

RENVILLE COUNTY
SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE

Section 1. Title and Authority. The Renville County Board of Commissioners desires to protect the health, safety and welfare of all persons living in and visiting the County. The use of alcohol by persons under the age of twenty-one (21) is prohibited by State statute. This ordinance prohibits, and establishes penalties for any person hosting an event or gathering where alcohol is present and being possessed or consumed by persons under twenty-one (21) years of age. This ordinance is enacted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §145A.05, subdivision 1.

Section 2. Purpose and Findings. The Board of Commissioners of Renville County intends to discourage underage possession and consumption of alcohol, even if done within the confines of a private residence, and intends to hold persons criminally responsible who host events or gatherings where persons under twenty-one (21) years of age possess or consume alcohol regardless of whether the person hosting the event or gathering supplied the alcohol. The Board of Commissioners of Renville County finds that:

- (a) Events and gatherings held on private or public property where alcohol is possessed or consumed by persons under the age of twenty-one are harmful to those persons and constitute a potential threat to public health requiring prevention or abatement.
- (b) Prohibiting underage consumption acts to protect underage persons, as well as the general public, from injuries related to alcohol consumption, such as alcohol overdose or alcohol-related traffic collisions.
- (c) Alcohol is an addictive drug which, if used irresponsibly, could have drastic effects on those who use it as well as those who are affected by the actions of an irresponsible user.
- (d) Often, events or gatherings involving underage possession and consumption occur outside the presence of parents. However, there are times when the parent(s) is/are present and, condone the activity, and in some circumstances provide the alcohol.
- (e) Even though giving or furnishing alcohol to an underage person is a crime, it is difficult to prove, and an ordinance is necessary to help further combat underage consumption.
- (f) A deterrent effect will be created by holding a person criminally responsible for hosting an event or gathering where underage possession or consumption occurs.

Section 3. Definitions. For purposes of this ordinance, the following terms have the following meanings:

- (a) **Alcohol.** "Alcohol" means ethyl alcohol, hydrated oxide of ethyl, or spirits of wine, whiskey, rum, brandy, gin, or any other distilled spirits including dilutions and mixtures thereof from whatever source or by whatever process produced.
- (b) **Alcoholic Beverage.** "Alcoholic beverage" means alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine, beer, and every liquid or solid containing alcohol, spirits, wine, or beer, and which contains one-half of one

percent or more of alcohol by volume and which is fit for beverage purposes either alone or when diluted, mixed, or combined with other substances.

- (c) **Event or Gathering.** "Event or gathering" means any group of three or more persons who have assembled or gathered together for a social occasion or other activity.
- (d) **Host.** "Host" means to aid, conduct, allow, entertain, organize, supervise, control, or permit a gathering or event, whether that host is present or not.
- (e) **Parent.** "Parent" means any person having legal custody of a juvenile:
 - (1) As a natural, adoptive parent, or step-parent;
 - (2) As a legal guardian; or
 - (3) As a person to whom legal custody has been given by order of the court.
- (f) **Person.** "Person" means any individual, partnership, co-partnership, corporation, or any association of one or more individuals.
- (g) **Residence or Premises.** "Residence or premises means any home, land, apartment, condominium, hotel or motel room, or other dwelling unit, or a hall or meeting room, or any other places of assembly, public or private, whether occupied as a dwelling or for any social function, and whether owned, leased, or rented.
- (h) **Underage Person.** "Underage person" is any individual under twenty-one (21) years of age.

Section 4. Prohibited Acts.

- (a) It is unlawful for any person(s) to:
 - (1) Host or allow an event or gathering;
 - (2) At any residence, premises, or on any other private or public property;
 - (3) Where alcohol or alcoholic beverages are present;
 - (4) When the person knows or reasonably should know that an underage person will or does
 - (a) Consume any alcohol or alcoholic beverage; or
 - (b) Possess any alcohol or alcoholic beverage with the intent to consume it; and
 - (5) The person fails to take reasonable steps to prevent possession or consumption by the underage person(s).
- (b) A person is criminally responsible for violating Section 4 of this ordinance if the person intentionally aids, advises, hires, counsels, or conspires with or otherwise procures another to commit the prohibited act.

Section 5. Exceptions.

- (a) This ordinance does not apply to conduct solely between an underage person and his or her parents while present in the parent's household.
- (b) This ordinance does not apply to legally protected religious observances.
- (c) This ordinance does not apply to retail intoxicating liquor or 3.2 percent malt liquor licenses, municipal liquor stores, or bottle club permit holders who are regulated by Minnesota Statutes §340A.503, Subd. 1(a)(1);

(d) This ordinance does not apply to situations where underage persons are lawfully in possession of alcohol or alcoholic beverages during the course and scope of employment.

Section 6. Enforcement. This ordinance can be enforced by any police officer, sheriff's deputy, or certified peace officer in the county.

Section 7. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, word, or other portion of this ordinance is for any reason, held to be unconstitutional or invalid, in whole, or in part, by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed severable, and such unconstitutionality or invalidity shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this law, which remaining portions shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Section 8. Penalty. Violation of Section 4 of this ordinance is a misdemeanor and is punishable by a maximum of 90 days jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.


Section 9. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days following its final passage and adoption.

Adopted by the Renville County Board of Commissioners this 22nd day of February 2011.



John Stahl, Chair
Renville County Board of Commissioners

Attest:



Sara Folsted
Renville County Administrator