

CHAPTER 39

AN ACT concerning stalking, amending P.L.1992, c.209 and N.J.S.2C:44-6 and supplementing Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 1 of P.L.1992, c.209 (C.2C:12-10) is amended to read as follows:

C.2C:12-10 Definitions; stalking designated a crime.

1. a. As used in this act:

(1) "Course of conduct" means repeatedly maintaining a visual or physical proximity to a person or repeatedly conveying verbal or written threats or threats implied by conduct or a combination thereof directed at or toward a person.

(2) "Repeatedly" means on two or more occasions.

(3) "Immediate family" means a spouse, parent, child, sibling or any other person who regularly resides in the household or who within the prior six months regularly resided in the household.

b. A person is guilty of stalking, a crime of the fourth degree, if he:

(1) Purposefully engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear bodily injury to himself or a member of his immediate family or to fear the death of himself or a member of his immediate family; and

(2) Knowingly, recklessly or negligently places the specific person in reasonable fear of bodily injury to himself or a member of his immediate family or in reasonable fear of the death of himself or a member of his immediate family.

c. A person is guilty of a crime of the third degree if he commits the crime of stalking in violation of an existing court order prohibiting the behavior.

d. A person who commits a second or subsequent offense of stalking against the same victim is guilty of a crime of the third degree.

e. This act shall not apply to conduct which occurs during organized group picketing.

2. N.J.S.2C:44-6 is amended to read as follows:

Procedure on sentence; presentence investigation and report.

2C:44-6. Procedure on Sentence; Presentence Investigation and Report.

a. The court shall not impose sentence without first ordering a presentence investigation of the defendant and according due consideration to a written report of such investigation when required by the Rules of Court. The court may order a presentence investigation in any other case.

b. The presentence investigation shall include an analysis of the circumstances attending the commission of the offense, the defendant's history of delinquency or criminality, family situation, financial resources, including whether or not the defendant is an enrollee or covered person under a health insurance contract, policy or plan, debts, including any amount owed for a fine, assessment or restitution ordered in accordance with the provisions of Title 2C, employment history, personal habits, the disposition of any charge made against any codefendants and may include a report on his physical and mental condition and any other matters that the probation officer deems relevant or the court directs to be included. In any case involving a conviction of N.J.S.2C:24-4, endangering the welfare of a child; N.J.S.2C:18-3, criminal trespass, where the trespass was committed in a school building or on school property; section 1 of P.L.1993, c.291 (C.2C:13-6), attempting to lure or entice a child with purpose to commit a criminal offense; or N.J.S.2C:13-1, kidnapping, where the victim of the offense is a child under the age of 18, the investigation shall include a report on the defendant's mental condition unless the court directs otherwise. In any case involving a conviction of stalking, the investigation shall include a report on the defendant's mental condition.

The presentence report shall also include a report on any compensation paid by the Victims of Crime Compensation Board as a result of the commission of the offense and, in any case where the victim chooses to provide one, a statement by the victim of the offense for which the defendant is being sentenced. The statement may include the nature and extent of any physical harm or psychological or emotional harm or trauma suffered by the victim, the extent of any loss to include loss of earnings or ability to work suffered by the victim and the effect of the crime

upon the victim's family. The probation department shall notify the victim or nearest relative of a homicide victim of his right to make a statement for inclusion in the presentence report if the victim or relative so desires. Any such statement shall be made within 20 days of notification by the probation department.

The presentence report shall specifically include an assessment of the gravity and seriousness of harm inflicted on the victim, including whether or not the defendant knew or reasonably should have known that the victim of the offense was particularly vulnerable or incapable of resistance due to advanced age, disability, ill-health, or extreme youth, or was for any other reason substantially incapable of exercising normal physical or mental power of resistance.

c. If, after the presentence investigation, the court desires additional information concerning an offender convicted of an offense before imposing sentence, it may order that he be examined as to his medical or mental condition, except that he may not be committed to an institution for such examination.

d. Disclosure of any presentence investigation report or psychiatric examination report shall be in accordance with law and the Rules of Court, except that information concerning the defendant's financial resources shall be made available upon request to the Victims of Crime Compensation Board or to any officer authorized under the provisions of section 3 of P.L.1979, c.396 (C.2C:46-4) to collect payment on an assessment, restitution or fine and that information concerning the defendant's coverage under any health insurance contract, policy or plan shall be made available, as appropriate to the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections and to the chief administrative officer of a county jail in accordance with the provisions of P.L.1995, c.254 (C.30:7E-1 et al.).

e. The court shall not impose a sentence of imprisonment for an extended term unless the ground therefor has been established at a hearing after the conviction of the defendant and on written notice to him of the ground proposed. The defendant shall have the right to hear and controvert the evidence against him and to offer evidence upon the issue.

f. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1986, c.85).

C.2C:12-10.1 Conviction for stalking, permanent restraining order.

3. a. A judgment of conviction for stalking shall operate as an application for a permanent restraining order limiting the contact of the defendant and the victim who was stalked.

b. A hearing shall be held on the application for a permanent restraining order at the time of the verdict or plea of guilty unless the victim requests otherwise. This hearing shall be in Superior Court. A permanent restraining order may grant the following specific relief:

(1) An order restraining the defendant from entering the residence, property, school, or place of employment of the victim and requiring the defendant to stay away from any specified place that is named in the order and is frequented regularly by the victim.

(2) An order restraining the defendant from making contact with the victim, including an order forbidding the defendant from personally or through an agent initiating any communication likely to cause annoyance or alarm including, but not limited to, personal, written, or telephone contact with the victim, the victim's employers, employees, or fellow workers, or others with whom communication would be likely to cause annoyance or alarm to the victim.

c. The permanent restraining order entered by the court subsequent to a conviction for stalking as provided in this act may be dissolved upon the application of the stalking victim to the court which granted the order.

d. Notice of permanent restraining orders issued pursuant to this act shall be sent by the clerk of the court or other person designated by the court to the appropriate chiefs of police, members of the State Police and any other appropriate law enforcement agency or court.

e. Any permanent restraining order issued pursuant to this act shall be in effect throughout the State, and shall be enforced by all law enforcement officers.

f. A violation by the defendant of an order issued pursuant to this act shall constitute an offense under subsection a. of N.J.S.2C:29-9 and each order shall so state. Violations of these orders may be enforced in a civil or criminal action initiated by the stalking victim or by the court, on its own motion, pursuant to applicable court rules. Nothing in this act shall preclude the filing of a criminal complaint for stalking based on the same act which is the basis for the violation of the permanent restraining order.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved June 20, 1996.