

§17. Enforcement of civil violations

1. A law enforcement officer who has probable cause to believe that a civil violation has been committed by a person must issue or have delivered a written summons to that person directing the person to appear in the District Court to answer the allegation that the person has committed the violation. The summons must include the signature of the officer, a brief description of the alleged violation, the time and place of the alleged violation and the time, place and date the person is to appear in court. The form used must be the Violation Summons and Complaint, as prescribed in Title 29-A, section 2601, for traffic infractions and the Uniform Summons and Complaint for other civil violations. A person to whom a summons is issued or delivered must give a written promise to appear. If the person refuses to sign the summons after having been ordered to do so by a law enforcement officer, the person commits a Class E crime. The law enforcement officer may not order a person to sign the summons for a civil violation unless the civil violation is an offense defined in Title 12; Title 23, section 1980; Title 28-A, section 2052; or Title 29-A.

Every law enforcement officer issuing a Violation Summons and Complaint charging the commission of a traffic infraction shall file the original of the Violation Summons and Complaint with the violations bureau within 5 days of the issuance of that Violation Summons and Complaint. Every law enforcement officer issuing a Uniform Summons and Complaint that charges the commission of an offense shall file the original of the Uniform Summons and Complaint with the District Court having jurisdiction over the offense or in such other location as instructed by the Chief Judge of the District Court without undue delay and, in any event, within 5 days after the issuance of the Uniform Summons and Complaint.

[PL 2003, c. 657, §3 (AMD).]

2. Any person to whom a law enforcement officer is authorized to issue or deliver a summons pursuant to subsection 1 who intentionally fails or refuses to provide the officer reasonably credible evidence of the person's correct name, address or date of birth commits a Class E crime, if the person persists in that failure or refusal after having been informed by the officer of the provisions of this subsection. If the person furnishes the officer evidence of that person's correct name, address and date of birth and the evidence does not appear to be reasonably credible, the officer shall attempt to verify the evidence as quickly as is reasonably possible. During the period that verification is being attempted, the officer may require the person to remain in the officer's presence for a period not to exceed 2 hours. During this period, if the officer reasonably believes that the officer's safety or the safety of others present requires, the officer may search for any dangerous weapon by an external patting of the person's outer clothing. If in the course of the search the officer feels an object that the officer reasonably believes to be a dangerous weapon, the officer may take such action as is necessary to examine the object, but may take permanent possession of the object only if it is subject to forfeiture. The requirement that the person remain in the presence of the officer does not constitute an arrest.

After informing the person of the provisions of this subsection, the officer may arrest the person either if the person intentionally refuses to furnish any evidence of that person's correct name, address or date of birth or if, after attempting to verify the evidence as provided for in this subsection, the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has intentionally failed to provide reasonably credible evidence of the person's correct name, address or date of birth.

[PL 2003, c. 657, §4 (AMD).]

3. If, at any time subsequent to an arrest made pursuant to subsection 2, it appears that the evidence of the person's correct name, address and date of birth was accurate, the person must be released from custody and any record of that custody must show that the person was released for that reason. If, upon trial for violating subsection 2, a person is acquitted on the ground that the evidence of the person's correct name, address and date of birth was accurate, the record of acquittal must show that that was the ground.

[PL 2003, c. 657, §4 (AMD).]

4. Any person who fails to appear in court as directed by a summons served on that person pursuant to subsection 1 or to otherwise respond in accordance with law on or before the date specified in the summons commits a Class E crime. Upon that person's failure to appear or respond, the court may issue a warrant of arrest. It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under this subsection that the failure to appear or respond resulted from just cause.

[PL 1991, c. 459, §5 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1975, c. 740, §22 (NEW). PL 1975, c. 770, §§81,82 (AMD). PL 1977, c. 671, §20 (AMD). PL 1985, c. 506, §§B12,13 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 459, §5 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 549, §7 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 549, §17 (AFF). PL 1991, c. 733, §5 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 65, §A56 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 65, §§A153,C15 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 657, §§3,4 (AMD).

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