

**DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ABC CITES TWO CLERKS FOR SELLING ALCOHOL TO MINORS IN PACIFICA**

**(Pacifica)** - Investigators of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) cited two clerks for selling alcoholic beverages to a minor during a Minor Decoy Operation in the City of Pacifica on November 30, 2005.

One decoy, a person under the age of 20, participated in the operation. The decoy was under direct supervision of ABC Investigators. The decoy attempted to purchase alcohol from 19 ABC licensed businesses. Two establishments sold alcohol to the minor decoy.

Those who sold to the minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will take administrative action against the business's liquor license. That may include a fine, a suspension of the liquor license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting the compliance checks state-wide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Young people under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunk driving fatalities than the general adult population.

Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's. When the program first began, the violation rate of retail establishments selling to minors was as high as 40 to 50 percent. When conducted on a routine basis, the rate has dropped in some cities as low as 10 percent or even below. The latest violation rate state-wide is below 16% percent.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.

In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that liquor licensees are complying with the law.

ABC is a Department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Sunne Wright-McPeak, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.