

REVISED JUDICATURE ACT OF 1961 (EXCERPT)
Act 236 of 1961

CHAPTER 17
CONTEMPTS

600.1701 Neglect or violation of duty or misconduct; power to punish by fine or imprisonment.

Sec. 1701. The supreme court, circuit court, and all other courts of record, have power to punish by fine or imprisonment, or both, persons guilty of any neglect or violation of duty or misconduct in all of the following cases:

(a) Disorderly, contemptuous, or insolent behavior, committed during its sitting, in its immediate view and presence, and directly tending to interrupt its proceedings or impair the respect due to its authority.

(b) Any breach of the peace, noise, or disturbance directly tending to interrupt its proceedings.

(c) All attorneys, counselors, clerks, registers, sheriffs, coroners, and all other persons in any manner elected or appointed to perform any judicial or ministerial services, for any misbehavior in their office or trust, or for any willful neglect or violation of duty, for disobedience of any process of the court, or any lawful order of the court, or any lawful order of a judge of the court or of any officer authorized to perform the duties of the judge.

(d) Parties to actions for putting in fictitious bail or sureties or for any deceit or abuse of the process or proceedings of the court.

(e) Parties to actions, attorneys, counselors, and all other persons for the nonpayment of any sum of money which the court has ordered to be paid.

(f) Parties to actions, attorneys, counselors, and all other persons for disobeying or refusing to comply with any order of the court for the payment of temporary or permanent alimony or support money or costs made in any action for divorce or separate maintenance.

(g) Parties to actions, attorneys, counselors, and all other persons for disobeying any lawful order, decree, or process of the court.

(h) All persons for assuming to be and acting as officers, attorneys, or counselors of any court without authority; for rescuing any property or persons that are in the custody of an officer by virtue of process issued from that court; for unlawfully detaining any witness or party to an action while he or she is going to, remaining at, or returning from the court where the action is pending for trial, or for any other unlawful interference with or resistance to the process or proceedings in any action.

(i) All persons who, having been subpoenaed to appear before or attend, refuse or neglect to obey the subpoena, to attend, to be sworn, or when sworn, to answer any legal and proper interrogatory in any of the following circumstances:

(i) As a witness in any court in this state.

(ii) Any officer of a court of record who is empowered to receive evidence.

(iii) Any commissioner appointed by any court of record to take testimony.

(iv) Any referees or auditors appointed according to the law to hear any cause or matter.

(v) Any notary public or other person before whom any affidavit or deposition is to be taken.

(j) Persons summoned as jurors in any court, for improperly conversing with any party to an action which is to be tried in that court, or with any other person in regard to merits of the action, or for receiving communications from any party to the action or any other person in relation to the merits of the action without immediately disclosing the communications to the court.

(k) All inferior magistrates, officers, and tribunals for disobedience of any lawful order or process of a superior court, or for proceeding in any cause or matter contrary to law after the cause or matter has been removed from their jurisdiction.

(l) The publication of a false or grossly inaccurate report of the court's proceedings, but a court shall not punish as a contempt the publication of true, full, and fair reports of any trial, argument, proceedings, or decision had in the court.

(m) All other cases where attachments and proceedings as for contempts have been usually adopted and practiced in courts of record to enforce the civil remedies of any parties or to protect the rights of any party.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963;—Am. 1987, Act 99, Imd. Eff. July 6, 1987;—Am. 2005, Act 326, Imd. Eff. Dec. 27, 2005.

600.1711 Summary punishment; hearing.

Sec. 1711. (1) When any contempt is committed in the immediate view and presence of the court, the court may punish it summarily by fine, or imprisonment, or both.

(2) When any contempt is committed other than in the immediate view and presence of the court, the court may punish it by fine or imprisonment, or both, after proof of the facts charged has been made by affidavit or other method and opportunity has been given to defend.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.

600.1715 Contempt; punishment; fine; probation; performance of act or duty.

Sec. 1715. (1) Except as otherwise provided by law, punishment for contempt may be a fine of not more than \$7,500.00, or imprisonment which, except in those cases where the commitment is for the omission to perform an act or duty which is still within the power of the person to perform shall not exceed 93 days, or both, in the discretion of the court. The court may place an individual who is guilty of criminal contempt on probation in the manner provided for persons guilty of a misdemeanor as provided in chapter XI of the code of criminal procedure, 1927 PA 175, MCL 771.1 to 771.14a.

(2) If the contempt consists of the omission to perform some act or duty that is still within the power of the person to perform, the imprisonment shall be terminated when the person performs the act or duty or no longer has the power to perform the act or duty, which shall be specified in the order of commitment, and pays the fine, costs, and expenses of the proceedings, which shall be specified in the order of commitment.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963;—Am. 1983, Act 228, Imd. Eff. Nov. 28, 1983;—Am. 2006, Act 544, Eff. Mar. 30, 2007.

600.1721 Payment of damages; effect.

Sec. 1721. If the alleged misconduct has caused an actual loss or injury to any person the court shall order the defendant to pay such person a sufficient sum to indemnify him, in addition to the other penalties which are imposed upon the defendant. The payment and acceptance of this sum is an absolute bar to any action by the aggrieved party to recover damages for the loss or injury.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.

600.1725 Witnesses; refusal to testify; penalty.

Sec. 1725. If any witness attending pursuant to a subpoena, or brought before any court, judge, officer, commissioner, or before any person before whom depositions may be taken, refuses without reasonable cause

(1) to be examined, or

(2) to answer any legal and pertinent question, or

(3) to subscribe his deposition after it has been reduced to writing, the officer issuing the subpoena shall commit him, by warrant, to the common jail of the county in which he resides. He shall remain there until he submits to be examined, or to answer, or to subscribe his deposition, as the case may be, or until he is discharged according to law.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.

600.1731 Publication as to court of record; hearing by judge of another court.

Sec. 1731. In proceedings for contempt arising out of the publication of any news, information, or comment concerning a court of record, except the supreme court, or any judge of that court the defendant has the right to have the proceedings heard by the judge of another court of record.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.

600.1735 Arrest on bench warrant; duties of sheriff.

Sec. 1735. Upon arresting any defendant, on a bench warrant, to answer for any alleged misconduct, the sheriff shall keep such person in his actual custody, and shall bring him personally before the court issuing the warrant, and shall keep and detain him in his custody, until such court orders otherwise, or until the defendant is entitled to be discharged on bond.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.

600.1741 Arrest on bench warrant; illness of arrested person.

Sec. 1741. Whenever an officer is required to keep any person arrested upon a bench warrant in actual custody, and to bring him personally before any court, the inability, from sickness or otherwise, of such person to attend such court personally, is a sufficient excuse for not bringing him before such court.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.

600.1745 Indictment for contemptuous conduct; sentence.

Sec. 1745. Persons proceeded against according to the provisions of this chapter, shall also be liable to indictment for the same misconduct, if it be an indictable offense; but the court before which a conviction shall be had on such indictment shall take into consideration the punishment before inflicted, in imposing

sentence.

History: 1961, Act 236, Eff. Jan. 1, 1963.