

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2044 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY MASSER, SCHMITT, GROVE, RYAN, POLINCHOCK, JOHNSON-
HARRELL, ROWE, CALTAGIRONE, JOZWIAK, WHEELAND AND HEFFLEY,
NOVEMBER 14, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NOVEMBER 14, 2019

AN ACT

1 Repealing the act of May 16, 1919 (P.L.193, No.120), entitled
2 "An act to provide for the licensing and regulation of public
3 dance halls and ball rooms, and for the regulation,
4 supervision of public dances and balls in cities of the
5 first, second, and third classes."

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. The act of May 16, 1919 (P.L.193, No.120),
9 entitled "An act to provide for the licensing and regulation of
10 public dance halls and ball rooms, and for the regulation,
11 supervision of public dances and balls in cities of the first,
12 second, and third classes," is repealed:

13 [AN ACT

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

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

1 Commonwealth.

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

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

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

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

28 Section 4. From and after the first day of June, one
29 thousand nine hundred and nineteen, it shall be unlawful to hold
30 or conduct any public dance or public ball, or to hold or

1 conduct classes in dancing, or to give instructions in dancing
2 for hire, in any hall, ball room, or academy, within the limits
3 of any city of the first, second, and third class, within this
4 Commonwealth, unless the dance hall or ball room or academy, in
5 which the same may be held, shall have been duly licensed for
6 such purpose.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29 Section 5. It shall be the duty of the mayor to cause an
30 investigation of all applications for public dance hall or ball

1 room licenses to determine whether or not the dance hall, ball
2 room, or academy, sought to be licensed, complies with the
3 rules, regulations, ordinances, and laws applicable thereto,
4 and, in making such investigation, he shall, when desired, have
5 the assistance of any department of the government of the city.

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

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

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

29 Section 9. All public dance halls, ball rooms, and academies
30 shall be subject to inspection by the police department of the

1 city at all reasonable times and whenever they are open for
2 dancing, instruction in dancing, or for any other purpose.

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

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

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

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

26 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.