



Ohio Revised Code

Section 2919.23 Interference with custody.

Effective: April 6, 2023

Legislation: House Bill 281

(A) No person, knowing the person is without privilege to do so or being reckless in that regard, shall entice, take, keep, or harbor a person identified in division (A)(1), (2), or (3) of this section from the parent, guardian, or custodian of the person identified in division (A)(1), (2), or (3) of this section:

(1) A child under the age of eighteen, or a child with a mental or physical disability under the age of twenty-one;

(2) A person committed by law to an institution for delinquent, unruly, neglected, abused, or dependent children;

(3) A person committed by law to an institution for persons with mental illnesses or an institution for persons with intellectual disabilities.

(B) No person shall aid, abet, induce, cause, or encourage a child or a ward of the juvenile court who has been committed to the custody of any person, department, or public or private institution to leave the custody of that person, department, or institution without legal consent.

(C) It is an affirmative defense to a charge of enticing or taking under division (A)(1) of this section, that the actor reasonably believed that the actor's conduct was necessary to preserve the child's health or safety. It is an affirmative defense to a charge of keeping or harboring under division (A) of this section, that the actor in good faith gave notice to law enforcement or judicial authorities within a reasonable time after the child or committed person came under the actor's shelter, protection, or influence.

(D)(1) Whoever violates this section is guilty of interference with custody.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this division, a violation of division (A)(1) of this section is a



misdemeanor of the first degree. If the child who is the subject of a violation of division (A)(1) of this section is removed from the state or if the offender previously has been convicted of an offense under this section, a violation of division (A)(1) of this section is a felony of the fifth degree. If the child who is the subject of a violation of division (A)(1) of this section suffers physical harm as a result of the violation, a violation of division (A)(1) of this section is a felony of the fourth degree.

(3) A violation of division (A)(2) or (3) of this section is a misdemeanor of the third degree.

(4) A violation of division (B) of this section is a misdemeanor of the first degree. Each day of violation of division (B) of this section is a separate offense.