

PENAL CODE

TITLE 5. OFFENSES AGAINST THE PERSON

CHAPTER 20A. TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS

Sec. 20A.01. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Child" means a person younger than 18 years of age.

(1-a) "Coercion" as defined by Section 1.07 includes:

(A) destroying, concealing, confiscating, or withholding from a trafficked person, or threatening to destroy, conceal, confiscate, or withhold from a trafficked person, the person's actual or purported:

(i) government records; or

(ii) identifying information or documents;

(B) causing a trafficked person, without the person's consent, to become intoxicated, as defined by Section 49.01, to a degree that impairs the person's ability to appraise the nature of or resist engaging in any conduct, including performing or providing labor or services; or

(C) withholding alcohol or a controlled substance to a degree that impairs the ability of a trafficked person with a chemical dependency, as defined by Section 462.001, Health and Safety Code, to appraise the nature of or resist engaging in any conduct, including performing or providing labor or services.

(1-b) "Disabled individual" has the meaning assigned by Section 22.021(b).

(2) "Forced labor or services" means labor or services, other than labor or services that constitute sexual conduct, that are performed or provided by another person and obtained through an actor's use of force, fraud, or coercion.

(2-a) "Premises" has the meaning assigned by Section 481.134, Health and Safety Code.

(2-b) "School" means a public or private primary or secondary school.

(3) "Sexual conduct" has the meaning assigned by Section 43.25.

(4) "Traffic" means to transport, entice, recruit, harbor, provide, or otherwise obtain another person by any means. Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 641, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003. Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 258 (S.B. 11), Sec. 16.01, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (H.B. 1121), Sec. 4, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. 24), Sec. 1.01, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 807 (H.B. 1540), Sec. 21, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 905 (H.B. 3521), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1049 (S.B. 1831), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 93 (S.B. 1527), Sec. 2.01, eff. September 1, 2023.

Sec. 20A.02. TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS. (a) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly:

(1) traffics another person with the intent that the trafficked person engage in forced labor or services;

(2) receives a benefit from participating in a venture that involves an activity described by Subdivision (1), including by receiving labor or services the person knows are forced labor or services;

(3) traffics another person and, through force, fraud, or coercion, causes the trafficked person to engage in conduct prohibited by:

(A) Section 43.02 (Prostitution);

(B) Section 43.03 (Promotion of Prostitution);

(B-1) Section 43.031 (Online Promotion of Prostitution);

(C) Section 43.04 (Aggravated Promotion of Prostitution);

(C-1) Section 43.041 (Aggravated Online

Promotion of Prostitution); or

(D) Section 43.05 (Compelling Prostitution);

(4) receives a benefit from participating in a venture that involves an activity described by Subdivision (3) or engages in sexual conduct with a person trafficked in the manner described in Subdivision (3);

(5) traffics a child or disabled individual with the intent that the trafficked child or disabled individual engage in forced labor or services, regardless of whether the person knows the age of the child or whether the person knows the victim is disabled;

(6) receives a benefit from participating in a venture that involves an activity described by Subdivision (5), including by receiving labor or services the person knows are forced labor or services, regardless of whether the person knows the age of the child or whether the person knows the victim is disabled;

(7) traffics a child or disabled individual, regardless of whether the person knows the age of the child or whether the person knows the victim is disabled, and by any means causes the trafficked child or disabled individual to engage in, or become the victim of, conduct prohibited by:

(A) Section 21.02 (Continuous Sexual Abuse of Young Child or Disabled Individual);

(B) Section 21.11 (Indecency with a Child);

(C) Section 22.011 (Sexual Assault);

(D) Section 22.021 (Aggravated Sexual Assault);

(E) Section 43.02 (Prostitution);

(E-1) Section 43.021 (Solicitation of Prostitution);

(F) Section 43.03 (Promotion of Prostitution);

(F-1) Section 43.031 (Online Promotion of Prostitution);

(G) Section 43.04 (Aggravated Promotion of Prostitution);

(G-1) Section 43.041 (Aggravated Online Promotion of Prostitution);

(H) Section 43.05 (Compelling Prostitution);

(I) Section 43.25 (Sexual Performance by a Child);

(J) Section 43.251 (Employment Harmful to Children); or

(K) Section 43.26 (Possession or Promotion of Child Pornography); or

(8) receives a benefit from participating in a venture that involves an activity described by Subdivision (7) or engages in sexual conduct with a child or disabled individual trafficked in the manner described in Subdivision (7), regardless of whether the person knows the age of the child or whether the person knows the victim is disabled.

(a-1) Repealed by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 807 (H.B. 1540), Sec. 62(5) and Ch. 905 (H.B. 3521), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2021.

Text of subsection as reenacted and amended by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 788 (S.B. 955), Sec. 1

(b) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection and Subsection (b-1), an offense under this section is a felony of the second degree. An offense under this section is a felony of the first degree if:

(1) the applicable conduct constitutes an offense under Subsection (a)(5), (6), (7), or (8), regardless of whether the actor knows the age of the child or whether the actor knows the victim is disabled at the time of the offense;

(2) the commission of the offense results in serious bodily injury to or the death of the person who is trafficked;

(3) the commission of the offense results in the death of an unborn child of the person who is trafficked; or

(4) the actor:

(A) used or exhibited a deadly weapon during the commission of the offense;

(B) intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly impeded the normal breathing or circulation of the blood of the trafficked person by applying pressure to the person's throat or

neck or by blocking the person's nose or mouth;

(C) subject to Subsection (b-1), recruited, enticed, or obtained the trafficked person from a shelter or facility operating as a residential treatment center that serves runaway youth, foster children, the homeless, or persons subjected to human trafficking, domestic violence, or sexual assault; or

(D) subject to Subsection (b-1), recruited, enticed, or obtained the trafficked person from a correctional facility while the trafficked person was confined in the facility.

Text of subsection as reenacted and amended by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 806 (S.B. [1212](#)), Sec. 2, and Ch. 250 (H.B. [1778](#)), Sec.

1.11

(b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (b-1), an offense under this section is a felony of the first degree.

Text of subsection as reenacted and amended by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 788 (S.B. [955](#)), Sec. 2

(b-1) An offense under this section is a felony of the first degree punishable by imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for life or for a term of not more than 99 years or less than 25 years if it is shown on the trial of the offense that the actor committed the offense in a location that was:

(1) on the premises of or within 1,000 feet of the premises of:

(A) a school;

(B) an institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education, as defined by Section [61.003](#), Education Code;

(C) a juvenile detention facility;

(D) a post-adjudication secure correctional facility;

(E) a shelter or facility operating as a residential treatment center that serves runaway youth, foster children, people who are homeless, or persons subjected to human

trafficking, domestic violence, or sexual assault;

(F) a community center offering youth services and programs;

(G) a child-care facility, as defined by Section [42.002](#), Human Resources Code; or

(H) a correctional facility; or

(2) on the premises where or within 1,000 feet of the premises where:

(A) an official school function was taking place; or

(B) an event sponsored or sanctioned by the University Interscholastic League was taking place.

Text of subsection as reenacted and amended by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 806 (S.B. [1212](#)), Sec. 3, and Ch. 250 (H.B. [1778](#)), Sec.

1.12

(b-1) An offense under this section is a felony of the first degree punishable by imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for life or for a term of not more than 99 years or less than 25 years if it is shown on the trial of the offense that the actor committed any part of the offense:

(1) on the premises of or within 1,000 feet of the premises of:

(A) a school or a school bus stop or other area designated by a school as a pick-up or drop-off zone for students;

(B) an institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education, as defined by Section [61.003](#), Education Code;

(C) a juvenile detention facility;

(D) a post-adjudication secure correctional facility;

(E) a shelter or facility operating as a residential treatment center that serves runaway youth, foster children, people who are homeless, or persons subjected to human trafficking, domestic violence, or sexual assault;

(F) a community center offering youth services

and programs; or

(G) a child-care facility, as defined by Section 42.002, Human Resources Code;

(2) on the premises where or within 1,000 feet of the premises where:

(A) an official school function was taking place; or

(B) an event sponsored or sanctioned by the University Interscholastic League was taking place; or

(3) in a school bus or other passenger transportation vehicle of a school.

(c) If conduct constituting an offense under this section also constitutes an offense under another section of this code, the actor may be prosecuted under either section or under both sections.

(d) If the victim of an offense under Subsection (a)(7)(A) is the same victim as a victim of an offense under Section 21.02, a defendant may not be convicted of the offense under Section 21.02 in the same criminal action as the offense under Subsection (a)(7)(A) unless the offense under Section 21.02:

(1) is charged in the alternative;

(2) occurred outside the period in which the offense alleged under Subsection (a)(7)(A) was committed; or

(3) is considered by the trier of fact to be a lesser included offense of the offense alleged under Subsection (a)(7)(A).

(e) This subsection applies only to a prosecution for an offense under Subsection (a)(7) or (8), in which the actor is alleged to have caused a trafficked child or disabled individual to engage in or become the victim of prostitution, as defined by Section 43.01. It is not a defense to a prosecution described by this subsection that the trafficked child or disabled individual:

(1) lacks the culpable mental state to engage in the act of prostitution; or

(2) did not complete the act of prostitution.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 641, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 258 (S.B. 11), Sec. 16.02,

eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 849 (H.B. [1121](#)), Sec. 5, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1002 (H.B. [4009](#)), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1 (S.B. [24](#)), Sec. 1.02, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 480 (H.B. [2529](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 685 (H.B. [29](#)), Sec. 30, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 858 (H.B. [2552](#)), Sec. 15, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1038 (H.B. [1808](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 273 (S.B. [1802](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 413 (S.B. [20](#)), Sec. 3.11, eff. September 1, 2019.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 221 (H.B. [375](#)), Sec. 2.26, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 807 (H.B. [1540](#)), Sec. 22, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 807 (H.B. [1540](#)), Sec. 62(5), eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 905 (H.B. [3521](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1049 (S.B. [1831](#)), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2021.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 93 (S.B. [1527](#)), Sec. 2.02, eff. September 1, 2023.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 451 (H.B. [3553](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2023.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 452 (H.B. [3554](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2023.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 250 (H.B. [1778](#)), Sec. 1.10, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 250 (H.B. 1778), Sec. 1.11, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 250 (H.B. 1778), Sec. 1.12, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 602 (H.B. 2761), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 788 (S.B. 955), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 788 (S.B. 955), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 806 (S.B. 1212), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 806 (S.B. 1212), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 806 (S.B. 1212), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2025.

Sec. 20A.03. CONTINUOUS TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS. (a) A person commits an offense if, during a period that is 30 or more days in duration, the person engages two or more times in conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 20A.02 against one or more victims.

(b) If a jury is the trier of fact, members of the jury are not required to agree unanimously on which specific conduct engaged in by the defendant constituted an offense under Section 20A.02 or on which exact date the defendant engaged in that conduct. The jury must agree unanimously that the defendant, during a period that is 30 or more days in duration, engaged in conduct that constituted an offense under Section 20A.02.

(c) If the victim of an offense under Subsection (a) is the same victim as a victim of an offense under Section 20A.02, a defendant may not be convicted of the offense under Section 20A.02 in the same criminal action as the offense under Subsection (a), unless the offense under Section 20A.02:

- (1) is charged in the alternative;
- (2) occurred outside the period in which the offense alleged under Subsection (a) was committed; or

(3) is considered by the trier of fact to be a lesser included offense of the offense alleged under Subsection (a).

(d) A defendant may not be charged with more than one count under Subsection (a) if all of the conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 20A.02 is alleged to have been committed against the same victim.

(e) An offense under this section is a felony of the first degree, punishable by imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice for life or for any term of not more than 99 years or less than 25 years.

(f) This subsection applies only to a prosecution for an offense under this section based on conduct constituting an offense under Section 20A.02(a)(7) or (8), in which the actor is alleged to have caused for one or more times a trafficked child or disabled individual to engage in or become the victim of prostitution as defined by Section 43.01. It is not a defense to a prosecution described by this subsection that the trafficked child or disabled individual:

(1) lacks the culpable mental state to engage in the act of prostitution; or

(2) did not complete the act of prostitution.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 122 (H.B. 3000), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2011.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 332 (H.B. 10), Sec. 12, eff. September 1, 2015.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 602 (H.B. 2761), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2025.

Sec. 20A.04. ACCOMPLICE WITNESS; TESTIMONY AND IMMUNITY.

(a) A party to an offense under this chapter may be required to provide evidence or testify about the offense.

(b) A party to an offense under this chapter may not be prosecuted for any offense about which the party is required to provide evidence or testify, and the evidence and testimony may not be used against the party in any adjudicatory proceeding except a prosecution for aggravated perjury. For purposes of this

subsection, "adjudicatory proceeding" means a proceeding before a court or any other agency of government in which the legal rights, powers, duties, or privileges of specified parties are determined.

(c) A conviction under this chapter may be had on the uncorroborated testimony of a party to the offense.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 332 (H.B. 10), Sec. 13, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 20A.05. PROSECUTION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL. The attorney general has jurisdiction to prosecute and shall represent the state in the prosecution of an offense under this chapter as provided by Section 402.103, Government Code.

Added by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 364 (H.B. 45), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2025.