

CHAPTER 942

CRIMES AGAINST REPUTATION AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

942.01 Defamation.
942.03 Giving false information for publication.

942.04 Denial of rights
942.05 Opening letters.

942.01 Defamation. (1) Whoever with intent to defame communicates any defamatory matter to a third person without the consent of the person defamed is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(2) Defamatory matter is anything which exposes the other to hatred, contempt, ridicule, degradation or disgrace in society or injury in his business or occupation.

(3) This section does not apply if the defamatory matter was true and was communicated with good motives and for justifiable ends or if the communication was otherwise privileged.

(4) No person shall be convicted on the basis of an oral communication of defamatory matter except upon the testimony of 2 other persons that they heard and understood the oral statement as defamatory or upon a plea of guilty or nolo contendere.

History: 1977 c. 173.

942.03 Giving false information for publication. Whoever, with intent that it be published and that it injure any person, and with knowledge that it is false, communicates to a newspaper, magazine, or other publication any false statement concerning any person or any false and unauthorized advertisement is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

History: 1977 c. 173.

942.04 Denial of rights. (1) Whoever does any of the following is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor:

(a) Denies to another or charges another a higher price than the regular rate for the full and equal enjoyment of any public place of accommodation or amusement because of sex, race, color, creed, physical condition, developmental disability as defined in s. 51.01 (5), national origin or ancestry; or

(b) Gives preferential treatment to some classes of persons in providing services or facilities in any public place of accommodation or amusement because of sex, race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry; or

(c) Directly or indirectly publishes, circulates, displays or mails any written communication which the communicator knows is to the effect that any of the facilities of any public place of accommodation or amusement will be denied to any person by reason of sex, race, color, creed, physical condition, developmental disability as defined in s. 51.01 (5), national origin or ancestry or that the patronage of a person is unwelcome, objectionable or unacceptable for any of those reasons; or

(d) Refuses to furnish or charges another a higher rate for any automobile insurance because of race, color, creed, physical condition, developmental disability as defined in s. 51.01 (5), national origin or ancestry.

(2) "Public place of accommodation or amusement" shall be interpreted broadly to include, but not be limited to, places of business or recreation, hotels, motels, resorts, restaurants, taverns, barbershops, nursing homes, clinics, hospitals, cemeteries, and any place where accommodations, amusement, goods or services are available either free or for a consideration except where provided by bona fide private, nonprofit organizations or institutions.

(3) No person, club or organization may refuse to rent, charge a higher price than the regular rate or give preferential treatment, because of sex, race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry, regarding the use of any private facilities commonly rented to the public. Violators of this subsection are subject to the penalties imposed by sub. (1).

(4) Nothing in this section shall prohibit separate dormitories at higher educational institutions or separate public toilets, showers, saunas and dressing rooms for persons of different sexes.

(5) Nothing in this section shall prohibit separate treatment of persons based on sex with regard to public toilets, showers, saunas and dressing rooms for persons of different sexes.

(6) The person aggrieved may recover damages of not less than \$100 and costs in a civil action.

History: 1975 c. 94, 256, 275, 421, 422; 1977 c. 173; 1977 c. 418 s. 929 (55).

942.05 Opening letters. Whoever does either of the following is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor:

- (1) Knowing that he does not have the consent of either the sender or the addressee, intentionally opens any sealed letter or package addressed to another; or
- (2) Knowing that a sealed letter or package has been opened without the consent of either the sender or addressee, intentionally publishes any of the contents thereof.

History: 1977 c. 173