

Act No. 313
Public Acts of 1998
Approved by the Governor
July 28, 1998
Filed with the Secretary of State
July 30, 1998
EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 1999

STATE OF MICHIGAN
89TH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 1998

Introduced by Reps. Profit, Nye, Curtis, Dalman, Green, Kukuk and Walberg

ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 4446

AN ACT to amend 1961 PA 236, entitled "An act to revise and consolidate the statutes relating to the organization and jurisdiction of the courts of this state; the powers and duties of such courts, and of the judges and other officers thereof; the forms and attributes of civil claims and actions; the time within which civil actions and proceedings may be brought in said courts; pleading, evidence, practice and procedure in civil and criminal actions and proceedings in said courts; to provide remedies and penalties for the violation of certain provisions of this act; and to repeal all acts and parts of acts inconsistent with, or contravening any of the provisions of this act," by amending sections 822, 2952, and 2953 (MCL 600.822, 600.2952, and 600.2953), section 822 as amended by 1996 PA 374, section 2952 as added by 1984 PA 276, and section 2953 as added by 1988 PA 50.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 822. (1) The probate judge of a county having a population of less than 15,000 according to the 1990 federal decennial census and comprising part of a proposed probate court district in which the electors of 1 or more counties of the probate court district did not approve the probate court district shall receive an annual salary of \$20,000.00. Six thousand dollars of the minimum annual salary provided by this subsection shall be paid by the county and the balance of the minimum annual salary shall be paid by the state as a grant to the county. The county shall, in turn, pay that amount to the probate judge.

(2) The annual salary provided in subsection (1) may be increased but shall not be decreased during the term for which the probate judge has been elected or appointed. This salary is in full compensation for all services performed by the person as probate judge, except as otherwise provided by law. A probate judge whose annual salary is provided in subsection (1) shall not represent a party in a contested proceeding in the probate court of this state.

(3) In addition to the salary provided in subsection (1), a probate judge may receive from the county in which he or she regularly holds court an additional salary of not more than \$43,000.00, as determined by the county board of commissioners. The additional salary may be increased during a term of office but shall not be decreased except to the extent of a general salary reduction in all other branches of government in the county.

(4) The total annual salary of a probate judge, including the salary provided in subsection (1) and any additional salary granted by the county under subsection (3), shall not exceed \$63,000.00.

(5) From funds appropriated to the judiciary, the state shall pay to a county described in subsection (1) a state salary standardization payment of \$5,750.00 for each probate judge and an additional payment of \$6,000.00 for each probate judge to offset the portion of minimum annual salary paid by the county.

Sec. 2952. (1) In addition to applicable penal sanctions, a person who makes, draws, utters, or delivers a check, draft, or order for payment of money upon a bank or other depository, person, firm, or corporation that refuses to honor the check, draft, or order for lack of funds or credit to pay or because the maker has no account with the drawee is liable for the amount of the dishonored check, draft, or order, plus a processing fee, civil damages, and costs, as provided in this section.

(2) A payee or an agent of a payee may make a written demand for payment of a check, draft, or order of the type specified in subsection (1), which demand may be delivered to the maker by first-class mail. The text of the written demand shall be as follows:

“A check, draft, or order for payment of money drawn by you for \$_____ was returned to me/us/our client (client's name) dishonored for:

☐ Insufficient funds

☐ No account

This notice is a formal demand for payment of the full amount of the dishonored check, draft, or order plus a processing fee of \$25.00 for a total amount of \$_____. If you pay this total amount within 7 days, excluding weekends and holidays, after the date this notice was mailed, no further civil action will be taken against you.

If you do not pay the \$_____ as requested above, but within 30 days after the date this notice was mailed you pay the amount of the dishonored check, draft, or order plus a \$35.00 processing fee, for a total amount of \$_____, no further civil action will be taken against you.

If you fail to pay either amount indicated above, I/we/our client will be authorized by state law to bring a civil action against you to determine your legal responsibility for payment of the check, draft, or order and civil damages and costs allowed by law.

If you dispute the dishonoring of this check, draft, or order, you should also contact your bank or financial institution immediately.”.

(3) The maker of a dishonored check, draft, or order for payment of money is liable to the payee as provided in subsection (4) if the maker fails to pay 1 of the following in cash to the payee or a designated agent of the payee after the mailing of a written demand for payment pursuant to subsection (2):

(a) Within 7 days, excluding weekends and holidays, after the date the written demand provided in subsection (2) is mailed, the full amount of the dishonored check, draft, or order, plus a processing fee of \$25.00.

(b) Within 30 days after the date of the mailing of the notice provided in subsection (2), the full amount of the dishonored check, draft, or order, plus a processing fee of \$35.00.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (5), a maker who fails to make payment pursuant to subsection (3) and who is found responsible for payment in a civil action is liable to the payee for payment of all of the following:

(a) The full amount of the check, draft, or order.

(b) Civil damages of 2 times the amount of the dishonored check, draft, or order or \$100.00, whichever is greater.

(c) Costs of \$250.00.

(5) Subsection (4) does not apply if, before the trial of an action brought pursuant to this section, the maker pays to the payee or a designated agent of the payee, in cash, the total of the amounts described in subsection (3)(b), plus reasonable costs, not exceeding \$250.00, as agreed to by the parties.

(6) An action under this section may be brought in the small claims division of the district court, if it does not exceed the jurisdiction of the small claims division, or in any other appropriate court. If the amount of the check exceeds the jurisdiction of the small claims division, the action may still be brought in the small claims division, but the amount of damages awarded shall not exceed the jurisdiction of the small claims division.

Sec. 2953. (1) In addition to applicable penal sanctions, a person who commits an act for which he or she could be charged with retail fraud in the first, second, or third degree under sections 356c and 356d of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.356c and 750.356d, is liable to the merchant who is the victim of the act for the full retail price of unrecovered property or recovered property that is not in salable condition, and civil damages of 10 times the retail price of the property, but not less than \$50.00 and not more than \$200.00.

(2) The merchant who is the victim of retail fraud in the first, second, or third degree, or an agent of the merchant, may make a written demand for payment of the amount for which the person who committed the act is liable under subsection (1). Except for a sole proprietorship, a member of management, other than the initial detaining person, shall

evaluate the validity of the accusation that the person committed the act and shall approve the accusation in writing before a written demand for payment is issued. The demand for payment may be delivered to the person from whom payment is demanded by first-class mail. The text of the written demand shall be as follows:

“We have cause to believe that on (date) you, or your minor child (child's name), committed retail fraud in the first, second, or third degree by (description of action and property involved) in our store or in its immediate vicinity.

State law authorizes us to demand in writing that you do all of the following, as applicable:

☐ Return the property in salable condition or pay to us \$_____, which represents the full retail price or the remaining balance of the full retail price of the property.

☐ Pay to us \$_____, which represents the full retail price of the recovered property that is not in salable condition.

☐ Pay to us civil damages in an amount equal to 10 times the retail price of the property involved, but not less than \$50.00 or more than \$200.00, equaling a total amount of \$_____.

This notice is a formal demand for return of the property involved, if applicable, and the payment of the amounts indicated above, equaling a total amount of \$_____. If you return any unrecovered property and pay the amounts indicated above to us within 30 days after the date this notice was mailed, we will not take any further civil action against you.

You are not required to respond to this demand if you believe that you or your minor child are not guilty of committing retail fraud or if you choose not to respond. If you fail to comply with this demand, we will be authorized by state law to bring a civil action against you to determine your legal responsibility for the return of any unrecovered property and the payment of the amounts indicated above plus the cost of the action, including reasonable attorney fees.

These civil proceedings do not prevent criminal prosecution for the alleged act of retail fraud.”.

(3) If the person to whom a written demand is made under subsection (2) complies with the written demand within 30 days after the date the written demand is mailed, that person shall incur no further civil liability to the merchant from the act of retail fraud.

(4) A person who commits an act described in subsection (1) and who fails to comply with a written demand under subsection (2) is liable to the merchant for the full retail price of the property, unless the property was recovered in salable condition, plus civil damages of 10 times the retail price of the property but not less than \$50.00 or more than \$200.00, and costs of the action, including reasonable attorney fees.

(5) If a civil action is filed pursuant to this section and before the trial of the action is commenced the person to whom a written demand was made under subsection (2) pays the merchant in cash the amount demanded, subsection (4) does not apply.

(6) An action under this section may be brought in the small claims division of the district court or in any other court of competent jurisdiction. If the amount demanded exceeds the jurisdiction of the small claims division, the action may still be brought in the small claims division, but the amount recovered shall not exceed the jurisdiction of the small claims division.

(7) A merchant may recover damages in an amount allowable under this section in a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction against the parent or parents of an unemancipated minor who lives with his or her parent or parents and who commits an act described in subsection (1).

(8) A merchant may recover the amount for which a person is civilly liable under this section only if a formal police report is filed with a local law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over the location where the violation took place, which report sets forth facts alleging that the person has committed retail fraud in the first, second, or third degree or violated a local ordinance substantially corresponding to section 218, 356, 356c, or 356d of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.218, 750.356, 750.356c, and 750.356d, regardless of the outcome of any criminal action.

(9) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a merchant shall not recover civil damages for an act of retail fraud in the first, second, or third degree with regard to a particular item of property if the merchant violated section 3 of 1976 PA 449, MCL 445.353, with regard to that item of property and the violation was not caused by the person who committed the act of retail fraud.

Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect January 1, 1999.

Enacting section 2. This amendatory act does not take effect unless all of the following bills of the 89th Legislature are enacted into law:

(a) House Bill No. 4444.

(b) House Bill No. 4445.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Clerk of the House of Representatives.



Secretary of the Senate.

Approved -----

Governor.