

[No. 50.] *Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud [2001.]
Offences) Act, 2001.*

PART 2

THEFT AND RELATED OFFENCES

Theft.

4.—(1) Subject to *section 5*, a person is guilty of theft if he or she dishonestly appropriates property without the consent of its owner and with the intention of depriving its owner of it.

(2) For the purposes of this section a person does not appropriate property without the consent of its owner if—

- (a) the person believes that he or she has the owner's consent, or would have the owner's consent if the owner knew of the appropriation of the property and the circumstances in which it was appropriated, or
- (b) (except where the property came to the person as trustee or personal representative) he or she appropriates the property in the belief that the owner cannot be discovered by taking reasonable steps,

but consent obtained by deception or intimidation is not consent for those purposes.

(3) (a) This subsection applies to a person who in the course of business holds property in trust for, or on behalf of, more than one owner.

(b) Where a person to whom this subsection applies appropriates some of the property so held to his or her own use or benefit, the person shall, for the purposes of *subsection (1)* but subject to *subsection (2)*, be deemed to have appropriated the property or, as the case may be, a sum representing it without the consent of its owner or owners.

(c) If in any proceedings against a person to whom this subsection applies for theft of some or all of the property so held by him or her it is proved that—

- (i) there is a deficiency in the property or a sum representing it, and
- (ii) the person has failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for the whole or any part of the deficiency,

it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, for the purposes of *subsection (1)* but subject to *subsection (2)*, that the person appropriated, without the consent of its owner or owners, the whole or that part of the deficiency.

(4) If at the trial of a person for theft the court or jury, as the case may be, has to consider whether the person believed—

- (a) that he or she had not acted dishonestly, or
- (b) that the owner of the property concerned had consented or would have consented to its appropriation, or
- (c) that the owner could not be discovered by taking reasonable steps,

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the presence or absence of reasonable grounds for such a belief is a matter to which the court or jury shall have regard, in conjunction with any other relevant matters, in considering whether the person so believed. Pt.2 S.4

(5) In this section—

“appropriates”, in relation to property, means usurps or adversely interferes with the proprietary rights of the owner of the property;

“depriving” means temporarily or permanently depriving.

(6) A person guilty of theft is liable on conviction on indictment to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or both.

5.—(1) Where property or a right or interest in property is or purports to be transferred for value to a person acting in good faith, no later assumption by that person of rights which that person believes himself or herself to be acquiring shall, by reason of any defect in the transferor’s title, amount to theft of the property. Exceptions to theft.

(2) A person cannot steal land, or things forming part of land and severed from it by or under his or her directions, except where the person—

(a) being a trustee, personal representative or other person authorised by power of attorney or as liquidator of a company or otherwise to sell or dispose of land owned by another, appropriates the land or anything forming part of it by dealing with it in breach of the confidence reposed in him or her, or

(b) not being in possession of the land, appropriates anything forming part of the land by severing it or causing it to be severed, or after it has been severed, or

(c) being in possession of the land under a tenancy or licence, appropriates the whole or part of any fixture or structure let or licensed to be used with the land.

(3) For the purposes of *subsection (2)*—

(a) “land” does not include incorporeal hereditaments,

“tenancy” means a tenancy for years or any less period and includes an agreement for such a tenancy,

“licence” includes an agreement for a licence,

and

(b) a person who after the expiration of a tenancy or licence remains in possession of land shall be treated as having possession under the tenancy or licence, and “let” and “licensed” shall be construed accordingly.

(4) A person who picks mushrooms or any other fungus growing wild on any land, or who picks flowers, fruit or foliage from a plant (including any shrub or tree) growing wild on any land, does not (although not in possession of the land) steal what is picked, unless he or she does it for reward or for sale or other commercial purpose.

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Pr.2 S.5

(5) Wild creatures, tamed or untamed, shall be regarded as property; but a person cannot steal a wild creature not tamed or ordinarily kept in captivity, or the carcase of any such creature, unless it has been reduced into possession by or on behalf of another person and possession of it has not since been lost or abandoned, or another person is in course of reducing it into possession.

Making gain or causing loss by deception.

6.—(1) A person who dishonestly, with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another, by any deception induces another to do or refrain from doing an act is guilty of an offence.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on conviction on indictment to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years or both.

Obtaining services by deception.

7.—(1) A person who dishonestly, with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another, by any deception obtains services from another is guilty of an offence.

(2) For the purposes of this section a person obtains services from another where the other is induced to confer a benefit on some person by doing some act, or causing or permitting some act to be done, on the understanding that the benefit has been or will be paid for.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (2)*, a person obtains services where the other is induced to make a loan, or to cause or permit a loan to be made, on the understanding that any payment (whether by way of interest or otherwise) will be or has been made in respect of the loan.

(4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on conviction on indictment to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years or both.

Making off without payment.

8.—(1) Subject to *subsection (2)*, a person who, knowing that payment on the spot for any goods obtained or any service done is required or expected, dishonestly makes off without having paid as required or expected and with the intention of avoiding payment on the spot is guilty of an offence.

(2) *Subsection (1)* shall not apply where the supply of the goods or the doing of the service is contrary to law or where the service done is such that payment is not legally enforceable.

(3) Subject to *subsections (5) and (6)*, any person may arrest without warrant anyone who is or whom he or she, with reasonable cause, suspects to be in the act of committing an offence under this section.

(4) Where a member of the Garda Síochána, with reasonable cause, suspects that an offence under this section has been committed, he or she may arrest without warrant any person whom the member, with reasonable cause, suspects to be guilty of the offence.

(5) An arrest other than by a member of the Garda Síochána may be effected by a person under *subsection (3)* only where the person, with reasonable cause, suspects that the person to be arrested by him or her would otherwise attempt to avoid, or is avoiding, arrest by a member of the Garda Síochána.

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(6) A person who is arrested pursuant to this section by a person other than a member of the Garda Síochána shall be transferred by that person into the custody of the Garda Síochána as soon as practicable. Pt.2 S.8

(7) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on conviction on indictment to a fine not exceeding £3,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or both.

9.—(1) A person who dishonestly, whether within or outside the State, operates or causes to be operated a computer within the State with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another, is guilty of an offence. Unlawful use of computer.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on conviction on indictment to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or both.

10.—(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he or she dishonestly, with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another— False accounting.

(a) destroys, defaces, conceals or falsifies any account or any document made or required for any accounting purpose,

(b) fails to make or complete any account or any such document, or

(c) in furnishing information for any purpose produces or makes use of any account, or any such document, which to his or her knowledge is or may be misleading, false or deceptive in a material particular.

(2) For the purposes of this section a person shall be treated as falsifying an account or other document if he or she—

(a) makes or concurs in making therein an entry which is or may be misleading, false or deceptive in a material particular, or

(b) omits or concurs in omitting a material particular therefrom.

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on conviction on indictment to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or both.

11.—(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he or she dishonestly, with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another, destroys, defaces or conceals any valuable security, any will or other testamentary document or any original document of or belonging to, or filed or deposited in, any court or any government department or office. Suppression, etc., of documents.

(2) (a) A person who dishonestly, with the intention of making a gain for himself or herself or another, or of causing loss to another, by any deception procures the execution of a valuable security is guilty of an offence.

(b) *Paragraph (a) shall apply in relation to—*