

Article 23.

Trespasses to Personal Property.

§ 14-160. Willful and wanton injury to personal property; punishments.

(a) If any person shall wantonly and willfully injure the personal property of another he shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a), if any person shall wantonly and willfully injure the personal property of another, causing damage in an amount in excess of two hundred dollars (\$200.00), he shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(c) This section applies to injuries to personal property without regard to whether the property is destroyed or not. (1876-7, c. 18; Code, s. 1082; 1885, c. 53; Rev., s. 3676; C.S., s. 4331; 1969, c. 1224, s. 14; 1993, c. 539, s. 105; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

§ 14-160.1. Alteration, destruction or removal of permanent identification marks from personal property.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to alter, deface, destroy or remove the permanent serial number, manufacturer's identification plate or other permanent, distinguishing number or identification mark from any item of personal property with the intent thereby to conceal or misrepresent the identity of said item.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person knowingly to sell, buy or be in possession of any item of personal property, not his own, on which the permanent serial number, manufacturer's identification plate or other permanent, distinguishing number or identification mark has been altered, defaced, destroyed or removed for the purpose of concealing or misrepresenting the identity of said item.

(c) Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, a violation of any of the provisions of this section shall be (i) a Class 1 misdemeanor if the personal property was valued at not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) at the time of the offense or (ii) a Class H felony if the personal property was valued at more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) at the time of the offense.

(d) This section shall not in any way affect the provisions of G.S. 20-108, 20-109(a) or 20-109(b). (1977, c. 767, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 106; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2009-204, s. 1; 2021-36, s. 1.)

§ 14-160.2. Alteration, destruction, or removal of serial number from firearm; possession of firearm with serial number removed.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to alter, deface, destroy, or remove the permanent serial number, manufacturer's identification plate, or other permanent distinguishing number or identification mark from any firearm with the intent thereby to conceal or misrepresent the identity of the firearm.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person knowingly to sell, buy, or be in possession of any firearm on which the permanent serial number, manufacturer's identification plate, or other permanent distinguishing number or identification mark has been altered, defaced, destroyed, or removed for the purpose of concealing or misrepresenting the identity of the firearm.

(c) A violation of any of the provisions of this section shall be a Class H felony. (2009-204, s. 2.)

§ 14-160.3. Injuring, destroying, removing, vandalizing, or tampering with firefighting or emergency medical services machinery or equipment.

A person is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor if the person intentionally injures, destroys, removes, vandalizes, or tampers with or otherwise intentionally interferes with the operation of any of the following:

- (1) Any machinery, apparatus, or equipment used by a fire department or the North Carolina Forest Services for fighting fires, protecting property, or protecting human life.
- (2) Any ambulance as defined in G.S. 131E-155 or rescue squad emergency medical services vehicle or any equipment or apparatus used for emergency medical services as defined in G.S. 131E-155. (2017-89, s. 1.)

§ 14-160.4. Injuring or tampering with vehicle.

(a) Any person who either individually or in association with one or more other persons willfully injures or tampers with any vehicles or breaks or removes any part or parts of or from a vehicle without the consent of the owner is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

(b) Any person who with intent to steal, commit any malicious mischief, injury or other crime, climbs into or upon a vehicle, whether it is in motion or at rest, or with like intent attempts to manipulate any of the levers, starting mechanism, brakes, or other mechanism or device of a vehicle while the same is at rest and unattended or with like intent sets in motion any vehicle while the same is at rest and unattended, is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. (1937, c. 407, s. 71; 1965, c. 621, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 348; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); recodified from N.C. Gen. Stat. 20-107 by 2022-73, s. 4(a).)

§ 14-161: Repealed by Session Laws 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 14, s. 72(7).

§ 14-162. Removing boats.

If any person shall loose, unmoor, or turn adrift from any landing or other place wherever the same shall be, any boat, canoe, or other marine vessel, or if any person shall direct the same to be done without the consent of the owner, or the person having the lawful custody or possession of such vessel, he shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. The owner may also have his action for such injury. The penalties aforesaid shall not extend to any person who shall press any such property by public authority. (R.C., c. 14, ss. 1, 3; Code, s. 2288; 1889, c. 378; Rev., s. 3544; C.S., s. 4333; 1977, c. 729; 1993, c. 539, s. 107; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

§ 14-163. Poisoning livestock.

If any person shall willfully and unlawfully poison any horse, mule, hog, sheep or other livestock, the property of another, such person shall be punished as a Class I felon. (1898-9, c. 253; Code, s. 1003; Rev., s. 3313; C.S., s. 4334; 1969, c. 1224, s. 3; 1973, c. 1388; 1979, c. 760, s. 5; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1316, s. 47; 1981, c. 63, s. 1, c. 179, s. 14.)

§ 14-163.1. Assaulting a law enforcement agency animal, an assistance animal, or a search and rescue animal.

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Assistance animal. – An animal that is trained and may be used to assist a "person with a disability" as defined in G.S. 168A-3. The term "assistance

animal" is not limited to a dog and includes any animal trained to assist a person with a disability as provided in Article 1 of Chapter 168 of the General Statutes.

- (2) Law enforcement agency animal. – An animal that is trained and may be used to assist a law enforcement officer in the performance of the officer's official duties.
- (3) Harm. – Any injury, illness, or other physiological impairment; or any behavioral impairment that impedes or interferes with duties performed by a law enforcement agency animal or an assistance animal.
- (3a) Search and rescue animal. – An animal that is trained and may be used to assist in a search and rescue operation.
- (4) Serious harm. – Harm that does any of the following:
 - a. Creates a substantial risk of death.
 - b. Causes maiming or causes substantial loss or impairment of bodily function.
 - c. Causes acute pain of a duration that results in substantial suffering.
 - d. Requires retraining of the law enforcement agency animal or assistance animal.
 - e. Requires retirement of the law enforcement agency animal or assistance animal from performing duties.

(a1) Any person who knows or has reason to know that an animal is a law enforcement agency animal, an assistance animal, or a search and rescue animal and who willfully kills the animal is guilty of a Class H felony.

(b) Any person who knows or has reason to know that an animal is a law enforcement agency animal, an assistance animal, or a search and rescue animal and who willfully causes or attempts to cause serious harm to the animal is guilty of a Class I felony.

(c) Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, any person who knows or has reason to know that an animal is a law enforcement agency animal, an assistance animal, or a search and rescue animal and who willfully causes or attempts to cause harm to the animal is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(d) Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, any person who knows or has reason to know that an animal is a law enforcement agency animal, an assistance animal, or a search and rescue animal and who willfully taunts, teases, harasses, delays, obstructs, or attempts to delay or obstruct the animal in the performance of its duty as a law enforcement agency animal, an assistance animal, or a search and rescue animal is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

(d1) A defendant convicted of a violation of this section shall be ordered to make restitution to the person with a disability, or to a person, group, or law enforcement agency who owns or is responsible for the care of the law enforcement agency animal or search and rescue animal for any of the following as appropriate:

- (1) Veterinary, medical care, and boarding expenses for the law enforcement agency animal, the assistance animal, or the search and rescue animal.
- (2) Medical expenses for the person with the disability relating to the harm inflicted upon the assistance animal.
- (3) Replacement and training or retraining expenses for the law enforcement agency animal, the assistance animal, or the search and rescue animal.

- (4) Expenses incurred to provide temporary mobility services to the person with a disability.
- (5) Wages or income lost while the person with a disability is with the assistance animal receiving training or retraining.
- (6) The salary of the law enforcement agency animal handler as a result of the lost services to the agency during the time the handler is with the law enforcement agency animal receiving training or retraining.
- (6a) The salary of the search and rescue animal handler as a result of the search and rescue services lost during the time the handler is with the search and rescue animal receiving training or retraining.
- (7) Any other expense reasonably incurred as a result of the offense.
- (e) This section shall not apply to a licensed veterinarian whose conduct is in accordance with Article 11 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- (f) Self-defense is an affirmative defense to a violation of this section.
- (g) Nothing in this section shall affect any civil remedies available for violation of this section. (1983, c. 646, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 108; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1995, c. 258, s. 1; 2001-411, s. 1; 2005-184, s. 1; 2007-80, s. 1; 2009-460, s. 1.)

§ 14-164: Repealed by Session Laws 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 14, s. 72(8).

§ 14-164.1. Possession of catalytic converter removed from a motor vehicle.

Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, knowingly possessing a catalytic converter that has been removed from a motor vehicle is a Class I felony unless the person in possession is any of the following:

- (1) An employee or agent of a company, or an individual, acting in their official duties for a motor vehicle dealer, motor vehicle repair shop, secondary metals recycler, or salvage yard that is licensed, permitted, or registered pursuant to State law.
- (2) An individual who possesses vehicle registration documentation indicating that the catalytic converter in the individual's possession is from a vehicle registered in that individual's name and is or will be replaced with another legally obtained catalytic converter.
- (3) An individual who possesses a catalytic converter lawfully received from an individual in subdivision (2) of this section and proof of vehicle ownership and a copy of the most recent vehicle registration documentation for the vehicle from which the catalytic converter was removed. (2022-68, s. 1(b).)