



New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Division of Codes and Standards Landlord-Tenant Information Service



LEGAL AGE REQUIREMENT N.J.S.A. 9:17B-1 through 9:17B-4

Printed February 2008

9:17B-1. Legislative findings

The Legislature finds and declares and by this act intends, pending the revision and amendment of the many statutory provisions involved, to:

a. Extend to persons 18 years of age and older the basic civil and contractual rights and obligations heretofore applicable only to persons 21 years of age or older, including the right to contract, sue, be sued and defend civil actions, apply for and be appointed to public employment, apply for and be granted a license or authority to engage in a business or profession subject to State regulation, serve on juries, marry, adopt children, attend and participate in horse race meetings and parimutuel betting and other legalized games and gaming, except as otherwise provided in subsection c. of this section, sell alcoholic beverages, act as an incorporator, registered agent or director of a corporation, consent to medical and surgical treatment, execute a will, and to inherit, purchase, mortgage or otherwise encumber and convey real and personal property.

b. Extend to persons 21 years of age and older the right to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages on January 1, 1983, provided that anyone attaining the age to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages legally prior to January 1, 1983, shall retain that right. Nothing in this act shall preclude any licensee under R.S. 33:1-1 et seq. from making purchases in the regular course of his licensed activities.

c. Extend to persons at or over the age at which a person is authorized to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages, heretofore applicable only to persons 18 years of age or older, the right to attend and participate in casino gaming. Nothing in this act shall preclude any licensee under the "Casino Control Act," P.L.1977, c. 110 (C. 5:12-1 et seq.) from attending and participating in casino gaming in the regular course of his licensed activities.

d. Abolish the right of a person between the ages of 18 and 21 years to disaffirm and be relieved of contractual obligations by reason of age.

L.1972, c. 81, s. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1973. Amended by L.1979, c. 260, s. 1, eff. Jan. 2, 1980; L.1982, c. 215, s. 1, eff. Dec. 28, 1982; L.1983, c. 134, s. 1, eff. April 13, 1983.

9:17B-2. Status of 18 to 21-year-olds

The Legislature by this act does not intend to:

- a. Effect the release from confinement or transfer from one institution to another of a person attaining age 18 rather than 21 years;
- b. Affect the right of a court to exercise its discretion in not sentencing a person between 18 and 21 years of age to a State prison;
- c. Alter the right of persons under 20 years of age to be eligible for enrollment in public schools;
- d. Alter the provisions of the uniform laws relative to gifts or transfers to minors;
- e. Alter the provisions of N.J.S. 2A:14-21 with respect to the time within which a person under 21 years of age on January 1, 1973 may commence an action or make an entry under a cause or right accrued prior to said date;
- f. Alter the provision of services pursuant to the laws relating to dependent and neglected children, allocated to chapter 4C of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes (C. 30:4C-1 to 30:4C-44), to persons between 18 and 21 years of age who seek to avail themselves of such services and who are enrolled in a school or training program below college level or who require a course of treatment for emotionally, cognitively or physically disabled persons.

P.L. 1972, c. 81; amended 1972, c.206, s.1; 1987,c.18,s.2.

9:17B-3. Majority at 18

Except with respect to the provisions of N.J.S. 2A:14-21, with respect to the provision of services pursuant to the laws relating to dependent and neglected children, allocated to chapter 4C of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes (C. 30:4C-1 to 30:4C-44), to persons between 18 and 21 years of age who seek to avail themselves of such services and who are enrolled in a school or training program below college level or who require a course of treatment for emotionally, cognitively or physically disabled persons, with respect to the right of a court to take any action it deems appropriate and in the interest of a person under 21 years of age, or to require a change in action heretofore taken by a court with respect to a person under 21 years of age, or with respect to the provisions of the "New Jersey Uniform Gifts to Minors Act" (P.L. 1963, c. 177, C. 46:38-13 et seq.), or the "New Jersey Uniform Transfers to Minors Act," R.S. 46:38A-1 et seq., every person 18 or more years of age shall in all other matters and for all other purposes be deemed to be an adult and, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, shall have the same legal capacity to act and the same powers and obligations as a person 21 or more years of age. Except as herein otherwise provided, every act or action of any such person shall be as valid, binding and enforceable by or against such person as if, at the time such act or action was performed or undertaken, such person was 21 or more years of age and no act or action by any such person performed or undertaken on or after the effective date of this act shall be subject to disaffirmance because of minority.

L. 1972, c. 81, s. 3; amended by L. 1972, c. 206, s. 2; 1987, c. 18, s. 3.

9:17B-4. Period of minority and age of majority; definition in testamentary disposition, will, deed, conveyance, trust or similar instrument

Any testamentary disposition, will, codicil, deed, conveyance, sale, trust or similar instrument executed prior to January 1, 1973 in which the words "minor," "minority" or "majority" are employed, shall, unless a contrary intention effectively appears, be construed to refer to the age of 18 years as delineating the period of minority and the age of majority.

L.1977, c. 355, s. 1.