls and ball rooms, and for the regulation, supervision of public dances and balls in cities of the first, second, and third classes.

**Compiler's Note:** Section 4701 of Act 317 of 1931 provided that Act 120 is repealed insofar as it relates to third class cities.

Section 1. Be it enacted, &c., That this act shall apply to all cities of the first, second, and third classes, within this Commonwealth.

Section 2. The term "public dance" or "public ball," as used in this act, shall be taken to include any dance or ball conducted in connection with instruction in dancing for hire, and any dance or ball to which admission may be had by the payment of a fee or by the purchase, possession, or presentation of a ticket or token, or in connection with which a charge is made for caring for clothing or other property, and any dance or ball to which the public generally may gain admission with or without the payment of a fee.

The term "dance hall" or "ball room," as used in this act, shall be taken to include any room, place, or space, in which a public dance or public ball, as herein defined, shall be held, and any room, hall, or academy, in which classes in dancing are held and instruction in dancing is given for hire.

Section 3. From and after the first day of June, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen, no person, persons, society, club, or corporation shall hold a public dance or public ball within the limits of any city of the first, second, or third class, within this Commonwealth, without having first obtained a permit therefor from the mayor thereof: Provided, however, Such permit shall not be required for dances held and conducted by regularly established instructors in dancing in connection with such instruction.

The fee for such permit, which shall be paid at the time of the issuing thereof, shall be one dollar for each public dance or ball.

Section 4. From and after the first day of June, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen, it shall be unlawful to hold or conduct any public dance or public ball, or to hold or conduct classes in dancing, or to give instructions in dancing for hire, in any hall, ball room, or academy, within the limits of any city of the first, second, and third class, within this Commonwealth, unless the dance hall or ball room or academy, in which the same may be held, shall have been duly licensed for such purpose.

Application for such license shall be made by the proprietor of such dance hall or ball room or academy to the mayor, who is hereby authorized to issue the same.

The fee payable for each such license granted hereunder shall be as follows:

In the case of dance halls maintained and conducted in connection with regularly established instruction in dancing, and exclusively used in such connection, the annual license fee shall be thirty-five dollars in cities of the first and second classes and ten dollars in all other cities.

In the case of all other dance halls and ball rooms, the annual license fee shall be forty dollars in cities of the first and second classes and fifteen dollars in all other cities.

Each license granted hereunder shall expire on the first day of June of each year.

The fee payable for each license granted hereunder shall be for the whole or any portion of a calendar year, and all moneys received by way of license fees hereunder shall be paid into the general fund of the city.

Every licensed public dance hall or ball room or academy shall post its license in a conspicuous place within the hall where the dance is held.

(4 amended June 15, 1961, P.L.441, No.218; Aug. 22, 1961, P.L.1024, No.461)

Section 5. It shall be the duty of the mayor to cause an investigation of all applications for public dance hall or ball room licenses to determine whether or not the dance hall, ball room, or academy, sought to be licensed, complies with the rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws applicable thereto, and, in making such investigation, he shall, when desired, have the assistance of any department of the government of the city.

Section 6. No license for a public dance hall or ball room or academy shall be issued until it shall be ascertained that the place for which it is issued complies with and conforms to all laws, ordinances, health and fire regulations, applicable thereto, and is a safe and proper place for the purpose for which it shall be used, properly ventilated, and supplied with sufficient toilet conveniences.

Section 7. The license of any public dance hall or ball room or academy may be forfeited or revoked by the mayor for disorderly or immoral conduct on the premises, or upon proof that the dance hall, ball room or academy was frequented by disorderly or immoral persons, or for the violation of any of the rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws, governing or applying to public dance hall, ball rooms, or academies, or public dances. If at any time the license of a public dance hall, ball room, or academy shall be forfeited or revoked, at least three months shall elapse before another license or permit shall be granted for dancing on the same premises.

Section 8. All public dance halls, or ball rooms or academies shall be kept at all times in a clean, healthful, and sanitary condition, and all stairways and other passages and all rooms connected with public dance hall, ball room, or academy shall be kept open and well lighted.

Section 9. All public dance halls, ball rooms, and academies shall be subject to inspection by the police department of the city at all reasonable times and whenever they are open for dancing, instruction in dancing, or for any other purpose.

Any police officer shall have the power to cause the place, hall or room where any public dance or ball is given, to be vacated whenever any provision of any law or ordinance with regard to public dances and public balls is being violated, or whenever any indecent act shall be committed, or when any disorder of a gross, violent or vulgar character shall take place therein.

Section 10. It shall be unlawful, after nine o'clock post meridian, to permit any person to attend or take part in any public dance who has not reached the age of sixteen years.

Section 11. All public dances shall be discontinued, and all public dance halls shall be closed, on or before the hour of one o'clock ante meridian: Provided, however, That upon the application of a bona fide organization or society, and upon an investigation by the proper authority, the mayor may grant such organization or society a permit to continue a dance until two o'clock ante meridian.

Section 12. Any person, persons, society, club, or corporation who shall violate the provisions of this act shall, upon conviction thereof in a summary proceeding, be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than three hundred dollars (\$300) and costs of prosecution, and, in default of the payment thereof, shall undergo imprisonment for not more than thirty days.

(12 amended Aug. 22, 1961, P.L.1024, No.461)