

Legal Age 101: When Is It Going To Be Legal?

Article by: James Monahan

Legal age is an age at which a person becomes entitled under the law to engage in a particular activity or becomes responsible for a particular act.

Those acts and activities include getting married, getting a license, voting and basically anything that will make you accountable for your actions. Government sets a legal minimum age for all these.

So before you head out to town for the supposedly biggest party of the season (which will probably include one or all of the following events: bringing your folks' car and getting drunk like crazy and ending up in Vegas with some random person you're about to marry) check out the legal ages for all your needs so you don't end up in juvenile court or jail for that matter.

Here's a list of the most fundamental legal ages.

Legal Age of Candidacy

It is the legal minimum age at which a person can legally qualify to hold certain elected government offices. In many cases, it also determines the age at which a person may be granted ballot access for an election.

Legal Age of Consent

According to the law, when a person reaches the age of consent, persons are bound by their words and acts. There are different ages at which one acquires legal capacity to consent to marriage, to choose a guardian, to conclude a contract, and the like.

For marriage, the age may be higher for males than for females if the jurisdiction does not guarantee equal rights to men and women. Age of consent also means the age below which consent of the female to sexual intercourse is not a defense to a charge of rape.

Under common law this age was 10; state statutes in the United States generally set it between 13 and 18. Basically, legal age of consent is when you become solely responsible for your own actions. It's about taking accountability.

Legal Age of Majority

In law, the age of majority is the age at which one acquires the full legal rights of an adult. This commonly includes things such as the right to vote and the ability to make contracts.

Legal Drinking Age

Many nations have a legal drinking age, or the minimum age one must be to drink alcohol. In most countries this is 16 or 18; in the US it is 21. Some countries distinguish between drinks with fairly low alcohol-content (such as beer and wine) and stronger spirit-based drinks.

Legal Marriageable Age

It is the age wherein an individual may decide on his or her own to marry or not. It's different for most countries and the youngest so far is 16 with parental consent.

Legal Minimum Driving Age

Minimum driving age refers to the legal age after which a person can obtain a license to operate a motor vehicle. The minimum driving age varies between jurisdictions but is generally between the ages of 14 and 18.

Legal Voting Age

The voting age is the minimum legal age at which a person may vote in a governmental election. That means carrying out the right to suffrage.

Legal ages were put into law for a reason. Age comes with education and experience and who would want a reckless, drunk 13-year-old driving down our streets, right? James Monahan is the owner and Senior Editor of TopLegalSites.com and writes expert articles about law.