

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 91-375 effective within 1 year after Aug. 12, 1970, on date established therefor by the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service and published by it in the Federal Register, see section 15(a) of Pub. L. 91-375, set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 39, Postal Service.

§ 501. Postage stamps, postage meter stamps, and postal cards

Whoever forges or counterfeits any postage stamp, postage meter stamp, or any stamp printed upon any stamped envelope, or postal card, or any die, plate, or engraving thereof; or

Whoever makes or prints, or knowingly uses or sells, or possesses with intent to use or sell, any such forged or counterfeited postage stamp, postage meter stamp, stamped envelope, postal card, die, plate, or engraving; or

Whoever makes, or knowingly uses or sells, or possesses with intent to use or sell, any paper bearing the watermark of any stamped envelope, or postal card, or any fraudulent imitation thereof; or

Whoever makes or prints, or authorizes to be made or printed, any postage stamp, postage meter stamp, stamped envelope, or postal card, of the kind authorized and provided by the Post Office Department or by the Postal Service, without the special authority and direction of the Department or Postal Service; or

Whoever after such postage stamp, postage meter stamp, stamped envelope, or postal card has been printed, with intent to defraud, delivers the same to any person not authorized by an instrument in writing, duly executed under the hand of the Postmaster General and the seal of the Post Office Department or the Postal Service, to receive it—

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 713; Pub. L. 91-375, § 6(j)(6), Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 777; Pub. L. 91-448, § 1(a), Oct. 14, 1970, 84 Stat. 920; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(G), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 348 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 219, 35 Stat. 1132).

Reference to persons causing or procuring was omitted as unnecessary in view of definition of “principal” in section 2 of this title.

Minor changes of phraseology were made.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$500” in last par.

1970—Pub. L. 91-448 inserted references to the Postal Service and to postage meter stamps. Pub. L. 91-448, § 1(b), repealed section 6(j)(6) of the Postal Reorganization Act, Pub. L. 91-375, Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 719, by which the references to the Postal Service had been inserted earlier.

Pub. L. 91-375 inserted “or by the Postal Service,” after “Post Office Department,” and substituted “the Department or Postal Service” for “said department” in fourth par. and struck out the comma after “stamped envelope” and “to defraud” and inserted “or the Postal Service” after “Post Office Department” in fifth par.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CHANGE OF NAME

Post Office Department redesignated United States Postal Service pursuant to Pub. L. 91-375, § 6(o), Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 733, set out as a note preceding section 101 of Title 39, Postal Service.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 91-375 effective within 1 year after Aug. 12, 1970, on date established therefor by Board of Governors of United States Postal Service and published by it in Federal Register, see section 15(a) of Pub. L. 91-375, set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 39, Postal Service.

§ 502. Postage and revenue stamps of foreign governments

Whoever forges, or counterfeits, or knowingly utters or uses any forged or counterfeit postage stamp or revenue stamp of any foreign government, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 713; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(G), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 349 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 220, 35 Stat. 1132; May 26, 1926, ch. 396, 44 Stat. 653).

A paragraph defining “foreign government” was combined with other like provisions to form section 11 of this title. A proviso against repeal, “Provided, however, That nothing in this section shall be held to repeal or modify section 350 of this title [now section 504 of this title]”, was deleted as unnecessary since that section by express reference to this one makes it clear that these sections are in pari materia.

Minor changes in phraseology were also made.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$500”.

§ 503. Postmarking stamps

Whoever forges or counterfeits any postmarking stamp, or impression thereof with intent to make it appear that such impression is a genuine postmark, or makes or knowingly uses or sells, or possesses with intent to use or sell, any forged or counterfeited postmarking stamp, die, plate, or engraving, or such impression thereof, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 713; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(H), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 349a (Aug. 26, 1935, ch. 692, 49 Stat. 866).

Minor changes in phraseology were made.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$1,000”.

§ 504. Printing and filming of United States and foreign obligations and securities

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the following are permitted:

(1) The printing, publishing, or importation, or the making or importation of the necessary plates for such printing or publishing, of illustrations of—

- (A) postage stamps of the United States,
- (B) revenue stamps of the United States,
- (C) any other obligation or other security of the United States, and
- (D) postage stamps, revenue stamps, notes, bonds, and any other obligation or other security of any foreign government, bank, or corporation.

Illustrations permitted by the foregoing provisions of this section shall be made in accordance with the following conditions—

(i) all illustrations shall be in black and white, except that illustrations of postage stamps issued by the United States or by any foreign government and stamps issued under the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act of 1934 may be in color;

(ii) all illustrations (including illustrations of uncanceled postage stamps in color and illustrations of stamps issued under the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act of 1934 in color) shall be of a size less than three-fourths or more than one and one-half, in linear dimension, of each part of any matter so illustrated which is covered by subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of this paragraph, except that black and white illustrations of postage and revenue stamps issued by the United States or by any foreign government and colored illustrations of canceled postage stamps issued by the United States may be in the exact linear dimension in which the stamps were issued; and

(iii) the negatives and plates used in making the illustrations shall be destroyed after their final use in accordance with this section.

The Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe regulations to permit color illustrations of such currency of the United States as the Secretary determines may be appropriate for such purposes.

(2) The provisions of this section shall not permit the reproduction of illustrations of obligations or other securities, by or through electronic methods used for the acquisition, recording, retrieval, transmission, or reproduction of any obligation or other security, unless such use is authorized by the Secretary of the Treasury. The Secretary shall establish a system to ensure that the legitimate use of such electronic methods and retention of such reproductions by businesses, hobbyists, press or others shall not be unduly restricted.

(3) The making or importation of motion-picture films, microfilms, or slides, for projection upon a screen or for use in telecasting, of postage and revenue stamps and other obligations and securities of the United States, and postage and revenue stamps, notes, bonds, and other obligations or securities of any foreign government, bank, or corporation. No prints or other reproductions shall be made from such films or slides, except for the purposes of paragraph (1), without the permission of the Secretary of the Treasury.

For the purposes of this section the term “postage stamp” includes postage meter stamps.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 713; Pub. L. 85-921, § 1, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1771; Pub. L. 90-353, § 1, June 20, 1968, 82 Stat. 240; Pub. L. 91-448, § 2, Oct. 14, 1970, 84 Stat. 921; Pub. L. 98-369, div. A, title X, § 1077(b)(1), (2), July 18, 1984, 98 Stat. 1054; Pub. L. 102-550, title XV, § 1554, Oct. 28, 1992, 106 Stat. 4071; Pub. L. 104-294, title VI, § 601(e), (f)(3), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3499.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 350 (Mar. 3, 1923, ch. 218, 42 Stat. 1437; Jan. 27, 1938, ch. 10, § 2, 52 Stat. 6). Minor changes in phraseology were made.

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, referred to in par. (1)(i), (ii), subsequently renamed the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act, is act Mar. 16, 1934, ch. 71, 48 Stat. 451, which is classified generally to subchapter IV (§ 718 et seq.) of chapter 7 of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 718 of Title 16 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Par. (1). Pub. L. 104-294, § 601(e)(1), substituted “The printing” for “the printing” in introductory provisions.

Par. (3). Pub. L. 104-294, § 601(e)(2), (f)(3), substituted “The making or importation of” for “the making or importation, of”.

1992—Par. (1). Pub. L. 102-550, § 1554(1), (2), in subpar. (D), substituted a period for the comma at end, in provisions following subpar. (D), struck out “for philatelic, numismatic, educational, historical, or newsworthy purposes in articles, books, journals, newspapers, or albums (but not for advertising purposes, except illustrations of stamps and paper money in philatelic or numismatic advertising of legitimate numismatists and dealers in stamps or publishers of or dealers in philatelic or numismatic articles, books, journals, newspapers, or albums).” before “Illustrations permitted”, and inserted at end “The Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe regulations to permit color illustrations of such currency of the United States as the Secretary determines may be appropriate for such purposes.”

Par. (2). Pub. L. 102-550, § 1554(3), added par. (2). Former par. (2) redesignated (3).

Par. (3). Pub. L. 102-550, § 1554(3), (4), redesignated par. (2) as (3) and struck out “but not for advertising purposes except philatelic advertising,” after “or importation,”.

1984—Par. (1)(i). Pub. L. 98-369, § 1077(b)(1), inserted “and stamps issued under the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act of 1934”.

Par. (1)(ii). Pub. L. 98-369, § 1077(b)(2), inserted “and illustrations of stamps issued under the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act of 1934 in color”.

1970—Pub. L. 91-448 inserted provision including postage meter stamp within the meaning of postage stamp for the purposes of this section.

1968—Par. (1). Pub. L. 90-353 inserted provisions so as to permit colored illustrations of canceled United States postage stamps in the exact size of genuine stamps and colored illustrations of uncanceled United States and foreign stamps if the size of the illustrations is less than three-fourths or more than one and one-half times the size of the genuine stamps and permitted the use of colored illustrations of stamps in public documents relating to stamps printed by the Government Printing Office at the request of the Postmaster General.

1958—Pub. L. 85-921 permitted black and white illustrations of revenue stamps of the United States for philatelic and numismatic purposes, black and white illustrations of United States and foreign paper money

and other obligations and securities for educational, historical, and newsworthy purposes, and permitted motion picture films, microfilms, and slides of United States and foreign postage and revenue stamps, paper money, and other obligations and securities, except films in connection with advertising.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1984 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 98-369 effective July 18, 1984, see section 1077(c) of Pub. L. 98-369, set out as a note under section 718e of Title 16, Conservation.

§ 505. Seals of courts; signatures of judges or court officers

Whoever forges the signature of any judge, register, or other officer of any court of the United States, or of any Territory thereof, or forges or counterfeits the seal of any such court, or knowingly concurs in using any such forged or counterfeit signature or seal, for the purpose of authenticating any proceeding or document, or tenders in evidence any such proceeding or document with a false or counterfeit signature of any such judge, register, or other officer, or a false or counterfeit seal of the court, subscribed or attached thereto, knowing such signature or seal to be false or counterfeit, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 714; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 236 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 130, 35 Stat. 1112).

Mandatory punishment provision was rephrased in the alternative.

Minor changes of phraseology were made.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$5,000”.

§ 506. Seals of departments or agencies

(a) Whoever—

(1) falsely makes, forges, counterfeits, mutilates, or alters the seal of any department or agency of the United States, or any facsimile thereof;

(2) knowingly uses, affixes, or impresses any such fraudulently made, forged, counterfeited, mutilated, or altered seal or facsimile thereof to or upon any certificate, instrument, commission, document, or paper of any description; or

(3) with fraudulent intent, possesses, sells, offers for sale, furnishes, offers to furnish, gives away, offers to give away, transports, offers to transport, imports, or offers to import any such seal or facsimile thereof, knowing the same to have been so falsely made, forged, counterfeited, mutilated, or altered,

shall be fined under this title, or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) or any other provision of law, if a forged, counterfeited,

mutilated, or altered seal of a department or agency of the United States, or any facsimile thereof, is—

(1) so forged, counterfeited, mutilated, or altered;

(2) used, affixed, or impressed to or upon any certificate, instrument, commission, document, or paper of any description; or

(3) with fraudulent intent, possessed, sold, offered for sale, furnished, offered to furnish, given away, offered to give away, transported, offered to transport, imported, or offered to import,

with the intent or effect of facilitating an alien's application for, or receipt of, a Federal benefit to which the alien is not entitled, the penalties which may be imposed for each offense under subsection (a) shall be two times the maximum fine, and 3 times the maximum term of imprisonment, or both, that would otherwise be imposed for an offense under subsection (a).

(c) For purposes of this section—

(1) the term “Federal benefit” means—

(A) the issuance of any grant, contract, loan, professional license, or commercial license provided by any agency of the United States or by appropriated funds of the United States; and

(B) any retirement, welfare, Social Security, health (including treatment of an emergency medical condition in accordance with section 1903(v) of the Social Security Act (19¹ U.S.C. 1396b(v))), disability, veterans, public housing, education, supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits,² or unemployment benefit, or any similar benefit for which payments or assistance are provided by an agency of the United States or by appropriated funds of the United States; and

(2) each instance of forgery, counterfeiting, mutilation, or alteration shall constitute a separate offense under this section.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 714; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147; Pub. L. 104-208, div. C, title V, § 561, Sept. 30, 1996, 110 Stat. 3009-681; Pub. L. 110-234, title IV, § 4002(b)(1)(E), (2)(M), May 22, 2008, 122 Stat. 1096, 1097; Pub. L. 110-246, § 4(a), title IV, § 4002(b)(1)(E), (2)(M), June 18, 2008, 122 Stat. 1664, 1857, 1858.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 131 (June 15, 1917, ch. 30, title X, § 2, 40 Stat. 228).

Reference to persons causing, procuring, aiding or assisting was omitted as unnecessary as such persons are made principals by section 2 of this title.

In view of definitions of department and agency in section 6 of this title, words “department or agency” in first paragraph were substituted for “executive department, or any bureau, commission, or office”.

Provision for 10 years' imprisonment was reduced to 5 years to conform to punishment provision in section 505 of this title, covering an offense of like gravity.

Minor changes in phraseology were also made.

¹ So in original. Probably should be “42”.

² So in original. The word “benefits” probably should not appear.