



BELIZE

**LAW REVISION ACT
CHAPTER 3**

REVISED EDITION 2020

**SHOWING THE SUBSTANTIVE LAWS AS AT
31ST DECEMBER, 2020**

This is a revised edition of the Substantive 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 2020.



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CHAPTER 3

LAW REVISION ACT

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART I

Preliminary

1. Short title.
2. Interpretation.

PART II

Preparation of the Revised Edition

3. Appointment and functions of Commissioner.
4. Contents of revised edition.
5. Acts may be omitted.
6. Revised edition to be published in form to be prescribed by the Minister.
7. Arrangement of revised edition.
8. Powers of Commissioner to omit provisions.
9. Other powers of Commissioner.
10. No power to make alterations of substance.
11. Binding of revised edition.
12. Bringing into force and validity of revised edition.

PART III

Maintenance of the Cumulative Edition

13. Appointment and function of Law Revision Counsel.
14. Preparation of annual supplement.
15. Inclusion and removal of pages from cumulative edition.

16. Power of Minister to order insertion of pages of amendments in the cumulative edition.
17. Powers of Law Revision Counsel.
18. Additional Powers of Law Revision Counsel.

PART IV

Revision of Subsidiary Laws

19. Appointment and function of Commissioner.
20. Cumulative edition of subsidiary laws.

PART V

Miscellaneous

21. Construction of reference to repealed, etc. enactment.
 22. Effect of repealed Acts.
 23. Saving of enactments omitted from revised edition, etc.
 24. Saving of existing subsidiary laws.
 25. Substitution in certain cases of reference to the words “the Chief Justice.”
 26. Expenses.
 27. Distribution of Laws of Belize.
 28. Offences.
- Schedule — Omitted Acts

CHAPTER 3

LAW REVISION

CAP. 3,
R. E. 1980-1990.
5 of 1979.
S. I. 44 of 1983.
S. I. 95 of 2011.
S.I. 110 of 2011.

[29th September, 1979]

PART I

Preliminary

1. This Act may be cited as the Law Revision Act. Short title.
2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, Interpretation.

“annual supplement” means the annual supplement prepared under section 14 of this Act;

“appointed day” means such day as the Governor-General may, by proclamation published in the *Gazette*, appoint;

“Commissioner” means the person appointed under section 3 of this Act;

“cumulative edition” means the revised edition as revised from time to time by the Law Revision Counsel in accordance with Part III;

“law or enactment” includes the Acts and subsidiary laws in force in Belize;

“Law Revision Counsel” means the person appointed under section 13 to maintain the cumulative edition;

“Minister” means the Attorney General;

“revised edition” means the new and revised edition of the Laws of Belize prepared under the authority of Part II;

“subsidiary laws” includes any proclamation, rule, regulation, by-law, order in council, order, notice or form made or issued under the authority of any law;

“the Laws of Belize” means the revised edition or, as soon as an annual supplement has been published, the cumulative edition and any revised edition of the subsidiary laws or subsequent cumulative edition of subsidiary laws prepared under the authority of Part IV.

PART II

Preparation of the Revised Edition

Appointment and functions of Commissioner.

3.-(1) The Public Services Commission shall by instrument appoint a Commissioner for the purpose of this Part.

(2) The Commissioner shall prepare and publish in accordance with the provisions of this Act, a revised edition of the Laws of Belize enacted or brought into force prior to such day as the Governor-General shall appoint.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2) of this section, there may be included in the revised edition any Act enacted or brought into force after the appointed day, if the Governor-General by Order so directs.

(4) If the Commissioner is from any cause unable fully to perform his functions, the Public Services Commission may appoint some other fit and proper person to be a Commissioner in his stead.

Contents of revised edition.

4.-(1) Subject to section 8 (2) of this Act the revised edition shall contain ,

- (a) all Acts contained in the existing revised edition which are still in force on the appointed day and all Acts enacted subsequent to the date of the latest Acts contained in the existing revised edition, which are in force on the appointed day;
- (b) all Acts which have been enacted but not brought into force on the appointed day;
- (c) any Act authorized to be included pursuant to section 3 (3) of this Act;
- (d) a table of contents, a chronological table of Acts and an index.

(2) The revised edition may also contain a reprint of such Imperial Statutes, Orders in Council, and other instruments as the Commissioner may think desirable.

5.-(1) It shall not be necessary for the Commissioner to include in the revised edition,

Acts may be omitted.

- (a) the Acts specified in the Schedule to this Act;
- (b) any enactment containing only special provision in relation to the pension of any person named therein; or
- (c) enactments providing for the validation of acts, or indemnity or alterations as to names, locations, offices, titles or ranks where such alterations have been embodied by the Commissioner in the laws to which they relate.

(2) The Minister may, at any time before the publication of the revised edition, by order vary or add to the Schedule.

Revised edition to be published in form to be prescribed by the Minister.

6.-(1) The revised edition shall be published in such form as the Minister may determine, including electronically on CD-ROM and on the internet, and shall comprise such pages as may be authorized to be included therein by order of the Minister.

(2) The Minister shall by order authorize the inclusion in the revised edition of the pages to be comprised therein and each page shall bear a reference to the fact that it was printed by the authority of the Government of Belize.

Arrangement of revised edition.

7.-(1) The revised edition shall be printed in such number of volumes and divided into so many Books and Titles and Chapters and Parts as the Commissioner thinks fit.

(2) Every Act shall, and any part of a body of law may, be made a Chapter of the revised edition and all such Acts shall, irrespective of the date of enactment, be arranged in such sequence and groups and generally in such consecutive order and shall be designated by such numbers showing their place in the revised edition as the Commissioner may determine.

(3) There shall be annexed to each Act contained in the revised edition the year and number by which such Act had previously been denoted, as well as the year and number of any other law the provisions of which have been incorporated into it by virtue of the powers contained in this Act.

Powers of Commissioner to omit provisions.

8.-(1) In the preparation of the revised edition, the Commissioner may omit ,

- (a) all laws or provisions of laws which have been repealed expressly or by necessary implication or which have expired or have become spent or have had their effect;
- (b) all long titles and general enactment clauses repealing enactments contained in Acts, and also all tables of lists of repealed enactments, whether contained in Schedules or otherwise;

- (c) all preambles to Acts, where such omission can, in the opinion of the Commissioner, be conveniently made;
- (d) all introductory words of enactments in any Act or section of an Act;
- (e) all enactments prescribing the date when any enactment or any provision of any enactment is to come into force where such omission can, in the opinion of the Commissioner, be conveniently made;
- (f) all amending Acts or parts of Acts where the amendments effected by such Acts or parts of Acts have been embodied by the Commissioner in the Acts to which they relate;
- (g) transitional powers relating to the vesting or transfer of assets and liabilities or enactments providing for the continuance in force of existing regulations and other instruments or the validation thereof;
- (h) the definition of any expression in any enactment or any provision in any enactment which, in the opinion of the Commissioner, can be omitted having regard to the provisions of the Interpretation Act, Cap. 1.

(2) The provisions of sections 27 and 28 of the Interpretation Act, Cap. 1 shall apply to such omissions in the same way as if the Acts or enactments omitted had been repealed.

9. In the preparation of the revised edition, the Commissioner shall have the following additional powers,

Other powers of Commissioner.

- (a) where by any law any amendment has been made to any other law, to alter the amended law in the manner prescribed by the amending law;
- (b) to consolidate into one Act any two or more Acts in *pari materia*, making the alterations thereby rendered necessary in the consolidated Act, and affixing thereto such date as may seem most convenient;
- (c) to alter the order of sections in any Act, and in all cases where it is desirable to do so, to re-number the sections of any Act;
- (d) to alter the form or arrangement of any section of an Act, either by combining it in whole or in part with another section or sections, or by dividing it into two or more subsections, or by transposing words;
- (e) to divide any Act, whether consolidated or not, into parts or other divisions;
- (f) to transfer any provision contained in an enactment from that enactment to any other enactment to which it more properly belongs;
- (g) to alter the number of the Chapter of any Act contained in the existing edition of the Revised Laws;
- (h) to add a short title to any Act which may require it and, if desirable, to alter the short title of any Act, and to alter and amend the title of any Act so as to bring such title into conformity with the consolidated Acts appearing in such title;
- (i) to clarify (whether by shortening, expansion or otherwise) the language of any provision of any

enactment appearing to the Commissioner to require such clarification;

- (j) to supply or alter marginal notes;
- (k) to correct cross references, to shorten and simplify the phraseology of any enactment;
- (l) to correct punctuation in any enactment;
- (m) to provide footnotes by way of amplification;
- (n) to correct grammatical, typographical and similar mistakes and omissions in the existing copies of enactments and for that purpose to make verbal additions, omissions or alterations not affecting the meaning of any enactment;
- (o) to make such formal alterations as to names, localities, offices, titles and otherwise as may be necessary to bring any enactment into conformity with the circumstances of Belize;
- (p) to frame and insert in any enactment definitions of words used therein and to substitute for definitions of words or phrases used in any enactment such other definitions appearing to the Commissioner to be more appropriate;
- (q) to make adaptations of or amendments in any enactment as appear to the Commissioner to be necessary or proper as a consequence of any change in the Belize Constitution, Cap. 4;
- (r) to do all such things relating to form and method as appear to the Commissioner to be necessary for the perfecting of the revised edition;

- (s) to publish the laws electronically on CD-ROM and on the internet.

No power to make alterations of substance.

10.-(1) Nothing in section 8 or 9 of this Act, shall empower the Commissioner to make any alteration or amendment in the substance or otherwise affecting the meaning of any law or provisions of any law.

(2) Subject to the provisions of the succeeding subsections of this section, in every case where any such alteration or amendment is, in the opinion of the Commissioner, desirable, the Commissioner shall cause to be drafted a Bill setting forth such alterations and amendments, and authorizing them to be made in the revised edition, and every such Bill shall, subject to the sanction of the Cabinet, be submitted to the National Assembly and dealt with in the ordinary way.

(3) Any such Bill may have reference to more Acts than one, although such Acts may not be in *pari materia*.

(4) In any case where an Act, whether consolidated or not, requires such considerable alterations and amendments as to involve its entire recasting, the Commissioner shall cause a Bill to be drafted accordingly, and any such Bill shall, subject to the sanction of the Cabinet, be submitted to the National Assembly and dealt with in the ordinary way.

Binding of revised edition.

11.-(1) Notwithstanding section 6 (1) of this Act, the Commissioner,

- (a) shall cause nine copies of the revised edition to be bound in volumes in book form;
- (b) shall certify each such copy, on the title page of each volume thereof, to contain a true copy of the revised edition prepared by him; and
- (c) shall cause one such copy to be delivered to the Governor-General, to the Clerk of the National

Assembly, to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, to the Attorney General, to the Law Revision Counsel, to the Chief Librarian, to the Librarian of the University of the West Indies, to the Librarian of the University of Belize and to the Archivist, and those officers shall respectively retain those copies for the purposes of record.

(2) Every publication made by the Law Revision Counsel in accordance with Part III shall be filed by the Clerk of the National Assembly and shall be bound and retained by him for the purposes of record.

(3) If for any purpose a copy of any publication filed with the Clerk of the National Assembly in accordance with subsection (4) of this section is required to be certified, the Clerk of the National Assembly shall insert at the foot of a copy of that publication a written certificate duly authenticated by him to the effect that such a copy is a true copy of that publication.

(4) A publication certified under subsection (3) of this section shall be evidence of that publication and of its contents contained in the cumulative edition.

12.-(1) When the revised edition is ready for publication, the Minister may by order direct that the revised edition or such part or parts thereof shall come into force on such date as he thinks fit.

Bringing into force and validity of revised edition.

(2) Subject to section 23 of this Act, the pages of the revised edition shall, from the date of the Order by which they were respectively authorised, be in all courts and for all purposes deemed to be and shall be the sole and proper statement of the Laws of Belize in respect of the laws as revised and reproduced in the revised edition, and copies of the electronic laws published pursuant to section 6 (1) of this Act, shall be received as evidence of such laws in all courts of law.

PART III

Maintenance of the Cumulative Edition

Appointment and
function of Law
Revision
Counsel.

13. The Public Services Commission shall by instrument appoint a Law Revision Counsel whose function it shall be to maintain the cumulative edition by the preparation and publication of the annual supplement.

Preparation of
annual
supplement

14.-(1) Subject to section 16 of this Act, as soon as practicable after 31st December of the year in which the revised edition comes into force or, as the case may be, the last Order is made by the Minister under section 12 of the Act and thereafter of each succeeding year, the Law Revision Counsel shall prepare in accordance with this Part an annual supplement comprising ,

- (a) such pages as in his opinion are necessary in order that the cumulative edition may contain,
 - (i) all such laws as are required by this Act to be included therein;
 - (ii) a current table of contents;
 - (iii) a chronological table of Acts; and
 - (iv) an index;
 - (b) instructions for insertion of such pages in the revised edition, as the case may be.
- (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as to,
- (a) prevent the Law Revision Counsel from preparing pages for inclusion in the cumulative edition at more frequent intervals than those provided by subsection (1) of this section; or

- (b) prevent the Minister from authorising by Order under and in accordance with section 15 of this Act, the inclusion in the revised edition of any pages and the removal therefrom of any pages in accordance with section 15 of the Act.

15.-(1) The Minister may by Order authorise the inclusion in the cumulative edition of pages and instructions prepared by the Law Revision Counsel under section 14 of this Act, and every page and any instructions whose inclusion is so authorised shall bear a reference to the authorising Order, in addition to a statement that it is prepared by the authority of the Government of Belize.

Inclusion and removal of pages from cumulative edition.

(2) Any Order made under this section may authorise the removal from the revised edition of any page,

- (a) which has been replaced by a new page authorised by such an Order to be included therein; or
- (b) where the provisions contained in that page may be omitted from the revised edition or cumulative edition by the Law Revision Counsel by virtue of the powers conferred upon him by this Part.

(3) The inclusion in the cumulative edition or removal from the revised edition or cumulative edition of a page by authority of an order made under this section shall have effect from such date as specified in the order.

(4) An Order made under this section or section 16 shall be known as a Law Revision Order.

16.-(1) In the maintenance of the cumulative edition the Minister may, where he thinks it expedient in the interests of economy or convenience, as an alternative or addition to the preparation of an annual supplement under section 14 of this Act and the inclusion of pages in or removal of pages from the revised edition or cumulative edition under section 15 of the Act, by Order authorise the insertion, at such place in the revised edition or cumulative

Power of Minister to order insertion of pages of amendments in the cumulative edition.

edition as the Minister directs, of a page of amendments (in this section referred to as an amendment page) stating the law as amended.

(2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing the removal of any amendment page inserted under subsection (1) of this section and replacing it by a page in accordance with section 15 of this Act, if the Minister thinks fit.

(3) Every amendment page shall bear such references as are required by section 15 (1) of this Act, and until the Minister by order authorise its removal therefrom, shall for all purposes be deemed to form part of the cumulative edition.

Powers of Law
Revision
Counsel.

17. The provisions of sections 7 to 11 of this Act relating to the preparation of the revised edition and the provisions of section 12 (2) of the Act relating to the validity of the revised edition shall in so far as they are applicable apply *mutatis mutandis* and have effect for the purpose of maintaining the cumulative edition and with respect to the validity thereof.

Additional
powers of Law
Revision
Counsel.

18. Without prejudice to section 17 of this Act, the Law Revision Counsel in the maintenance of the cumulative edition shall have the following powers,

- (a) to rectify any clerical or printing error appearing in the revised edition or cumulative edition or, subject to the provisions of this Act, any other error so appearing;
- (b) to alter the sequence or groups in which the laws in the revised edition or cumulative edition have been arranged and to alter the heading prefixed to any Book, Title or Part;
- (c) to alter the number of the Chapter of any enactment contained in the revised edition or cumulative edition;

- (d) to transfer any law contained in any Book or Title to any other Book or Title to which in the opinion of the Law Revision Counsel it more properly belongs;
- (e) to omit from the annual supplement,
 - (i) any Appropriation Act or any law (whether comprising financial provisions or not) which in the opinion of the Law Revision Counsel will within one year of its having been brought into force have expired or become spent;
 - (ii) any loan Act or loan guarantee Act; or
 - (iii) any other Act authorised by Order of the Minister to be omitted from the Laws of Belize.

PART IV

Revision of Subsidiary Laws

19.-(1) The Public Services Commission may by instrument appoint a Commissioner, for the purpose of preparing a revised edition of the subsidiary laws of Belize.

Appointment and functions of Commissioner.

(2) As from the date of such appointment, the provisions of Parts I and II relating to the preparation and validity of the revised edition shall in so far as they are applicable apply *mutatis mutandis* and have effect for the purpose of preparing and bringing into force the revised edition of the subsidiary laws and with respect to the validity thereof.

20.-(1) When the revised edition of the subsidiary laws has been published, the Minister may by writing under his hand direct the Law Revision Counsel to maintain a cumulative edition of such laws.

Cumulative edition of subsidiary laws.

(2) As from the date of such appointment, the provisions of Part III relating to the annual maintenance and validity of the revised edition of the laws shall in so far as they are applicable apply *mutatis mutandis* and have effect for the purpose of maintaining the revised edition of the subsidiary laws and with respect to the validity thereof.

PART V

Miscellaneous

Construction of reference to repealed, etc. enactment.

21. Where in any enactment or in any document of any kind, reference is made to any enactment repealed or otherwise affected by or under the operation of this Act, such reference shall, where necessary and practicable, be deemed to extend and apply to the corresponding enactment, in the revised edition.

Effect of repealed Acts.

22. The repeal of any enactment repealed during and for the purpose of the preparation of the revised edition shall not affect the validity of any existing resolution of the National Assembly or any subsidiary law made under any enactment so repealed, but such resolutions or subsidiary laws, so far as they are not inconsistent with any other law of Belize for the time being in force, shall continue in force until otherwise provided.

Saving of enactments omitted from revised edition, etc.

23. No enactment omitted under the authority of any provision of this Act from the revised edition, any annual supplement, the revised edition of subsidiary laws or any supplement thereto, shall be deemed to be without force and validity by reason only of its having been so omitted but shall remain in force until the same shall have been repealed or shall have expired or become spent or had its effect.

Saving of existing subsidiary laws.

24. All subsidiary laws made under any enactment included in the revised edition and in force at the date when such revised edition shall come into force, shall continue in force until otherwise provided, and references in any such subsidiary law to the enactment under which it is made, or to any other enactment, shall

where necessary and practicable be deemed to apply to the corresponding enactment in the revised edition.

25. Where in any enactment the words “the Chief Justice” occur with reference to the exercise of his civil and criminal jurisdiction (as opposed to his administrative functions) and in the opinion of the Commissioner the words “a judge”, “any judge” or “the judge”, as the case may be, can conveniently be substituted therefor, the Commissioner shall make such substitution unless the context otherwise requires.

Substitution in certain cases of reference to the words “the Chief Justice”.

26. The expenses of and incidental to the preparation, maintenance and publication of the Laws of Belize shall be paid out of such moneys as may be voted for that purpose by the National Assembly.

Expenses.

27. Copies of the revised edition, the subsidiary laws and annual supplements shall,

Distribution of Laws of Belize.

- (a) be distributed among such persons, officers, departments and institutions as the Cabinet may direct.
- (b) be disposed of at such price as the Cabinet shall determine and the proceeds therefrom shall be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

28.-(1) Any person who,

Offences.

- (a) prints any copy of any pages of the laws of Belize which falsely purports to have been printed by the Government Printer or under the authority of the Government of Belize or tenders in evidence any such copy knowing that it was not so printed;
- (b) forges any certificate authorised under this Act to be inserted at the foot of any publication issued by the Law Revision Counsel or tenders in evidence such a certificate knowing it to have been forged,

is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of not less than five hundred dollars and not more than five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to both such fine and term of imprisonment.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1) (a) of this section, “prints” includes the reproduction by means other than by printing.

SCHEDULE 1 AND 2

LAW REVISION ACT

OMITTED ACTS

[Section 5]

PART I

*ORDINANCES**TITLE*

<i>Ordinances omitted in 1958 Revised Edition</i>	Punta Gorda Town Survey Village of Barranco Survey
No. 8 of 1929	
No. 11 of 1929	
<i>Ordinances enacted after 15th September 1958.</i>	Transfer of Enemy Property. New Capital City Loan (United Kingdom Government) New Capital City (Supplementary No. 1) Loan (United Kingdom). National Telecommunications System Loan.
No. 5 of 1969	
No. 11 of 1969	
No. 6 of 1970	
No. 11 of 1971	

PART II

All Ordinances merely appropriating or legalising the expenditure of any public money or funds for a specific period of time or purpose and in force at the date of the completion of the revised edition.

PART III

Chapter 136 ----- Deportation (British Subjects) Act.

Chapter 163 ----- British Nationality Act.

Chapter 240 ----- Government Railway Act.

Chapter 243:01----- Government Printing Corporation Act.

Chapter 336 ----- Newtown Barracks.

Chapter 57----- Income Tax (Partial Remission of Arrears) Act.

Chapter 229:01----- Telecommunications Undertaking (BTL)
Operations Vesting Act.

Chapter 46:01 ----- Institute of Agricultural Research and
Development Act.