



**SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER**  
**Special Edition: Suffolk County's Social Host Law**

**February 2011**

**What is the Social Host Law?**

The primary purpose of the Social Host Law is to deter underage drinking parties or gatherings where adults knowingly allow minors to drink alcohol or alcoholic beverages. The law applies to any adult (including parents) who are over the age of 18 and knowingly allow consumption of alcohol by minors (any person under the age of 21).

**Why is this law needed?**

This law provides a legal basis for holding adults responsible for knowingly allowing parties for individuals under the age of 21 to occur at a place under their control, whether or not they provide the alcohol.

**Who can be charged?**

- Anyone who is over the age of 18; and
- Owns, rents or otherwise controls a private residence; or a permanent or temporary domicile, including a home, apartment, condominium, cooperative unit, trailer home, recreational vehicle, mobile home, overnight accommodations at a hotel, motel, campsite or short-term rental property; or other dwelling unit of any kind, including yards and open areas adjacent to these locations.
- Knowingly allows the consumption of alcohol or alcoholic beverages by any minor on such premises; or
- Fails to take reasonable corrective action upon learning of the consumption of alcohol or alcoholic beverages by any minor on such premises.

**What is "Reasonable Corrective Action?"**

Reasonable corrective actions shall include, but are not be limited to:

- Making a prompt demand that the minor(s) stop drinking the alcoholic beverage or leave the premises; and

- If the minor refuses to comply with the request, the adult must promptly report the underage drinking to:
  - Local law enforcement; or
  - Any other person with greater degree of authority over the minor (e.g. the minors parents or guardians, etc.)

### **What are the penalties?**

1st Offense: Fine not to exceed \$500

2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent offense: Misdemeanor—fine up to \$1,000 and/or a term of imprisonment not to exceed one year

### **Other laws regarding underage persons....**

The New York State Penal Law, the Alcohol Beverage Control Law, and other state and local regulations make it illegal to engage in unlawful conduct with persons under the age of 21. These laws prohibit the sale of alcohol to persons under the age of 21, the purchase of alcohol for someone who is under the age of 21, and address conduct that endangers the welfare of persons of a protected age. Penalties are severe, and in many cases can result in significant fines and/or imprisonment

### **Help us keep our young community members safe....**

Illegal consumption of alcohol by minors should be reported without delay to (631) 852-COPS (2677). Reports of a possible overdose, intoxicated or impaired driver, or other emergency should be called into 911 immediately. Information regarding future parties where alcohol or other substances will be unlawfully consumed can be:

- Called in anonymously to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-220-TIPS
- “Texted in” by texting “SCPD” and the message to “CRIMES” (274637)
- Emailed in using Tip Submit at [www.tipsubmit.com](http://www.tipsubmit.com)

Rewards may be available and most importantly, you may save a life!

**A number of resources provide valuable information regarding alcohol and drug abuse among teens, such as the website *Parents: The Anti-Drug* at <http://www.theantidrug.com/>.**

**For additional information on Police Department programs or operations, visit our website at [www.suffolkpd.org](http://www.suffolkpd.org), or contact our Community Outreach Bureau at (631) 852-6019.**

**For Non-Emergency Police Response, please dial (631) 852-COPS (2677).**