

AN ACT concerning criminal law.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Criminal Code of 2012 is amended by changing Section 12-7.5 as follows:

(720 ILCS 5/12-7.5)

Sec. 12-7.5. Cyberstalking.

(a) A person commits cyberstalking when he or she engages in a course of conduct using electronic communication directed at a specific person, and he or she knows or should know that would cause a reasonable person to:

- (1) fear for his or her safety or the safety of a third person; or
- (2) suffer other emotional distress.

(a-3) A person commits cyberstalking when he or she, knowingly and without lawful justification, on at least 2 separate occasions, harasses another person through the use of electronic communication and:

- (1) at any time transmits a threat of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint and the threat is directed towards that person or a family member of that person; or
- (2) places that person or a family member of that

person in reasonable apprehension of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint; or

(3) at any time knowingly solicits the commission of an act by any person which would be a violation of this Code directed towards that person or a family member of that person.

(a-4) A person commits cyberstalking when he or she knowingly, surreptitiously, and without lawful justification, installs or otherwise places electronic monitoring software or spyware on an electronic communication device as a means to harass another person and:

(1) at any time transmits a threat of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint and the threat is directed towards that person or a family member of that person;

(2) places that person or a family member of that person in reasonable apprehension of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint; or

(3) at any time knowingly solicits the commission of an act by any person which would be a violation of this Code directed towards that person or a family member of that person.

For purposes of this Section, an installation or placement is not surreptitious if:

(1) with respect to electronic software, hardware, or computer applications, clear notice regarding the use of

the specific type of tracking software or spyware is provided by the installer in advance to the owners and primary users of the electronic software, hardware, or computer application; or

(2) written or electronic consent of all owners and primary users of the electronic software, hardware, or computer application on which the tracking software or spyware will be installed has been sought and obtained through a mechanism that does not seek to obtain any other approvals or acknowledgement from the owners and primary users.

(a-5) A person commits cyberstalking when he or she, knowingly and without lawful justification, creates and maintains an Internet website or webpage which is accessible to one or more third parties for a period of at least 24 hours, and which contains statements harassing another person and:

(1) which communicates a threat of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint, where the threat is directed towards that person or a family member of that person, or

(2) which places that person or a family member of that person in reasonable apprehension of immediate or future bodily harm, sexual assault, confinement, or restraint, or

(3) which knowingly solicits the commission of an act by any person which would be a violation of this Code

directed towards that person or a family member of that person.

(b) Sentence. Cyberstalking is a Class 4 felony; a second or subsequent conviction is a Class 3 felony.

(c) For purposes of this Section:

(0.5) "Anxiety" means excessive worry and apprehensive expectations, occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities, such as work or school performance and is associated with 3 or more of the following 6 symptoms with at least some symptoms present for more days than not for the past 6 months:

(1) restlessness or feeling keyed up or on edge;

(2) easily fatigued;

(3) difficulty concentrating or mind going blank;

(4) irritability;

(5) muscle tension; and

(6) sleep disturbance such as difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless and unsatisfying sleep.

The anxiety, worry, or physical symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

(1) "Course of conduct" means 2 or more acts, including but not limited to acts in which a defendant directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means follows, monitors,

observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, engages in other non-consensual contact, or interferes with or damages a person's property or pet. The incarceration in a penal institution of a person who commits the course of conduct is not a bar to prosecution under this Section.

(2) "Electronic communication" means any transfer of signs, signals, writings, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectric, or photo-optical system. "Electronic communication" includes transmissions through an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager, which communication includes, but is not limited to, e-mail, instant message, text message, or voice mail.

(2.1) "Electronic communication device" means an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a wireless telephone, personal digital assistant, or a portable or mobile computer.

(2.2) "Electronic monitoring software or spyware" means software or an application that surreptitiously tracks computer activity on a device and records and transmits the information to third parties with the intent to cause injury or harm. For the purposes of this paragraph (2.2), "intent to cause injury or harm" does not include activities carried out in furtherance of the

prevention of fraud or crime or of protecting the security of networks, online services, applications, software, other computer programs, users, or electronic communication devices or similar devices.

(3) "Emotional distress" means significant mental suffering, anxiety or alarm.

(4) "Harass" means to engage in a knowing and willful course of conduct directed at a specific person that alarms, torments, or terrorizes that person.

(5) "Non-consensual contact" means any contact with the victim that is initiated or continued without the victim's consent, including but not limited to being in the physical presence of the victim; appearing within the sight of the victim; approaching or confronting the victim in a public place or on private property; appearing at the workplace or residence of the victim; entering onto or remaining on property owned, leased, or occupied by the victim; or placing an object on, or delivering an object to, property owned, leased, or occupied by the victim.

(6) "Reasonable person" means a person in the victim's circumstances, with the victim's knowledge of the defendant and the defendant's prior acts.

(7) "Third party" means any person other than the person violating these provisions and the person or persons towards whom the violator's actions are directed.

(d) Telecommunications carriers, commercial mobile service

providers, and providers of information services, including, but not limited to, Internet service providers and hosting service providers, are not liable under this Section, except for willful and wanton misconduct, by virtue of the transmission, storage, or caching of electronic communications or messages of others or by virtue of the provision of other related telecommunications, commercial mobile services, or information services used by others in violation of this Section.

(e) A defendant who directed the actions of a third party to violate this Section, under the principles of accountability set forth in Article 5 of this Code, is guilty of violating this Section as if the same had been personally done by the defendant, without regard to the mental state of the third party acting at the direction of the defendant.

(f) It is not a violation of this Section to:

(1) provide, protect, maintain, update, or upgrade networks, online services, applications, software, other computer programs, electronic communication devices, or similar devices under the terms of use applicable to those networks, services, applications, software, programs, or devices;

(2) interfere with or prohibit terms or conditions in a contract or license related to networks, online services, applications, software, other computer programs, electronic communication devices, or similar devices; or

(3) create any liability by reason of terms or conditions adopted, or technical measures implemented, to prevent the transmission of unsolicited electronic mail or communications.

(Source: P.A. 100-166, eff. 1-1-18.)