

## Irish liquor laws: Circuit Court rules no bar to late night licence on Good Friday

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The Intoxicating Liquor (Amendment) Act 2018, which came into operation on 31 January 2018, removed the prohibition on serving alcohol on Good Friday.

Under the Act it appeared that Good Friday was to now be treated as an 'ordinary' Friday for the purpose of the liquor licensing laws. Therefore, the amendment appeared to also permit Special Exemption Orders on Holy Thursday and Good Friday.

The question of the legality of late night trade on Good Friday was raised in Dublin District Court on 22 February 2018, when a test case was brought on behalf of the Red Cow Inn seeking a Special Exemption Order from 30 March 2018 (Good Friday) into the early hours of 31 March 2018.

The application was refused by Judge Coghlan in Dublin District Court on Wednesday, 7 March, and the decision was immediately appealed to the Circuit Court.

The appeal hearing came before the President of the Circuit Court, Mr. Justice Raymond Groarke, today.

Upon hearing submissions on behalf of the applicant, the President ruled that there was no legal reason for a Special Exemption Order not to be granted on Good Friday when the amendment to the legislation meant that Good Friday was to be treated as an ordinary day under licensing laws, subject to no objection from the State or An Garda Síochána and where all other legal proofs were in order.

A number of outstanding applications for Special Exemption Orders for Holy Thursday and Good Friday were adjourned by the District Court to 21 March 2018. Considering the Circuit Court's decision, these applications are now likely to be granted, subject to no objection and all other proofs being in order.

*For further information on this legal update, please contact Maria by emailing*

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