



**Laws related to the Underage Purchase and
Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages**

Alcoholic Beverage Control Law § 65-a
Procuring alcoholic beverages for persons under the age of twenty-one years

Any person who misrepresents the age of a person under the age of twenty-one years for the purpose of inducing the sale of any alcoholic beverage, as defined in the alcoholic beverage control law, to such person, is guilty of an offense and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than two hundred dollars, or by imprisonment for not more than five days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Alcoholic Beverage Control Law § 65-b
Offense for one under age of twenty-one years to purchase or attempt to purchase an alcoholic beverage through fraudulent means

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2. (a) No person under the age of twenty-one years shall present or offer to any licensee under this chapter, or to the agent or employee of such licensee, any written evidence of age which is false, fraudulent or not actually his own, for the purpose of purchasing or attempting to purchase any alcoholic beverage.

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3. A person violating the provisions of paragraph (a) of subdivision two of this section shall be guilty of a violation and shall be sentenced in accordance with the following:

(a) For a first violation, the court shall order payment of a fine of not more than one hundred dollars and/or an appropriate amount of community service not to exceed thirty hours. In addition, the court may order completion of an alcohol awareness program established pursuant to section 19.25 of the mental hygiene law.

(b) For a second violation, the court shall order payment of a fine of not less than fifty dollars nor more than three hundred fifty dollars and/or an appropriate amount of community service not to exceed thirty hours. The court also shall order completion of an alcohol awareness program as referenced in paragraph (a) of this subdivision if such program has not previously been completed by the offender, unless the court determines that attendance at such program is not feasible due to the lack of availability of such program within a reasonably close proximity to the locality in which the offender resides or matriculates, as appropriate.

(c) For third and subsequent violations, the court shall order payment of a fine of not less than fifty dollars nor more than seven hundred fifty dollars and/or an appropriate amount of community service not to exceed thirty hours. The court also shall order that such person submit to an evaluation by an appropriate agency certified or licensed by the office of alcoholism and substance abuse services to determine whether the person suffers from the disease of alcoholism or alcohol abuse, unless the court determines that under the circumstances presented such an evaluation is not necessary, in which case the court shall state on the record the basis for such determination. Payment for such evaluation shall be made by such person. If, based on such evaluation, a need for treatment is indicated, such person may choose to participate in a treatment plan developed by an agency certified or licensed by the office of alcoholism and substance abuse services. If such person elects to participate in recommended treatment, the court shall order that payment of such fine and community service be suspended pending the completion of such treatment.

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6. In addition to the penalties otherwise provided in subdivision three of this section, if a determination is made sustaining a charge of illegally purchasing or attempting to illegally purchase an alcoholic beverage, the court may suspend such person's license to drive a motor vehicle and the privilege of an unlicensed person of obtaining such license, in accordance with the following and for the following periods, if it is found that a driver's license was used for the purpose of such illegal purchase or attempt to illegally purchase; provided, however, that where a person is sentenced pursuant to paragraph (b) or (c) of subdivision three of this section, the court shall impose such license suspension if it is found that a driver's license was used for the purpose of such illegal purchase or attempt to illegally purchase:

- (a) For a first violation of paragraph (a) of subdivision two of this section, a three month suspension.
- (b) For a second violation of paragraph (a) of subdivision two of this section, a six month suspension.
- (c) For a third or subsequent violation of paragraph (a) of subdivision two of this section, a suspension for one year or until the holder reaches the age of twenty-one, whichever is the greater period of time.

Such person may thereafter apply for and be issued a restricted use license in accordance with the provisions of section five hundred thirty of the vehicle and traffic law.

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Alcoholic Beverage Control Law § 65-c

Unlawful possession of an alcoholic beverage with the intent to consume by persons under the age of twenty-one years

1. Except as hereinafter provided, no person under the age of twenty-one years shall possess any alcoholic beverage, as defined in this chapter, with the intent to consume such beverage.
2. A person under the age of twenty-one years may possess any alcoholic beverage with intent to consume if the alcoholic beverage is given:
 - (a) to a person who is a student in a curriculum licensed or registered by the state education department and the student is required to taste or imbibe alcoholic beverages in courses which are a part of the required curriculum, provided such alcoholic beverages are used only for instructional purposes during class conducted pursuant to such curriculum; or
 - (b) to the person under twenty-one years of age by that person's parent or guardian.
3. Any person who unlawfully possesses an alcoholic beverage with intent to consume may be summoned before and examined by a court having jurisdiction of that charge; provided, however, that nothing contained herein shall authorize, or be construed to authorize, a peace officer as defined in subdivision thirty-three of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law or a police officer as defined in subdivision thirty-four of section 1.20 of such law to arrest a person who unlawfully possesses an alcoholic beverage with intent to consume. If a determination is made sustaining such charge the court may impose a fine not exceeding fifty dollars and/or completion of an alcohol awareness program established pursuant to section 19.25 of the mental hygiene law and/or an appropriate amount of community service not to exceed thirty hours.
4. No such determination shall operate as a disqualification of any such person subsequently to hold public office, public employment, or as a forfeiture of any right or privilege or to receive any license granted by public authority; and no such person shall be denominated a criminal by reason of such determination, nor shall such determination be deemed a conviction.
5. Whenever a peace officer as defined in subdivision thirty-three of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law or police officer as defined in subdivision thirty-four of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law shall observe a person under twenty-one years of age openly in possession of an alcoholic beverage as defined in this chapter, with the intent to consume such beverage in violation of this section, said officer may seize the beverage, and shall deliver it to the custody of his or her department.
6. Any alcoholic beverage seized in violation of this section is hereby declared a nuisance. The official to whom the beverage has been delivered shall, no earlier than three days following the return date for initial appearance on the summons, dispose of or destroy the alcoholic beverage seized or cause it to be disposed of or destroyed. Any person claiming ownership of an alcoholic beverage seized under this section may, on the initial return date of the summons or earlier on five days notice to the official or department in possession of the beverage, apply to the court for an order preventing the destruction or disposal of the alcoholic beverage seized and ordering the return of that beverage. The court may order the beverage returned if it is determined that return of the beverage would be in the interest of justice or that the beverage was improperly seized.

Penal Law § 260.20

Unlawfully dealing with a child in the first degree

A person is guilty of unlawfully dealing with a child in the first degree when:

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2. He gives or sells or causes to be given or sold any alcoholic beverage, as defined by section three of the alcoholic beverage control law, to a person less than twenty-one years old; except that this subdivision does not apply to the parent or guardian of such a person or to a person who gives or causes to be given any such alcoholic beverage to a person under the age of twenty-one years, who is a student in a curriculum licensed or registered by the state education department, where the tasting or imbibing of alcoholic beverages is required in courses that are part of the required curriculum, provided such alcoholic beverages are given only for instructional purposes during classes conducted pursuant to such curriculum.

It is no defense to a prosecution pursuant to subdivision two of this section that the child acted as the agent or representative of another person or that the defendant dealt with the child as such.

Unlawfully dealing with a child in the first degree is a class A misdemeanor.