BELIZE

CINEMATOGRAPHS ACT
CHAPTER 241

REVISED EDITION 2003
SHOWING THE SUBSIDIARY LAWS AS AT 31ST OCTOBER, 2003

This is a revised edition of the Subsidiary Laws, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000.

ARRANGEMENT OF SUBSIDIARY LAWS
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This edition contains a consolidation of the following laws-

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CHAPTER 241

CINEMATOGRAPH RULES

ARRANGEMENT OF RULES

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CHAPTER 241

CINEMATOGRAPH RULES

(Section 10)

Title.

1. These Rules may be cited as the

CINEMATOGRAPH RULES.

Interpretation.

2. In these Rules –

“building” means a building used or intended to be used for cinematograph exhibition and includes any booth, tent or similar structure, whether permanent or temporary, used or intended to be used for this purpose;

“Electrical Inspector” means a person qualified to practice in Belize as an Electrical Engineer, or any other person or persons designated by the Minister;

“general lights” means the lights used to illuminate the building in which a cinematograph exhibition is being held but shall not include those lights illuminating exit and other emergency or safety signs or forming part of the projection equipment;

“licensee” means the holder of a permit granted under section 3 of the Act;

“operator” means any person operating or licensed to operate a cinematograph projector;

“projector” means a machine with its lights and other equipment used for the purpose of projecting cinematograph films;

“projection room” means the place or enclosure in which a projector is set up and operated or intended to be operated;
“rewind” means any device for winding or rewinding cinematograph films;

“rewind room” means the room or enclosure in which cinematograph films are wound or rewound or repaired;

“the Act” means the Cinematograph Act.

3. (1) No building shall be used unless it be provided with an adequate number of exits clearly indicated and so placed and maintained as readily to afford the audience ample means of egress.

(2) The doors of all exits shall be so constructed and maintained as easily to open outwards on being pressed from within.

(3) All exit doors shall be so placed as to give free access to a street, roadway or passageway not less than 4’ wide or to some open space affording free access to a street or other public roadway.

(4) The seating in the building shall be so arranged as not to interfere with free access to the exits.

(5) The lobby or foyer of the building, the gangways, the staircases, and the passages leading to the exits, shall, during the presence of the public in the building, be kept clear of obstructions.

(6) No person shall be allowed to stand or sit in the gangways intersecting the rows of seats, or in any space between the front row of seats and the screen.

(7) Standing may be permitted in the gangways at the sides and the rear end of the building so long as sufficient room is left for persons to pass easily.

(8) Notices, which shall be kept illuminated during every
performance, shall be painted in 7” letters at each exit door clearly indicating the place of egress.

(9) The lighting of all exit doors and other safety lights shall be so arranged that they will continue to function even in the event of a complete breakdown in the general lights.

(10) Every building shall be provided with adequate sanitary conveniences to the satisfaction of the Director of Health Services or any Health Officer authorised by him.

Exit doors.

4. (1) During every performance all exit doors either shall be left unfastened or shall be secured with proper cinema panic locks of a type to be approved by the Commissioner of Police, and of such a nature that the doors can be opened immediately from the inside.

(2) Push-bars, handles or other means of release shall not be less than 3’ nor more than 4’ 6” from the floor.

(3) The floor of the building shall extend on one level through each doorway intended to be used by the public.

(4) Before the commencement of each performance all exit doors and their fastenings shall be tested to ensure that they are in order and free from obstructions.

(5) At the end of each performance all exit doors shall be opened for the use of the audience.

Chair seats.

5. (1) When chairs are used for the seating accommodation in the building they must be battened together in lengths of not less than four nor more than twelve chairs.

(2) The chairs at the end of each length shall be firmly secured
to the floor.

6. The number, design, width and location of gangways and the construction of steps or stairways of any building shall be subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Police.

7. Additional lighting of a type approved by the Commissioner of Police shall be provided in every building for use in the event of a breakdown or of any failure in the general lights.

8. The licensee or some person nominated by him in writing shall be present in the building during the whole time of any cinematograph exhibition and he shall be assisted by a sufficient staff of attendants who shall at all times, when on duty carry an electric torch maintained in good working order.

9. The licensee or the person nominated by him in writing under the last foregoing rule shall ensure that the operators and every other person who may be called upon to handle inflammable film within the building for any purpose are fully instructed as to the dangers arising from the use of inflammable film, the precautions to be observed against the risk of ignition and the steps to be taken in the event of any film smoldering or catching fire.

10. (1) All electrical work, apparatus and appliances, their arrangement and location, and the voltage and maximum loading of each circuit shall be subject to the approval of the Electrical Inspector.

   (2) Voltages in excess of 250 V are prohibited unless special permission is granted on the recommendation of the Electrical Inspector that he is satisfied that the higher voltage is essential to the purpose for which it is intended to be used and that all electrical work and fittings are suitably insulated and protected against damage.

11. (1) All fuse boxes and blocks shall be placed in a part of the building which is not readily accessible to the public but accessible to the staff.
(2) The fuse boxes and blocks guarding the general lights and the safety lights shall not be placed in the projection room nor the rewind rooms.

(3) All fuse holders shall be of a design that may be inserted or removed from the fuse blocks without risk of human contact with live metal.

(4) All fuse blocks shall be so enclosed that molten metal and flame cannot escape therefrom.

(5) A sufficient supply of spare fuses shall be kept in such place as the Electrical Inspector shall direct.

12. (1) All electrical circuits connected to projectors or projector equipment shall be so arranged that failure in any part of them shall not affect the working of the general lights and the safety lights.

(2) Such circuits shall be controlled by means of a switch or switches, installed in the projection room in a position readily accessible to the operator or operators.

(3) When the general lights and the safety lights are controlled from within the projection room, there shall be separate and independent means of control outside of and away from the projection room in a position readily accessible to members of the staff but not to the public.

13. (1) Fire appliances, including fire extinguishers of an approved capacity and type, shall be kept and maintained in good working order in every building as the Commissioner of Police may from time to time direct in writing.

(2) During any exhibition such appliances and fire extinguishers shall be in the charge of some person specially nominated by the licensee for that purpose.
(3) The Commissioner of Police may direct the number of fire-extinguishers which shall be provided for any building.

14. (1) The projector shall be placed in a projection room of substantial construction made of, or lined internally with, fire-resisting material and shall be of sufficient dimensions to allow the operators to work freely.

(2) All fittings and fixtures within the projection room other than the frames of outside windows, shall be constructed of, or covered with, fire-resisting material.

(3) Any entrance to the projection room shall be suitably placed and fitted with a self-closing and close-fitting door which shall be kept closed during the exhibition.

(4) All openings from the projection room into any other part of the building shall be lined with fire-resisting material, and shall be so constructed that they may be closed instantly both from inside or outside the projection room and, when closed, smoke cannot pass through the joints into the main building.

(5) In the wall through which the pictures are projected, the only openings which may be made are one view port and one projection port to each machine and these openings shall not exceed 12" in height and 12" in width.

(6) In the event of fire all doors, entrances, and openings in the projection room shall be closed immediately.

(7) There shall be no direct means of ingress into the projection room from that part of the building used by the public.

15. (1) The projection room shall always be in the charge of a Projection room. restrictions.
competent operator who shall be present in the projection room during the whole time that the apparatus is in use.

(2) No unauthorised person shall enter the projection room.

(3) No person shall smoke in the projection room.

(4) No inflammable liquid or articles shall unnecessarily be taken into nor allowed to remain in the projection room.

(5) The projection room shall be provided with adequate means of ventilation communicating directly with the outside air.

16. No person shall operate any projector in any building during any exhibition to which members of the public are admitted unless such person -

(a) is over twenty years of age; and

(b) has passed such examination as may be required by the Commissioner of Police in the use of the particular type of projector used in the building; or

(c) has been permitted to operate that particular type of projector by the Commissioner of Police.

17. (1) There shall always be maintained within the projection room readily available for use sufficient means of dealing with fire and these shall include –

(a) at least one carbon tetrachloride or pyrene type of fire extinguisher;

(b) one large double asbestos blanket and four
buckets of dry sand; and

(c) at least three buckets filled with water.

(2) Before the commencement of any exhibition the operator shall satisfy himself that the fire equipment in the projection room is ready for use.

18. (1) Only films intended for use during an exhibition shall be kept in the projection room.

(2) Films kept in the projection room for use during an exhibition shall be kept in a strong metal box when not actually in use.

(3) The box shall have a close fitting lid which shall be kept closed whenever the projector is working.

(4) All other film stored in the building shall be kept in strong metal boxes with close fitting lids which shall be kept locked at all times except when in use for the purpose of inserting or extracting films.

19. (1) When electrical current is generated on the premises for use in the building the generating machinery shall be kept in a fire proof enclosure detached from the main building.

(2) Fire extinguishers to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Police shall be kept in such enclosure and maintained in proper working order.

20. When a projector is operated by hand the handle or crank used to operate the machine shall be secured to its spindle or shaft in a manner that it cannot slip or become disengaged while the machine is being operated.

21. (1) The projector shall be fitted with an automatic safety shutter or cut-off inserted between the film gate and the projection light and so arranged that it will automatically close and prevent the heat and flame of the projection...
light from coming into contact with the film when the projector is operating below the normal safety speed or when idle.

(2) The shutter or cut-off shall be maintained in good working order and adjustment at all times.

(3) The construction of the film gate shall be substantial and so made as to afford ample heat-radiating surface.

(4) The passage for the film through the gate shall be sufficiently narrow to prevent flames from travelling upwards or downwards from the light-opening.

22. (1) The film-feed and pick-up reels on the projector shall be enclosed in fire-proof metal boxes, or both may be contained in a strong metal chamber below the projector, with film slots so constructed as to prevent the passage of flame to the interior of the boxes or chamber.

(2) In constructing the metal boxes or chamber the parts shall not be joined with any material of a lower melting point than that of the boxes or chamber.

(3) The openings through which the reels are inserted or extracted shall be provided with close fitting doors or covers which shall be kept firmly closed when the projection light is on.

23. (1) The use of any illuminant in the projector other than electricity is prohibited unless approved in writing by the Electrical Inspector.

(2) The form and type of lights used in the projection room, the rewind room and in any room where film is stored shall be subject to the approval of the Electrical Inspector.

24. (1) Unless the rewind is part of the projector, a separate room
shall be provided for the rewinding and repairing of films.

(2) The rewind room shall be constructed throughout of, or lined internally with, fire-resisting material.

(3) The rewind shall not be operated while there is unprotected film, other than the one mounted on the rewind, in the rewind room.

(4) All fittings and fixtures in the rewind room shall be constructed of, or covered with, fire-resisting material.

(5) No person shall smoke in the rewind room.

(6) The licensee shall provide a fire-extinguisher of a type approved by the Commissioner of Police in the rewind room.

(7) The rewind room shall be provided with adequate means of ventilation communicating directly with the outside air.

(8) If there is any communicating doorway or other opening between the rewind room and the projection room such doorway or other opening shall be provided with a self-closing shutter of fire-resistant material.

(9) Alternative means of egress shall be provided other than through the projection room.

25. Not more than 30,000’ of film altogether shall be kept in the projection room or the rewind room at any one time.

26. The licensee of a permit granted under the provisions of the Act shall comply with the provisions of these Rules.

27. (1) The Commissioner of Police may, in his discretion, permit any person to use any place for cinematograph exhibition on a special occasion and
for a specific purpose.

(2) Where a permission is granted under paragraph (1) of this rule the Commissioner of Police may exempt the holder of such permission from compliance with the provisions of these Rules but shall impose such conditions and restrictions as he may deem fit for the safety of the public.

(3) Any place used for a special occasion and for a specific purpose for any cinematograph exhibition shall be subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Police.

(4) In any such place where there is no separate rewind nor projection room and the rewind is part of the projector, film, other than non-inflammable, shall not be re-wound while the place is occupied by the public.

28. (1) The licensee shall ensure that a copy of these Rules is kept exhibited in the projection room and is easily accessible to the operators.

(2) The licensee shall satisfy himself that the members of his staff are conversant with these Rules.

29. The Commissioner of Police shall inspect every building at least once a year and shall submit a report on the condition of such building to the Minister.