

Ban soon on underage workers at bars, clubs

YOUNGSTERS under 15 will not be allowed to work in bars, nightclubs or any other liquor-selling places from next month.

At present, people aged between 14 and 18 are allowed to work in these places, but not between 8 pm and 6 am.

An amendment to the Dutiable Commodities (Liquor) Regulations to limit the minimum age was published in the government gazette last Friday.

A spokesman for the Urban Council said the amendment was made to protect underage youngsters from being exploited by undesirable elements in such places.

It is also designed to bring the regulations in line with the definition of "child" in the Employment Ordinance, the spokesman said.

Another amendment made to the regulations will stop the use of "front men" by dubious establishments whose applications have been previously refused or whose existing licences have been revoked.

"This is aimed at preventing a person whose licence has been revoked or whose previous application was turned down, or anyone acting on his behalf, from immediately re-applying for a licence for the same premises.

"In other words, applications from such people will not be considered within a 12-month period," he said.

However, there is a new provision to avoid causing undue hardship to genuine transferees or to the owner of the premises, who may be placed in a difficult position if he cannot let or sell the premises for the purpose of selling liquor, particularly where the premises concerned are suitable for such a purpose.

Under this provision, the Liquor Licensing Board may consider certain applications if the applicant can prove to the board that he is not acting on behalf of the former applicant or the person whose licence has been revoked.

The amended regulations also provide for appeals to the governor-in-council against the board's refusal to consider such applications.