

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

H. B. No. 20

Representatives Hall, T., Plummer

A BILL

To amend section 2903.22 and to enact section 1
2927.31 of the Revised Code to prohibit a person 2
from knowingly harassing or impeding an 3
emergency service responder who is engaged in 4
the lawful performance of a legal duty and to 5
clarify that heightened penalties apply for 6
menacing a probation officer. 7

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 2903.22 be amended and section 8
2927.31 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows: 9

Sec. 2903.22. (A) (1) No person shall knowingly cause 10
another to believe that the offender will cause physical harm to 11
the person or property of the other person, the other person's 12
unborn, or a member of the other person's immediate family. In 13
addition to any other basis for the other person's belief that 14
the offender will cause physical harm to the person or property 15
of the other person, the other person's unborn, or a member of 16
the other person's immediate family, the other person's belief 17
may be based on words or conduct of the offender that are 18
directed at or identify a corporation, association, or other 19

organization that employs the other person or to which the other 20
person belongs. 21

(2) No person shall knowingly place or attempt to place 22
another in reasonable fear of physical harm or death by 23
displaying a deadly weapon, regardless of whether the deadly 24
weapon displayed is operable or inoperable, if either of the 25
following applies: 26

(a) The other person is an emergency service responder, 27
the person knows or reasonably should know that the other person 28
is an emergency service responder, and it is the person's 29
specific purpose to engage in the specified conduct against an 30
emergency service responder. 31

(b) The other person is a family or household member or 32
co-worker of an emergency service responder, the person knows or 33
reasonably should know that the other person is a family or 34
household member or co-worker of an emergency service responder, 35
and it is the person's specific purpose to engage in the 36
specified conduct against a family or household member or co- 37
worker of an emergency service responder. 38

(B) Whoever violates this section is guilty of menacing. 39

Except as otherwise provided in this division, menacing is 40
a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. If the victim of the offense 41
is an officer or employee of a public children services agency 42
or a private child placing agency and the offense relates to the 43
officer's or employee's performance or anticipated performance 44
of official responsibilities or duties or if the victim of the 45
offense is an emergency service responder in the performance of 46
the responder's official duties, menacing is one of the 47
following: 48

(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (B) (2) of 49
this section, a misdemeanor of the first degree; 50

(2) If the offender previously has been convicted of or 51
pleaded guilty to an offense of violence, the victim of that 52
prior offense was an officer or employee of a public children 53
services agency or private child placing agency or an emergency 54
service responder, and that prior offense related to the 55
officer's or employee's performance or anticipated performance 56
of official responsibilities or duties or to the responder's 57
performance of the responder's official duties, a felony of the 58
fourth degree. 59

(C) A prosecution for a violation of this section does not 60
preclude a prosecution of a violation of any other section of 61
the Revised Code. One or more acts, a series of acts, or a 62
course of behavior that can be prosecuted under this section or 63
any other section of the Revised Code may be prosecuted under 64
this section, the other section of the Revised Code, or both 65
sections. However, if an offender is convicted of or pleads 66
guilty to a violation of this section and also is convicted of 67
or pleads guilty to a violation of section 2903.13 of the 68
Revised Code based on the same conduct involving the same victim 69
that was the basis of the violation of this section, the two 70
offenses are allied offenses of similar import under section 71
2941.25 of the Revised Code. 72

(D) As used in this section: 73

(1) "Emergency service responder," "family has the same 74
meaning as in section 2903.13 of the Revised Code and also 75
includes a probation officer. 76

(2) "Family or household member," and "co-worker" have the 77

same meanings as in section 2903.13 of the Revised Code. 78

~~(2)~~(3) "Organization" includes an entity that is a 79
governmental employer. 80

(4) "Probation officer" means a probation officer 81
appointed by a municipal court under section 1901.33 of the 82
Revised Code, a probation officer appointed by a county court 83
under section 1907.201 of the Revised Code, and a probation 84
officer appointed by a court of common pleas under section 85
2301.27 of the Revised Code. 86

Sec. 2927.31. (A) As used in this section: 87

(1) "Emergency service responder" has the same meaning as 88
in section 2903.22 of the Revised Code. 89

(2) "Harass" means either of the following: 90

(a) To engage in a course of conduct to which all of the 91
following apply: 92

(i) It is directed at an emergency service responder. 93

(ii) It causes substantial emotional distress to the 94
emergency service responder. 95

(iii) It interferes with the emergency service responder 96
lawfully performing a legal duty. 97

(b) To interrupt, disrupt, hinder, impede, or interfere 98
with an emergency service responder's ability to lawfully 99
perform a legal duty. 100

(B) No person shall knowingly harass an emergency service 101
responder who is engaged in the lawful performance of a legal 102
duty when both of the following circumstances apply: 103

(1) The person received a warning from the emergency 104

service responder not to approach. 105

(2) The person approached or remained within fourteen feet 106
of the emergency service responder after receipt of the warning 107
under division (B) (1) of this section. 108

(C) Whoever violates division (B) of this section is 109
guilty of harassing an emergency service responder. Harassing an 110
emergency service responder is a misdemeanor of the first 111
degree. 112

Section 2. That existing section 2903.22 of the Revised 113
Code is hereby repealed. 114