STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

A N A C T
RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS - 911 EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Lombardi, Hull, Walsh, and Lyle
Date Introduced: January 09, 2020
Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 39-21.1-16 of the General Laws in Chapter 39-21.1 entitled "911 Emergency Telephone Number Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:


(a) No person shall call or otherwise cause the number nine-one-one (911) to be called for the purpose of knowingly making a false alarm or complaint or reporting false information which could result in the dispatch of emergency services from any public agency as defined in § 39-21.1-3(6) of this chapter. Any person violating the provisions of this section, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars ($1,000) or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or both.

(b) Any person who reports, or causes any report to be made, to any city, town, state department, district, agency, division, commission, or board, that an "emergency" exists, who knows that the report is false, and who knows or should know that the response to the report is likely to cause death or serious bodily injury, and serious bodily injury or death is sustained by any person as a result of the false report, is guilty of a felony, and upon conviction shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than sixteen (16) months, nor more than three (3) years, or by a fine of not more than ten thousand dollars ($10,000), or both.

(c) "Emergency" as used in this section means any condition that results in, or could result in, the response of a public official in an authorized emergency vehicle, aircraft, or vessel,
any condition that jeopardizes or could jeopardize public safety and results in, or could result in,

the evacuation of any area, building, structure, vehicle, or of any other place that any individual

may enter, or any situation that results in or could result in activation of the Rhode Island

America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response Plan (Amber Alert/Senior Citizen Alert)
pursuant to §§ 42-28-3.1 and 42-28-3.3. An activation or possible activation of the Rhode Island

America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response Plan (Amber Alert/Senior Citizen Alert)
pursuant to §§ 42-28-3.1 and 42-28-3.3 shall not constitute an "emergency" for purposes of this

section if it occurs as the result of a report made or caused to be made by a parent, guardian, or

lawful custodian of a child or senior citizen that is based on a good faith belief that the child or

the senior citizen are missing.

(d) Nothing in this section precludes punishment for the conduct described in subsection

(a) or (b) of this section under any other provision of the general law providing for greater

punishment for that conduct.

(e) Any individual convicted of violating this section, based upon a report that resulted in

an emergency response, is liable to the city, town, state department, district, agency, division,

commission, board or public agency for the reasonable costs of the emergency response by that

public agency.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.
EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
ACT
RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS - 911 EMERGENCY TELEPHONE
NUMBER ACT

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1. This act would make knowingly filing a false alarm or reporting false information using
the 911 emergency telephone number a felony when the individual knows the report is false and
knows or should know that the emergency response is likely to and does cause death or serious
bodily injury as a result of the report. This act would also make any individual convicted of filing
such a false alarm, resulting in an emergency response, liable to a public agency for the
reasonable costs of the emergency response.

2. This act would take effect upon passage.