

CHAPTER 85

AN ACT concerning personal identifying information and amending N.J.S.2C:20-1, N.J.S.2C:21-1, P.L.1983, c.565 and N.J.S.2C:21-17 and supplementing Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. N.J.S.2C:20-1 is amended to read as follows:

Definitions.

2C:20-1. Definitions. In chapters 20 and 21, unless a different meaning plainly is required:

a. "Deprive" means: (1) to withhold or cause to be withheld property of another permanently or for so extended a period as to appropriate a substantial portion of its economic value, or with purpose to restore only upon payment of reward or other compensation; or (2) to dispose or cause disposal of the property so as to make it unlikely that the owner will recover it.

b. "Fiduciary" means an executor, general administrator of an intestate, administrator with the will annexed, substituted administrator, guardian, substituted guardian, trustee under any trust, express, implied, resulting or constructive, substituted trustee, executor, conservator, curator, receiver, trustee in bankruptcy, assignee for the benefit of creditors, partner, agent or officer of a corporation, public or private, temporary administrator, administrator, administrator pendente lite, administrator ad prosequendum, administrator ad litem or other person acting in a similar capacity.

c. "Financial institution" means a bank, insurance company, credit union, savings and loan association, investment trust or other organization held out to the public as a place of deposit of funds or medium of savings or collective investment.

d. "Government" means the United States, any state, county, municipality, or other political unit, or any department, agency or subdivision of any of the foregoing, or any corporation or other association carrying out the functions of government.

e. "Movable property" means property the location of which can be changed, including things growing on, affixed to, or found in land, and documents, although the rights represented thereby have no physical location. "Immovable property" is all other property.

f. "Obtain" means: (1) in relation to property, to bring about a transfer or purported transfer of a legal interest in the property, whether to the obtainer or another; or (2) in relation to labor or service, to secure performance thereof.

g. "Property" means anything of value, including real estate, tangible and intangible personal property, trade secrets, contract rights, choses in action and other interests in or claims to wealth, admission or transportation tickets, captured or domestic animals, food and drink, electric, gas, steam or other power, financial instruments, information, data, and computer software, in either human readable or computer readable form, copies or originals.

h. "Property of another" includes property in which any person other than the actor has an interest which the actor is not privileged to infringe, regardless of the fact that the actor also has an interest in the property and regardless of the fact that the other person might be precluded from civil recovery because the property was used in an unlawful transaction or was subject to forfeiture as contraband. Property in possession of the actor shall not be deemed property of another who has only a security interest therein, even if legal title is in the creditor pursuant to a conditional sales contract or other security agreement.

i. "Trade secret" means the whole or any portion or phase of any scientific or technical information, design, process, procedure, formula or improvement which is secret and of value. A trade secret shall be presumed to be secret when the owner thereof takes measures to prevent it from becoming available to persons other than those selected by the owner to have access thereto for limited purposes.

j. "Dealer in property" means a person who buys and sells property as a business.

k. "Traffic" means:

(1) To sell, transfer, distribute, dispense or otherwise dispose of property to another person;
or

(2) To buy, receive, possess, or obtain control of or use property, with intent to sell, transfer, distribute, dispense or otherwise dispose of such property to another person.

l. "Broken succession of title" means lack of regular documents of purchase and transfer by any seller except the manufacturer of the subject property, or possession of documents of purchase and transfer by any buyer without corresponding documents of sale and transfer in possession of seller, or possession of documents of sale and transfer by seller without corresponding documents of purchase and transfer in possession of any buyer.

m. "Person" includes any individual or entity or enterprise, as defined herein, holding or capable of holding a legal or beneficial interest in property.

n. "Anything of value" means any direct or indirect gain or advantage to any person.

o. "Interest in property which has been stolen" means title or right of possession to such property.

p. "Stolen property" means property that has been the subject of any unlawful taking.

q. "Enterprise" includes any individual, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, business trust, association, or other legal entity, and any union or group of individuals associated in fact, although not a legal entity, and it includes illicit as well as licit enterprises and governmental as well as other entities.

r. "Attorney General" includes the Attorney General of New Jersey, his assistants and deputies. The term shall also include a county prosecutor or his designated assistant prosecutor, if a county prosecutor is expressly authorized in writing by the Attorney General to carry out the powers conferred on the Attorney General by this chapter.

s. "Access device" means property consisting of any telephone calling card number, credit card number, account number, mobile identification number, electronic serial number, personal identification number, or any other data intended to control or limit access to telecommunications or other computer networks in either human readable or computer readable form, either copy or original, that can be used to obtain telephone service.

t. "Defaced access device" means any access device, in either human readable or computer readable form, either copy or original, which has been removed, erased, defaced, altered, destroyed, covered or otherwise changed in any manner from its original configuration.

u. "Domestic companion animal" means any animal commonly referred to as a pet or one that has been bought, bred, raised or otherwise acquired, in accordance with local ordinances and State and federal law for the primary purpose of providing companionship to the owner, rather than for business or agricultural purposes.

v. "Personal identifying information" means any name, number or other information that may be used, alone or in conjunction with any other information, to identify a specific individual and includes, but is not limited to, the name, address, telephone number, date of birth, social security number, official State issued identification number, employer or taxpayer number, place of employment, employee identification number, demand deposit account number, savings account number, credit card number, mother's maiden name, unique biometric data, such as fingerprint, voice print, retina or iris image or other unique physical representation, or unique electronic identification number, address or routing code of the individual.

2. N.J.S.2C:21-1 is amended to read as follows:

Forgery and Related Offenses.

2C:21-1. Forgery and Related Offenses.

a. Forgery. A person is guilty of forgery if, with purpose to defraud or injure anyone, or with knowledge that he is facilitating a fraud or injury to be perpetrated by anyone, the actor:

(1) Alters or changes any writing of another without his authorization;

(2) Makes, completes, executes, authenticates, issues or transfers any writing so that it purports to be the act of another who did not authorize that act or of a fictitious person, or to have been executed at a time or place or in a numbered sequence other than was in fact the case, or to be a copy of an original when no such original existed; or

(3) Utters any writing which he knows to be forged in a manner specified in paragraph (1) or (2).

"Writing" includes printing or any other method of recording information, money, coins, tokens, stamps, seals, credit cards, badges, trademarks, access devices, and other symbols of

value, right, privilege, or identification, including retail sales receipts, universal product code (UPC) labels and checks. This section shall apply without limitation to forged, copied or imitated checks.

As used in this section, "information" includes, but is not limited to, personal identifying information as defined in subsection v. of N.J.S.2C:20-1.

b. Grading of forgery. Forgery is a crime of the third degree if the writing is or purports to be part of an issue of money, securities, postage or revenue stamps, or other instruments, certificates or licenses issued by the government, New Jersey Prescription Blanks as referred to in R.S.45:14-14, or part of an issue of stock, bonds or other instruments representing interest in or claims against any property or enterprise, personal identifying information or an access device. Forgery is a crime of the third degree if the writing is or purports to be a check. Forgery is a crime of the third degree if the writing is or purports to be 15 or more forged or altered retail sales receipts or universal product code labels.

Otherwise forgery is a crime of the fourth degree.

c. Possession of forgery devices. A person is guilty of possession of forgery devices, a crime of the third degree, when with purpose to use, or to aid or permit another to use the same for purposes of forging written instruments, including access devices and personal identifying information, he makes or possesses any device, apparatus, equipment, computer, computer equipment, computer software or article specially designed or adapted to such use.

3. Section 1 of P.L.1983, c.565 (C.2C:21-2.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.2C:21-2.1 Offenses involving false government documents, degree of crime.

1. a. A person who knowingly sells, offers or exposes for sale, or otherwise transfers, or possesses with the intent to sell, offer or expose for sale, or otherwise transfer, a document, printed form or other writing which falsely purports to be a driver's license or other document issued by a governmental agency and which could be used as a means of verifying a person's identity or age or any other personal identifying information is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

b. A person who knowingly makes, or possesses devices or materials to make, a document or other writing which falsely purports to be a driver's license or other document issued by a governmental agency and which could be used as a means of verifying a person's identity or age or any other personal identifying information is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

c. A person who knowingly exhibits, displays or utters a document or other writing which falsely purports to be a driver's license or other document issued by a governmental agency and which could be used as a means of verifying a person's identity or age or any other personal identifying information is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree.

d. A person who knowingly possesses a document or other writing which falsely purports to be a driver's license or other document issued by a governmental agency and which could be used as a means of verifying a person's identity or age or any other personal identifying information is guilty of a disorderly persons offense.

e. In addition to any other disposition authorized by this Title, the provisions of section 24 of P.L.1982, c.77 (C.2A:4A-43), or any other statute indicating the dispositions that may be ordered for an adjudication of delinquency, and, notwithstanding the provisions of subsection c. of N.J.S.2C:43-2, every person convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for a violation of any offense defined in this section shall forthwith forfeit his right to operate a motor vehicle over the highways of this State for a period to be fixed by the court at not less than six months or more than two years which shall commence on the day the sentence is imposed. In the case of any person who at the time of the imposition of the sentence is less than 17 years of age, the period of the suspension of driving privileges authorized herein, including a suspension of the privilege of operating a motorized bicycle, shall commence on the day the sentence is imposed and shall run for a period as fixed by the court of not less than six months or more than two years after the day the person reaches the age of 17 years. If the driving privilege of any person is under revocation, suspension, or postponement for a violation of any provision of this Title or Title 39 of the Revised Statutes at the time of any conviction or adjudication of delinquency for a

violation of any offense defined in this chapter or chapter 36 of this Title, the revocation, suspension, or postponement period imposed herein shall commence as of the date of termination of the existing revocation, suspension or postponement.

The court before whom any person is convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for a violation of any offense defined in this section shall collect forthwith the New Jersey driver's license or licenses of that person and forward the license or licenses to the Director of the Division of Motor Vehicles along with a report indicating the first and last day of the suspension or postponement period imposed by the court pursuant to this section. If the court is for any reason unable to collect the license or licenses of the person, the court shall cause a report of the conviction or adjudication of delinquency to be filed with the director. The report shall include the complete name, address, date of birth, eye color and sex of the person and shall indicate the first and last day of the suspension or postponement period imposed by the court pursuant to this section. The court shall inform the person orally and in writing that if the person is convicted of personally operating a motor vehicle during the period of license suspension or postponement imposed pursuant to this section, the person shall, upon conviction, be subject to the penalties set forth in R.S.39:3-40. A person shall be required to acknowledge receipt of the written notice in writing. Failure to receive a written notice or failure to acknowledge in writing the receipt of a written notice shall not be a defense to a subsequent charge of a violation of R.S.39:3-40. If the person is the holder of a driver's license from another jurisdiction, the court shall not collect the license, but shall notify forthwith the director who shall notify the appropriate officials in that licensing jurisdiction. The court shall, however, in accordance with the provisions of this section, revoke the person's non-resident driving privileges in this State.

In addition to any other condition imposed, a court, in its discretion, may suspend, revoke or postpone the driving privileges of a person admitted to supervisory treatment under N.J.S.2C:36A-1 or N.J.S.2C:43-12 without a plea of guilty or finding of guilt.

C.2C:21-17.1 Restitution to victim of unlawful use of personal identifying information.

4. Restitution to a victim of an offense under N.J.S.2C:21-1, section 1 of P.L.1983, c.565 (C.2C:21-2.1) or N.J.S. 2C:21-17 when the offense concerns personal identifying information may include costs incurred by the victim:

- a. in clearing the credit history or credit rating of the victim; or
- b. in connection with any civil or administrative proceeding to satisfy any debt, lien, or other obligation of the victim arising as a result of the actions of the defendant.

5. N.J.S.2C:21-17 is amended to read as follows:

Impersonation; theft of identity; disorderly persons offense, crime.

2C:21-17. Impersonation; Theft of Identity; disorderly persons offense, crime.

a. A person is guilty of an offense when he:

(1) Impersonates another or assumes a false identity and does an act in such assumed character or false identity for purpose of obtaining a pecuniary benefit for himself or another or to injure or defraud another;

(2) Pretends to be a representative of some person or organization and does an act in such pretended capacity for the purpose of obtaining a benefit for himself or another or to injure or defraud another;

(3) Impersonates another, assumes a false identity or makes a false or misleading statement regarding the identity of any person, in an oral or written application for services, for the purpose of obtaining services; or

(4) Obtains any personal identifying information pertaining to another person and uses that information, or assists another person in using the information, in order to assume the identity of or represent themselves as another person, without that person's authorization and with the purpose to fraudulently obtain or attempt to obtain a pecuniary benefit or services, or avoid the payment of debt or other legal obligation or avoid prosecution for a crime by using the name of the other person.

b. A person is guilty of an offense if, in the course of making an oral or written application for services, he impersonates another, assumes a false identity or makes a false or misleading statement with the purpose of avoiding payment for prior services. Purpose to avoid payment for prior services may be presumed upon proof that the person has not made full payment for prior services and has impersonated another, assumed a false identity or made a false or misleading statement regarding the identity of any person in the course of making oral or written application for services.

c. (1) A person who violates subsection a. or b. of this section is guilty of a crime of the second degree if the pecuniary benefit, the value of the services received, the payment sought to be avoided or the injury or fraud perpetrated on another is \$75,000 or more. If the pecuniary benefit, the value of the services received, the payment sought to be avoided or the injury or fraud perpetrated on another is at least \$500 but is less than \$75,000, the offender is guilty of a crime of the third degree. If the pecuniary benefit, the value of the services received, the payment sought to be avoided or the injury or fraud perpetrated on another is at least \$200 but is less than \$500, the offender is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree.

(2) If the pecuniary benefit, the value of the services received, the payment sought to be avoided or the injury or fraud perpetrated on another is less than \$200, or if the benefit or services received or the injury or fraud perpetrated on another has no pecuniary value, or if the person was unsuccessful in an attempt to receive a benefit or services or to injure or perpetrate a fraud on another, then the person is guilty of a disorderly persons offense.

d. A violation of R.S.39:3-37 for using the personal information of another to obtain a driver's license or register a motor vehicle or a violation of R.S.33:1-81 or section 6 of P.L.1968, c.313 (C.33:1-81.7) for using the personal information of another to illegally purchase an alcoholic beverage shall not constitute an offense under this section if the actor received only that benefit or service and did not perpetrate or attempt to perpetrate any additional injury or fraud on another.

6. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved October 16, 2002.