

PENAL CODE

TITLE 10. OFFENSES AGAINST PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND MORALS

CHAPTER 47. GAMBLING

Sec. 47.01. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Bet" means an agreement to win or lose something of value solely or partially by chance. A bet does not include:

(A) contracts of indemnity or guaranty, or life, health, property, or accident insurance;

(B) an offer of a prize, award, or compensation to the actual contestants in a bona fide contest for the determination of skill, speed, strength, or endurance or to the owners of animals, vehicles, watercraft, or aircraft entered in a contest; or

(C) an offer of merchandise, with a value not greater than \$25, made by the proprietor of a bona fide carnival contest conducted at a carnival sponsored by a nonprofit religious, fraternal, school, law enforcement, youth, agricultural, or civic group, including any nonprofit agricultural or civic group incorporated by the state before 1955, if the person to receive the merchandise from the proprietor is the person who performs the carnival contest.

(2) "Bookmaking" means:

(A) to receive and record or to forward more than five bets or offers to bet in a period of 24 hours;

(B) to receive and record or to forward bets or offers to bet totaling more than \$1,000 in a period of 24 hours; or

(C) a scheme by three or more persons to receive, record, or forward a bet or an offer to bet.

(3) "Gambling place" means any real estate, building, room, tent, vehicle, boat, or other property whatsoever, one of the uses of which is the making or settling of bets, bookmaking, or the conducting of a lottery or the playing of gambling devices.

(4) "Gambling device" means any electronic, electromechanical, or mechanical contrivance not excluded under Paragraph (B) that for a consideration affords the player an opportunity to obtain anything of value, the award of which is

determined solely or partially by chance, even though accompanied by some skill, whether or not the prize is automatically paid by the contrivance. The term:

(A) includes, but is not limited to, gambling device versions of bingo, keno, blackjack, lottery, roulette, video poker, or similar electronic, electromechanical, or mechanical games, or facsimiles thereof, that operate by chance or partially so, that as a result of the play or operation of the game award credits or free games, and that record the number of free games or credits so awarded and the cancellation or removal of the free games or credits; and

(B) does not include any electronic, electromechanical, or mechanical contrivance designed, made, and adapted solely for bona fide amusement purposes if the contrivance rewards the player exclusively with noncash merchandise prizes, toys, or novelties, or a representation of value redeemable for those items, that have a wholesale value available from a single play of the game or device of not more than 10 times the amount charged to play the game or device once or \$5, whichever is less.

(5) "Altered gambling equipment" means any contrivance that has been altered in some manner, including, but not limited to, shaved dice, loaded dice, magnetic dice, mirror rings, electronic sensors, shaved cards, marked cards, and any other equipment altered or designed to enhance the actor's chances of winning.

(6) "Gambling paraphernalia" means any book, instrument, or apparatus by means of which bets have been or may be recorded or registered; any record, ticket, certificate, bill, slip, token, writing, scratch sheet, or other means of carrying on bookmaking, wagering pools, lotteries, numbers, policy, or similar games.

(7) "Lottery" means any scheme or procedure whereby one or more prizes are distributed by chance among persons who have paid or promised consideration for a chance to win anything of value, whether such scheme or procedure is called a pool, lottery, raffle, gift, gift enterprise, sale, policy game, or some other name.

(8) "Private place" means a place to which the public does not have access, and excludes, among other places, streets, highways, restaurants, taverns, nightclubs, schools, hospitals, and the common areas of apartment houses, hotels, motels, office buildings, transportation facilities, and shops.

(9) "Thing of value" means any benefit, but does not include an unrecorded and immediate right of replay not exchangeable for value.

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 313, Sec. 1, 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 1989; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 774, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 318, Sec. 19, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 47.02. GAMBLING. (a) A person commits an offense if he:

(1) makes a bet on the partial or final result of a game or contest or on the performance of a participant in a game or contest;

(2) makes a bet on the result of any political nomination, appointment, or election or on the degree of success of any nominee, appointee, or candidate; or

(3) plays and bets for money or other thing of value at any game played with cards, dice, balls, or any other gambling device.

(b) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that:

(1) the actor engaged in gambling in a private place;

(2) no person received any economic benefit other than personal winnings; and

(3) except for the advantage of skill or luck, the risks of losing and the chances of winning were the same for all participants.

(c) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that the actor reasonably believed that the conduct:

(1) was permitted under Chapter 2001, Occupations Code;

(2) was permitted under Chapter 2002, Occupations Code;

(3) was permitted under Chapter 2004, Occupations Code;

(4) consisted entirely of participation in the state lottery authorized by the State Lottery Act (Chapter 466, Government Code);

(5) was permitted under Subtitle A-1, Title 13, Occupations Code (Texas Racing Act); or

(6) consisted entirely of participation in a drawing for the opportunity to participate in a hunting, fishing, or other recreational event conducted by the Parks and Wildlife Department.

(d) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

(e) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that a person played for something of value other than money using an electronic, electromechanical, or mechanical contrivance excluded from the definition of "gambling device" under Section 47.01(4)(B). Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1981, 67th Leg., 1st C.S., p. 101, ch. 11, Sec. 43, eff. Nov. 10, 1981; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 957, Sec. 2, eff. Jan. 1, 1990; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., 1st C.S., ch. 6, Sec. 3; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 107, Sec. 4.04, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 774, Sec. 2, eff. Aug. 30, 1993. Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 76, Sec. 14.53, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 318, Sec. 20, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 931, Sec. 79, eff. June 16, 1995; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1256, Sec. 124, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.834, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 47 (H.B. 975), Sec. 2, eff. January 1, 2016.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 963 (S.B. 1969), Sec. 2.08, eff. April 1, 2019.

Sec. 47.03. GAMBLING PROMOTION. (a) A person commits an offense if he intentionally or knowingly does any of the following

acts:

(1) operates or participates in the earnings of a gambling place;

(2) engages in bookmaking;

(3) for gain, becomes a custodian of anything of value bet or offered to be bet;

(4) sells chances on the partial or final result of or on the margin of victory in any game or contest or on the performance of any participant in any game or contest or on the result of any political nomination, appointment, or election or on the degree of success of any nominee, appointee, or candidate; or

(5) for gain, sets up or promotes any lottery or sells or offers to sell or knowingly possesses for transfer, or transfers any card, stub, ticket, check, or other device designed to serve as evidence of participation in any lottery.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor. Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 313, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Sec. 47.04. KEEPING A GAMBLING PLACE. (a) A person commits an offense if he knowingly uses or permits another to use as a gambling place any real estate, building, room, tent, vehicle, boat, or other property whatsoever owned by him or under his control, or rents or lets any such property with a view or expectation that it be so used.

(b) It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under this section that:

(1) the gambling occurred in a private place;

(2) no person received any economic benefit other than personal winnings; and

(3) except for the advantage of skill or luck, the risks of losing and the chances of winning were the same for all participants.

(c) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor. Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1977, 65th Leg., p. 667, ch. 251, Sec. 1, eff. Aug.

29, 1977. Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1030, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1989. Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Sec. 47.05. COMMUNICATING GAMBLING INFORMATION. (a) A person commits an offense if, with the intent to further gambling, he knowingly communicates information as to bets, betting odds, or changes in betting odds or he knowingly provides, installs, or maintains equipment for the transmission or receipt of such information.

(b) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (a) that the information communicated is intended for use in placing a lawful wager under Chapter 2027, Occupations Code, and is not communicated in violation of Section 2033.013, Occupations Code.

(c) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor. Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Amended by:

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 963 (S.B. 1969), Sec. 2.09, eff. April 1, 2019.

Sec. 47.06. POSSESSION OF GAMBLING DEVICE, EQUIPMENT, OR PARAPHERNALIA. (a) A person commits an offense if, with the intent to further gambling, he knowingly owns, manufactures, transfers, or possesses any gambling device that he knows is designed for gambling purposes or any equipment that he knows is designed as a subassembly or essential part of a gambling device.

(b) A person commits an offense if, with the intent to further gambling, he knowingly owns, manufactures, transfers commercially, or possesses any altered gambling equipment that he knows is designed for gambling purposes or any equipment that he knows is designed as a subassembly or essential part of such device.

(c) A person commits an offense if, with the intent to further gambling, the person knowingly owns, manufactures, transfers commercially, or possesses gambling paraphernalia.

(d) It is a defense to prosecution under Subsections (a) and (c) that:

(1) the device, equipment, or paraphernalia is used for or is intended for use in gambling that is to occur entirely in a private place;

(2) a person involved in the gambling does not receive any economic benefit other than personal winnings; and

(3) except for the advantage of skill or luck, the chance of winning is the same for all participants.

(e) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(f) It is a defense to prosecution under Subsection (a) or (c) that the person owned, manufactured, transferred, or possessed the gambling device, equipment, or paraphernalia for the sole purpose of shipping it to another jurisdiction where the possession or use of the device, equipment, or paraphernalia was legal.

(g) A district or county attorney is not required to have a search warrant or subpoena to inspect a gambling device or gambling equipment or paraphernalia on an ocean-going vessel that enters the territorial waters of this state to call at a port in this state.

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1977, 65th Leg., p. 668, ch. 251, Sec. 2, eff. Aug. 29, 1977; Acts 1977, 65th Leg., p. 1865, ch. 741, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 29, 1977; Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 167, Sec. 5.01(a)(48), eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 458, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1030, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 44, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 26, 1991; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 315, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1991; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., 1st C.S., ch. 6, Sec. 4; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 107, Sec. 4.05, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 284, Sec. 30, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Sec. 47.07. EVIDENCE. In any prosecution under this chapter in which it is relevant to prove the occurrence of a sporting event, a published report of its occurrence in a daily newspaper, magazine, or other periodically printed publication of general circulation shall be admissible in evidence and is prima facie evidence that the event occurred.

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974.

Renumbered from Penal Code Sec. 47.08 and amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Sec. 47.08. TESTIMONIAL IMMUNITY. (a) A party to an offense under this chapter may be required to furnish evidence or testify about the offense.

(b) A party to an offense under this chapter may not be prosecuted for any offense about which he is required to furnish 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.

(c) For purposes of this section, "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.

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

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 883, ch. 399, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974.  
Renumbered from Penal Code Sec. 47.09 by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Sec. 47.09. OTHER DEFENSES.

(a) It is a defense to prosecution under this chapter that the conduct:

(1) was authorized under:

(A) Chapter 2001, Occupations Code;

(B) Chapter 2002, Occupations Code;

(C) Chapter 2004, Occupations Code;

(D) Subtitle A-1, Title 13, Occupations Code

(Texas Racing Act); or

(E) Chapter 280, Finance Code;

(2) consisted entirely of participation in the state lottery authorized by Chapter 466, Government Code; or

(3) was a necessary incident to the operation of the state lottery and was directly or indirectly authorized by:

(A) Chapter 466, Government Code;

(B) the lottery division of the Texas Lottery



Commission;

(C) the Texas Lottery Commission; or

(D) the director of the lottery division of the Texas Lottery Commission.

(b) It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under Sections 47.04, 47.06(a), and 47.06(c) that the gambling device, equipment, or paraphernalia is aboard an ocean-going vessel that enters the territorial waters of this state to call at a port in this state if:

(1) before the vessel enters the territorial waters of this state, the district attorney or, if there is no district attorney, the county attorney for the county in which the port is located receives notice of the existence of the device, equipment, or paraphernalia on board the vessel and of the anticipated dates on which the vessel will enter and leave the territorial waters of this state;

(2) at all times while the vessel is in the territorial waters of this state all devices, equipment, or paraphernalia are disabled, electronically or by another method, from a remote and secured area of the vessel in a manner that allows only the master or crew of the vessel to remove any disabling device;

(3) at all times while the vessel is in the territorial waters of this state any disabling device is not removed except for the purposes of inspecting or repairing the device, equipment, or paraphernalia; and

(4) the device, equipment, or paraphernalia is not used for gambling or other gaming purposes while the vessel is in the territorial waters of this state.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 76, Sec. 14.54, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 111, Sec. 1, eff. May 16, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1035, Sec. 55, eff. June 19, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 844, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.835, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 47 (H.B. 975), Sec. 3, eff. January 1, 2016.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 963 (S.B. 1969), Sec. 2.10, eff. April 1, 2019.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 978 (H.B. 471), Sec. 5, eff. November 7, 2017.

Sec. 47.10. AMERICAN DOCUMENTATION OF VESSEL REQUIRED. If 18 U.S.C. Section 1082 is repealed, the affirmative defenses provided by Section 47.09(b) apply only if the vessel is documented under the laws of the United States.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1030, Sec. 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1989. Renumbered from Penal Code Sec. 47.12 by Acts 1990, 71st Leg., 6th C.S., ch. 12, Sec. 2(27), eff. Sept. 6, 1990. Renumbered from Penal Code Sec. 47.13 and amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, Sec. 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Sec. 47.11. DEPOSITS IN CERTAIN ACCOUNTS NOT CONSIDERATION. For purposes of this chapter, opening or making a deposit in a savings account or other savings program subject to a savings promotion raffle under Chapter 280, Finance Code, does not constitute consideration.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 978 (H.B. 471), Sec. 6, eff. November 7, 2017.