



Ohio Revised Code

Section 2921.31 Obstructing official business.

Effective: October 06, 2026

Legislation: House Bill 20 - 136th General Assembly

(A) As used in this section:

(1) "Emergency service responder" has the same meaning as in section 2903.22 of the Revised Code.

(2) "Warning" means a verbal command made by an emergency service responder through which the emergency service responder does both of the following:

(a) Commands a person to maintain the person's distance, to stay away, to back away, to not interfere, or another similar instruction;

(b) Communicates the verbal command in a manner such that a reasonable person would believe that the person must comply with the verbal command under the circumstances.

(B) No person, without privilege to do so and with purpose to prevent, obstruct, or delay the performance by a public official of any authorized act within the public official's official capacity, shall do any act that hampers or impedes a public official in the performance of the public official's lawful duties.

(C) No person, without privilege to do so, and after receiving a warning, shall knowingly approach or remain within fifteen feet of an emergency service responder engaged in the lawful performance of the responder's legal duty and do either of the following:

(1) Impede or interfere with the emergency service responder's ability to perform the responder's legal duty;

(2) Threaten the emergency service responder with physical harm.

(D)(1) Whoever violates this section is guilty of obstructing official business. Except as otherwise provided in divisions (D)(2), (3), and (4) of this section, obstructing official business is a misdemeanor of the second degree.

(2) If the victim is an emergency service responder engaged in the lawful performance of the responder's legal duty, and the responder issued a warning to the person before the person engaged in or continued to engage in the conduct described in division (B) of this section, obstructing official business is a misdemeanor of the first degree.



(3) If a violation of this section creates a risk of physical harm to a person other than an emergency service responder, obstructing official business is a felony of the fifth degree.

(4) If a violation of this section creates a risk of physical harm to an emergency service responder, obstructing official business is a felony of the fourth degree.
