CHAPTER 96—RACKETEER INFLUENCED AND CORRUPT ORGANIZATIONS

§1961. Definitions

As used in this chapter—

(1) “racketeering activity” means (A) any act or threat involving murder, kidnapping, gambling, arson, robbery, bribery, extortion, dealing in obscene matter, or dealing in a controlled substance or listed chemical (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act), which is chargeable under State law and punishable by imprisonment for more than one year; (B) any act which is indictable under any of the following provisions of title 18, United States Code: Section 201 (relating to bribery), section 224 (relating to sports bribery), sections 471, 472, and 473 (relating to counterfeiting), section 659 (relating to theft from interstate shipment) if the act indictable under section 659 is felonious, section 664 (relating to embezzlement from pension and welfare funds), sections 891–894 (relating to extortionate credit transactions), section 1028 (relating to fraud and related activity in connection with identification documents), section 1029 (relating to fraud and related activity in connection with access devices), section 1084 (relating to the transmission of gambling information), section 1341 (relating to mail fraud), section 1343 (relating to wire fraud), section 1344 (relating to financial institution fraud), section 1425 (relating to the procurement of citizenship or naturalization unlawfully), section 1426 (relating to the reproduction of naturalization or citizenship papers), section 1427 (relating to the sale of naturalization or citizenship papers), sections 1461–1465 (relating to obscene matter), section 1503 (relating to obstruction of justice), section 1510 (relating to obstruction of criminal investigations), section 1511 (relating to the obstruction of State or local law enforcement), section 1512 (relating to tampering with a witness, victim, or an informant), section 1513 (relating to retaliating against a witness, victim, or an informant), section 1542 (relating to false statement in application and use of passport), section 1543 (relating to forgery or false use of passport), section 1544 (relating to misuse of passport), section 1546 (relating to fraud and misuse of visas, permits, and other
documents), sections 1581–1592 (relating to peonage, slavery, and trafficking in persons),§ 1
section 1591 (relating to interference with commerce, robbery, or extortion), section 1592 (relating to racketeering), section 1593 (relating to interstate transportation of wagering paraphernalia), section 1594 (relating to unlawful welfare fund payments), section 1595 (relating to the prohibition of illegal gambling businesses), section 1596 (relating to the laundering of monetary instruments), section 1597 (relating to engaging in monetary transactions in property derived from specified unlawful activity), section 1598 (relating to use of interstate commerce facilities in the commission of murder-for-hire), section 1599 (relating to illegal money transmitters), sections 2251, 2251A, 2252, and 2260 (relating to sexual exploitation of children), sections 2312 and 2313 (relating to interstate transportation of stolen motor vehicles), sections 2314 and 2315 (relating to interstate transportation of stolen property), section 2316 (relating to trafficking in counterfeit labels for phonorecords, computer programs or computer program documentation or packaging and copies of motion pictures or other audiovisual works), section 2319 (relating to criminal infringement of a copyright), section 2319A (relating to unauthorized fixation of and trafficking in sound recordings and music videos of live musical performances), section 2320 (relating to trafficking in goods or services bearing counterfeit marks), section 2321 (relating to trafficking in certain motor vehicles or motor vehicle parts), sections 2341–2346 (relating to trafficking in contraband cigarettes), sections 2421–24 (relating to white slave traffic), sections 175–178 (relating to biological weapons), sections 229–229F (relating to chemical weapons), section 831 (relating to nuclear materials), (C) any act which is indictable under title 29, United States Code, section 186 (dealing with restrictions on payments and loans to labor organizations) or section 501(c) (relating to embezzlement from union funds), (D) any offense involving fraud connected with a case under title 11 (except a case under section 157 of this title), fraud in the sale of securities, or the felonious manufacture, importation, receiving, concealing, buying, selling, or otherwise dealing in a controlled substance or listed chemical (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act), punishable under any law of the United States, (E) any act which is indictable under the Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act, (F) any act which is indictable under the Immigration and Nationality Act, section 274 (relating to bringing in and harboring certain aliens), section 277 (relating to aiding or assisting certain aliens to enter the United States), or section 278 (relating to importation of alien for immoral purpose) if the act indictable under such section of such Act was committed for the purpose of financial gain, or (G) any act that is indictable under any provision listed in section 2332b(g)(5)(B);

(2) “State” means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, any political subdivision, or any department, agency, or instrumentality thereof;

(3) “person” includes any individual or entity capable of holding a legal or beneficial interest in property;

(4) “enterprise” includes any individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity, and any union or group of individuals associated in fact although not a legal entity;

(5) “pattern of racketeering activity” requires at least two acts of racketeering activity, one of which occurred after the effective date of this chapter and the last of which occurred within ten years (excluding any period of imprisonment) after the commission of a prior act of racketeering activity;

(6) “unlawful debt” means a debt (A) incurred or contracted in gambling activity which was in violation of the law of the United States, a State or political subdivision thereof, or which is unenforceable under State or Federal law in whole or in part as to principal or interest because of the laws relating to usury, and (B) which was incurred in connection with the business of gambling in violation of the law of the United States, a State or political subdivision thereof, or the business of lending money or a thing of value at a rate usurious under State or Federal law, where the usurious rate is at least twice the enforceable rate;

(7) “racketeering investigator” means any attorney or investigator so designated by the Attorney General and charged with the duty of enforcing or carrying into effect this chapter;

(8) “racketeering investigation” means any inquiry conducted by any racketeering investigator for the purpose of ascertaining whether any person has been involved in any violation of this
chapter or of any final order, judgment, or decree of any court of the United States, duly entered in
any case or proceeding arising under this chapter;

(9) “documentary material” includes any book, paper, document, record, recording, or other
material; and

(10) “Attorney General” includes the Attorney General of the United States, the Deputy
Attorney General of the United States, the Associate Attorney General of the United States, any
Assistant Attorney General of the United States, or any employee of the Department of Justice or
any employee of any department or agency of the United States so designated by the Attorney
General to carry out the powers conferred on the Attorney General by this chapter. Any
department or agency so designated may use in investigations authorized by this chapter either the
investigative provisions of this chapter or the investigative power of such department or agency
otherwise conferred by law.

§3(c), Nov. 2, 1978, 92 Stat. 2465; Pub. L. 95–598, title III, §314(g), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2677;
35; Pub. L. 99–646, §50(a), Nov. 10, 1986, 100 Stat. 3605; Pub. L. 100–690, title VII, §§7013,
7020(c), 7032, 7054, 7514, Nov. 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4395, 4396, 4398, 4402, 4489; Pub. L. 101–73,

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act, referred to in par. (1)(A), (D), is classified to section 802 of
Title 21, Food and Drugs.

The Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act, referred to in par. (1)(E), is title II of Pub. L. 91–

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“sections 2251”.


229–229F (relating to chemical weapons), section 831 (relating to nuclear materials),” before “(C) any act
which is indictable under title 29”.

2003—Par. (1)(B). Pub. L. 108–193, which directed amendment of par. (1)(A) of this section by
substituting “sections 1581–1591 (relating to peonage, slavery, and trafficking in persons)” for “sections
1581–1588 (relating to peonage and slavery)”, was executed by making the substitution in par. (1)(B) to
reflect the probable intent of Congress.

See 2001 Amendment note below.
2001—Par. (1)(G). Pub. L. 107–56, as amended by Pub. L. 107–273, which directed addition of cl. (G) before period at end, was executed by making the addition before the semicolon at end to reflect the probable intent of Congress.


Pub. L. 104–294, §601(i)(3), substituted “2260” for “2258”.

Pub. L. 104–208 struck out “if the act indictable under section 1028 was committed for the purpose of financial gain” before “section 1029,” inserted “section 1425 (relating to the procurement of citizenship or nationalization unlawfully), section 1426 (relating to the reproduction of naturalization or citizenship papers), section 1427 (relating to the sale of naturalization or citizenship papers),” after “section 1344 (relating to financial institution fraud),”, struck out “if the act indictable under section 1542 was committed for the purpose of financial gain” before “section 1543”, “if the act indictable under section 1543 was committed for the purpose of financial gain” before “section 1544”, “if the act indictable under section 1544 was committed for the purpose of financial gain” before “section 1546”, and “if the act indictable under section 1546 was committed for the purpose of financial gain” before “sections 1581–1588”.

Pub. L. 104–153 inserted “section 2318 (relating to trafficking in counterfeit labels for phonorecords, computer programs or computer program documentation or packaging and copies of motion pictures or other audiovisual works), section 2319 (relating to criminal infringement of a copyright), section 2319A (relating to unauthorized fixation of and trafficking in sound recordings and music videos of live musical performances), section 2320 (relating to trafficking in goods or services bearing counterfeit marks)” after “sections 2314 and 2315 (relating to interstate transportation of stolen property)”.

Pub. L. 104–132, §433(1), (2), inserted “section 1028 (relating to fraud and related activity in connection with identification documents) if the act indictable under section 1028 was committed for the purpose of financial gain, “section 1029” and “section 1542 (relating to false statement in application and use of passport) if the act indictable under section 1542 was committed for the purpose of financial gain, section 1543 (relating to forgery or false use of passport) if the act indictable under section 1543 was committed for the purpose of financial gain, section 1544 (relating to misuse of passport) if the act indictable under section 1544 was committed for the purpose of financial gain, section 1546 (relating to fraud and misuse of visas, permits, and other documents) if the act indictable under section 1546 was committed for the purpose of financial gain, sections 1581–1588 (relating to peonage and slavery),” after “section 1513 (relating to retaliating against a witness, victim, or an informant),”.


Par. (1)(F). Pub. L. 104–132, §433(3), (4), which directed addition of cl. (F) before period at end, was executed by making the addition before the semicolon at end to reflect the probable intent of Congress.


Pub. L. 103–322, §90104, substituted “a controlled substance or listed chemical (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act)” for “narcotic or other dangerous drugs”.


Par. (1)(D). Pub. L. 103–394 inserted “(except a case under section 157 of that title)” after “title 11”.

Pub. L. 103–322, §90104, substituted “a controlled substance or listed chemical (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act)” for “narcotic or other dangerous drugs”.

1990—Par. (1)(B). Pub. L. 101–647 substituted “section 1029 (relating to)” for “section 1029 (relative to)” and struck out “sections 2251 through 2252 (relating to sexual exploitation of children),” before “section 1958”.

1989—Par. (1). Pub. L. 101–73 inserted “section 1344 (relating to financial institution fraud),” after “section 1343 (relating to wire fraud).”.


Pub. L. 100–690, §7054, inserted “section 1029 (relating to fraud and related activity in connection with access devices)” and “section 1958 (relating to use of interstate commerce facilities in the commission of murder-for-hire), sections 2251–2252 (relating to sexual exploitation of children)”.

Pub. L. 100–690, §7032, substituted “section 2321” for “section 2320”.

Par. (10). Pub. L. 100–690, §7020(c), inserted “the Associate Attorney General of the United States,” after “Deputy Attorney General of the United States.”.

1986—Par. (1)(B). Pub. L. 99–646, as amended by Pub. L. 100–690, §7013, inserted “section 1512 (relating to tampering with a witness, victim, or an informant), section 1513 (relating to retaliating against a witness, victim, or an informant),” after “section 1511 (relating to the obstruction of State or local law enforcement),”.

Pub. L. 99–570 inserted “section 1956 (relating to the laundering of monetary instruments), section 1957 (relating to engaging in monetary transactions in property derived from specified unlawful activity),”.


Par. (1)(B). Pub. L. 98–547 inserted “sections 2312 and 2313 (relating to interstate transportation of stolen motor vehicles),” and “section 2320 (relating to trafficking in certain motor vehicles or motor vehicle parts),”.

Pub. L. 98–473, §1020(2), inserted “sections 1461–1465 (relating to obscene matter),”.


Par. (1)(D). Pub. L. 95–598 substituted “fraud connected with a case under title 11” for “bankruptcy fraud”.

Effective Date of 2002 Amendment

Effective Date of 1996 Amendment

Effective Date of 1994 Amendment

Effective Date of 1978 Amendments
Amendment by Pub. L. 95–598 effective Oct. 1, 1979, see section 402(a) of Pub. L. 95–598, set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.


Short Title of 1984 Amendment
Section 301 of chapter III (§§301–322) of title II of Pub. L. 98–473 provided that: “This title [probably means this chapter, enacting sections 1589, 1600, 1613a, and 1616 of Title 19, Customs Duties and sections 853, 854, and 970 of Title 21, Food and Drugs, amending section 1963 of this title and sections 1602, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1618, 1619, and 1644 of Title 19, sections 824, 848, and 881 of Title 21, and section 524 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, and repealing section 7607 of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code] may be cited as the ‘Comprehensive Forfeiture Act of 1984’.”

Short Title of 1970 Amendment
Pub. L. 91–452, §1, Oct. 15, 1970, 84 Stat. 922, provided in part: “That this Act [enacting this section, sections 841 to 848, 1511, 1623, 1955, 1962 to 1968, 3331 to 3334, 3503, 3504, 3575 to 3578, and 6001 to 6005 of this title, and section 1826 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, amending sections 835, 853, and 970 of Title 21, Food and Drugs, amending section 1963 of this title and sections 1602 to 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1618, 1619, and 1644 of Title 19, sections 824, 848, and 881 of Title 21, and section 524 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, and repealing section 7607 of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code] may be cited as the ‘Comprehensive Forfeiture Act of 1970’.”
to 144 of Title 50, enacting provisions set out as notes under this section and sections 841, 1511, 1955, preceding 3331, preceding 3481, 3504, and 6001 of this title, and repealing provisions set out as a note under section 2510 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Organized Crime Control Act of 1970’.”

Pub. L. 91–452, title IX, §901(a), Oct. 15, 1970, 84 Stat. 941, is popularly known as the “Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act”. See also Short Title note below.

**Short Title**

This chapter is popularly known as the “Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act”.

**Savings Provision**

Amendment by section 314 of Pub. L. 95–598 not to affect the application of chapter 9 (§151 et seq.), chapter 96 (§1961 et seq.), or section 2516, 3057, or 3284 of this title to any act of any person (1) committed before Oct. 1, 1979, or (2) committed after Oct. 1, 1979, in connection with a case commenced before such date, see section 403(d) of Pub. L. 95–598, set out as a note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

**Separability**

Section 1301 of Pub. L. 91–452 provided that: “If the provisions of any part of this Act [see Short Title of 1970 Amendment note set out above] or the application thereof to any person or circumstances be held invalid, the provisions of the other parts and their application to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.”

**Congressional Statement of Findings and Purpose**

Section 1 of Pub. L. 91–452 provided in part that:

“...organized crime in the United States is a highly sophisticated, diversified, and widespread activity that annually drains billions of dollars from America's economy by unlawful conduct and the illegal use of force, fraud, and corruption; (2) organized crime derives a major portion of its power through money obtained from such illegal endeavors as syndicated gambling, loan sharking, the theft and fencing of property, the importation and distribution of narcotics and other dangerous drugs, and other forms of social exploitation; (3) this money and power are increasingly used to infiltrate and corrupt legitimate business and labor unions and to subvert and corrupt our democratic processes; (4) organized crime activities in the United States weaken the stability of the Nation's economic system, harm innocent investors and competing organizations, interfere with free competition, seriously burden interstate and foreign commerce, threaten the domestic security, and undermine the general welfare of the Nation and its citizens; and (5) organized crime continues to grow because of defects in the evidence-gathering process of the law inhibiting the development of the legally admissible evidence necessary to bring criminal and other sanctions or remedies to bear on the unlawful activities of those engaged in organized crime and because the sanctions and remedies available to the Government are unnecessarily limited in scope and impact.

“...It is the purpose of this Act [see Short Title of 1970 Amendment note above] to seek the eradication of organized crime in the United States by strengthening the legal tools in the evidence-gathering process, by establishing new penal prohibitions, and by providing enhanced sanctions and new remedies to deal with the unlawful activities of those engaged in organized crime.”

**Liberal Construction of Provisions; Supersedure of Federal or State Laws; Authority of Attorneys Representing United States**

Section 904 of title IX of Pub. L. 91–452 provided that:

“(a) The provisions of this title [enacting this chapter and amending sections 1505, 2516, and 2517 of this title] shall be liberally construed to effectuate its remedial purposes.

“(b) Nothing in this title shall supersede any provision of Federal, State, or other law imposing criminal penalties or affording civil remedies in addition to those provided for in this title.

“(c) Nothing contained in this title shall impair the authority of any attorney representing the United States to—

“(1) lay before any grand jury impaneled by any district court of the United States any evidence concerning any alleged racketeering violation of law;

“(2) invoke the power of any such court to compel the production of any evidence before any such grand jury; or

“(3) institute any proceeding to enforce any order or process issued in execution of such power or to punish disobedience of any such order or process by any person.”

**President's Commission on Organized Crime; Taking of Testimony and Receipt of Evidence**

§1962. Prohibited activities

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person who has received any income derived, directly or indirectly, from a pattern of racketeering activity or through collection of an unlawful debt in which such person has participated as a principal within the meaning of section 2, title 18, United States Code, to use or invest, directly or indirectly, any part of such income, or the proceeds of such income, in acquisition of any interest in, or the establishment or operation of, any enterprise which is engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce. A purchase of securities on the open market for purposes of investment, and without the intention of controlling or participating in the control of the issuer, or of assisting another to do so, shall not be unlawful under this subsection if the securities of the issuer held by the purchaser, the members of his immediate family, and his or their accomplices in any pattern or racketeering activity or the collection of an unlawful debt after such purchase do not amount in the aggregate to one percent of the outstanding securities of any one class, and do not confer, either in law or in fact, the power to elect one or more directors of the issuer.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person through a pattern of racketeering activity or through collection of an unlawful debt to acquire or maintain, directly or indirectly, any interest in or control of any enterprise which is engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any person employed by or associated with any enterprise engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce, to conduct or participate, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of such enterprise's affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity or collection of unlawful debt.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to conspire to violate any of the provisions of subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this section.


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1988—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 100–690 substituted “subsection” for “subsections”.

§1963. Criminal penalties

(a) Whoever violates any provision of section 1962 of this chapter shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years (or for life if the violation is based on a racketeering activity for which the maximum penalty includes life imprisonment), or both, and shall forfeit to the United States, irrespective of any provision of State law—

(1) any interest the person has acquired or maintained in violation of section 1962;

(2) any—

(A) interest in;