

**Betting Act  
(CHAPTER 21)**

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# **BETTING ACT**

## **(CHAPTER 21)**

**(Original Enactment: Ordinance 30 of 1960)**

**REVISED EDITION 2011**

**(31st December 2011)**

An Act to suppress common betting-houses, betting in public places and bookmaking.

[20th May 1960]

## **Short title**

1. This Act may be cited as the Betting Act.

## Interpretation

2.—(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —

“access” includes access through the telephone, by post or by telegram;

“betting information centre” means any place kept or used for receiving or transmitting by telephone or other means any information relating to any horse-race or other sporting event for the purpose of betting or wagering in contravention of this Act;

“bookmaker” means any person who, whether on his own account or as penciller, runner, employee or agent for any other person, receives or negotiates bets or wagers whether on a cash or on a credit basis and whether for money or money’s worth, or who in any manner holds himself out or permits himself to be held out in any manner as a person who receives or negotiates those bets or wagers; but does not include a club, its officers or employees or any other person or organisation operating or conducting a totalisator or pari-mutuel or any other system or method of cash or credit betting authorised under section 22;

“common betting-house” means —

- (a) any place kept or used for betting or wagering on any event or contingency of or relating to any horse-race or other sporting event to which the public or any class of the public has or may have access;
- (b) any place kept or used for habitual betting or wagering on any such event or contingency as aforesaid, whether the public has, or may have, access thereto or not; and
- (c) any place used by a bookmaker for the purpose of receiving or negotiating bets or wagers on any such event or contingency as aforesaid whether the bets or wagers reach the bookmaker by the hand of the person placing the bet or his agent or the bookmaker’s agent or through the telephone or by post or by telegram or by any other means;

“equipment” has the same meaning as in the Telecommunications Act (Cap. 323);

“penciller” means a person who helps a bookmaker to keep his accounts or record of bets in connection with horse-races;

“place” means any house, office, room or building, and any place or spot, whether open or enclosed, and includes a ship, boat, or other vessel whether afloat or

not, and any vehicle;

“runner” means a person employed by a bookmaker to collect and settle bets either on salary or on commission basis;

“sporting event” includes any race, fight, game, sport or exercise;

“telecommunication system” has the same meaning as in the Telecommunications Act.

*[8/86; 43/99; 13/2004]*

(2) A place shall be deemed to be used for a purpose if it is used for that purpose on only one occasion.

(3) A place shall be deemed to be used for habitual betting or wagering if betting or wagering is frequently carried on therein, notwithstanding that betting or wagering is not the primary purpose for which that place is normally used.

(4) Every person who demises or lets for hire a place shall be deemed to be the owner thereof.

(5) A common betting-house shall be deemed to be a common nuisance and contrary to law.

### **Offences relating to common betting-houses and betting information centres**

**3.—(1)** Any person who —

- (a) being the owner or occupier, or having the use temporarily or otherwise thereof, keeps or uses a place as a common betting-house or betting information centre;
- (b) permits a place of which he is the owner or occupier or of which he has the use temporarily or otherwise, to be kept or used as a common betting-house or betting information centre;
- (c) has the care or management of or in any manner assists in the management or in the business of, a place kept or used as a common betting-house or betting information centre;
- (d) receives directly or indirectly any money or valuable thing, for or in respect of any bet or wager on any such event or contingency, as is mentioned in this Act, in a common betting-house or betting information centre; or
- (e) announces, exhibits or publishes, or causes to be announced, exhibited or published, either orally or by means of any letter, circular, telegram, placard, handbill, card, print, writing, design, sign, advertisement or

otherwise that a place is opened, kept or used as a common betting-house or betting information centre in Singapore or elsewhere, or in any other manner invites or solicits any person to commit a breach of any of the provisions of this Act,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine of not less than \$20,000 and not more than \$200,000 and shall also be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years.

[8/86]

(1A) Subsection (1)(e) shall not apply to —

- (a) the Singapore Totalisator Board;
- (b) any totalisator agency appointed by the Singapore Totalisator Board; and
- (c) any agent appointed by the Singapore Totalisator Board to operate or conduct any totalisator, lottery, betting or gaming activity.

[12/2008]

(2) Any person who occupies or has the use temporarily of a place which is kept or used by another person as a common betting-house or betting information centre shall be presumed until the contrary is proved to have permitted that place to be so kept or used.

[8/86]

### **Advancing money for conducting business of common betting-house**

4. Any person who advances or furnishes money for the purpose of establishing or conducting the business of a common betting-house shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 and shall also be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years.

[8/86]

### **Betting in a common betting-house**

5.—(1) Except as permitted by an exemption under section 22, any person who bets or wagers in a common betting-house, or with a bookmaker in any place or by any means, or who for the purpose of betting or wagering loiters in any place to which the public has or may have access shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.

[8/86]

(2) A person found in a common betting-house, or found escaping therefrom on the occasion of its being entered under this Act shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, to be or to have been betting or wagering therein.

(3) Any person who —