

**ROCHELLE CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM MEMO
REGULAR MEETING**

SUBJECT: Ordinance Amending Chapter 6, Article I, Sec. 6.6. - Employment of persons under 21 years of age on licensed premises.

Staff Contact: Rose Huéramo, City Clerk

Summary: The City's current liquor code regulates what duties individuals under the age of 21 may perform on licensed premises. Under the current ordinance, individuals under 21 are prohibited from working behind the bar, tending bar, or pouring and mixing alcoholic beverages. However, individuals who are 19 or 20 years old may serve alcoholic beverages as waiters or waitresses on licensed premises.

Several local restaurants have inquired about lowering the minimum age for these waitstaff positions from 19 to 18 years old. The goal is to provide additional staffing flexibility while maintaining the existing restrictions on bartending and alcohol preparation.

Illinois law allows individuals who are at least 18 years old to serve alcoholic beverages as waitstaff. They may deliver drinks to customers, but they may not perform bartending duties, work behind the bar, or mix and pour alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic beverages must continue to be prepared by an employee who is at least 21 years old.

To better align the City's ordinance with state law, consideration could be given to lowering the minimum age for waitstaff serving alcoholic beverages from 19 to 18 years old while keeping all current restrictions related to bartending and alcohol preparation.

Under the proposed change, employees who are at least 18 years old would be permitted to:

- Serve alcoholic beverages to customers as waitstaff.
- Deliver alcoholic beverages to customer tables.
- Perform the same duties currently allowed for 19- and 20-year-old waiters and waitresses.

Employees under 21 years of age would continue to be prohibited from:

- Working behind the bar.
- Tending bar or performing bartending duties.
- Pouring alcoholic beverages.
- Mixing alcoholic beverages.
- Preparing alcoholic beverages for service.

Recommendation: To approve the proposed Ordinance Amending Section 6-6, Employment of Persons Under 21 Years of Age on Licensed Premises, lowering the minimum age for waitstaff serving alcoholic beverages from 19 to 18 years of age while maintaining all existing restrictions on bartending and alcohol preparation.