

[First Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 709**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**220th LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator RICHARD J. CODEY**

**District 27 (Essex and Morris)**

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**District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)**

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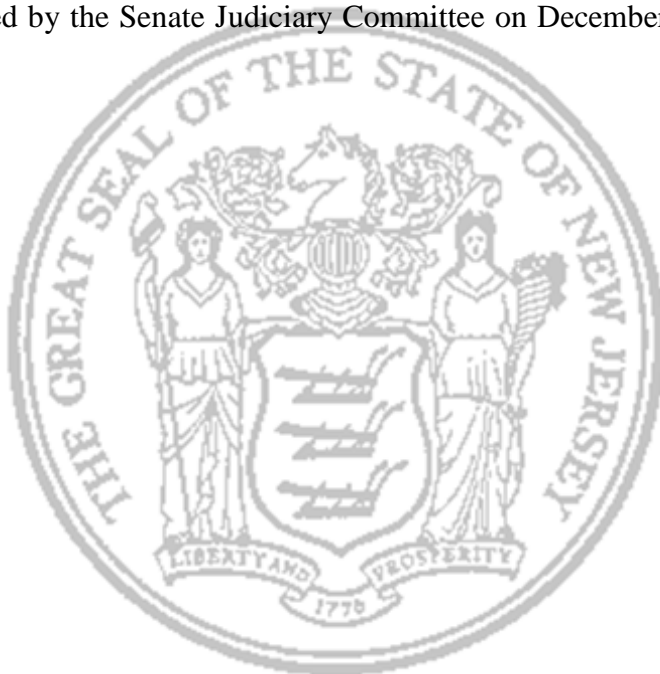
**Senator Bramnick**

**SYNOPSIS**

Upgrades certain types of assault against sports officials to aggravated assault.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee on December 7, 2023, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/11/2023)**

1 AN ACT concerning certain assaults against sports officials <sup>1</sup>**[,]** and  
2 amending N.J.S.2C:12-1.

3  
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

6  
7 1. N.J.S.2C:12-1 is amended to read as follows:

8 2C:12-1. Assault. a. Simple assault. A person is guilty of  
9 assault if the person:

10 (1) Attempts to cause or purposely, knowingly or recklessly  
11 causes bodily injury to another; or

12 (2) Negligently causes bodily injury to another with a deadly  
13 weapon; or

14 (3) Attempts by physical menace to put another in fear of  
15 imminent serious bodily injury.

16 Simple assault is a disorderly persons offense unless committed  
17 in a fight or scuffle entered into by mutual consent, in which case it  
18 is a petty disorderly persons offense.

19 b. Aggravated assault. A person is guilty of aggravated assault  
20 if the person:

21 (1) Attempts to cause serious bodily injury to another, or causes  
22 injury purposely or knowingly or under circumstances manifesting  
23 extreme indifference to the value of human life recklessly causes  
24 such injury; or

25 (2) Attempts to cause or purposely or knowingly causes bodily  
26 injury to another with a deadly weapon; or

27 (3) Recklessly causes bodily injury to another with a deadly  
28 weapon; or

29 (4) Knowingly under circumstances manifesting extreme  
30 indifference to the value of human life points a firearm, as defined  
31 in subsection f. of N.J.S.2C:39-1, at or in the direction of another,  
32 whether or not the actor believes it to be loaded; or

33 (5) Commits a simple assault as defined in paragraph (1), (2), or  
34 (3) of subsection a. of this section upon:

35 (a) Any law enforcement officer acting in the performance of  
36 the officer's duties while in uniform or exhibiting evidence of  
37 authority or because of the officer's status as a law enforcement  
38 officer; or

39 (b) Any paid or volunteer firefighter acting in the performance  
40 of the firefighter's duties while in uniform or otherwise clearly  
41 identifiable as being engaged in the performance of the person's  
42 duties of a firefighter; or

43 (c) Any person engaged in emergency first-aid or medical  
44 services acting in the performance of the person's duties while in

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is  
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Senate SJU committee amendments adopted December 7, 2023.

- 1 uniform or otherwise clearly identifiable as being engaged in the  
2 performance of emergency first-aid or medical services; or
- 3 (d) Any school board member, school administrator, teacher,  
4 school bus driver, or other employee of a public or nonpublic  
5 school or school board while clearly identifiable as being engaged  
6 in the performance of the person's duties or because of the person's  
7 status as a member or employee of a public or nonpublic school or  
8 school board or any school bus driver employed by an operator  
9 under contract to a public or nonpublic school or school board while  
10 clearly identifiable as being engaged in the performance of the  
11 person's duties or because of his status as a school bus driver; or
- 12 (e) Any employee of the Division of Child Protection and  
13 Permanency while clearly identifiable as being engaged in the  
14 performance of the employee's duties or because of the status as an  
15 employee of the division; or
- 16 (f) Any justice of the Supreme Court, judge of the Superior  
17 Court, judge of the Tax Court or municipal judge while clearly  
18 identifiable as being engaged in the performance of judicial duties  
19 or because of the status as a member of the judiciary; or
- 20 (g) Any operator of a motorbus or the operator's supervisor or  
21 any employee of a rail passenger service while clearly identifiable  
22 as being engaged in the performance of the person's duties or  
23 because of the status as an operator of a motorbus or as the  
24 operator's supervisor or as an employee of a rail passenger service;  
25 or
- 26 (h) Any Department of Corrections employee, county  
27 correctional police officer, juvenile correctional police officer,  
28 State juvenile facility employee, juvenile detention staff member,  
29 juvenile detention officer, probation officer or any sheriff,  
30 undersheriff, or sheriff's officer acting in the performance of the  
31 person's duties while in uniform or exhibiting evidence of the  
32 person's authority or because of the status as a Department of  
33 Corrections employee, county correctional police officer, juvenile  
34 correctional police officer, State juvenile facility employee,  
35 juvenile detention staff member, juvenile detention officer,  
36 probation officer, sheriff, undersheriff, or sheriff's officer; or
- 37 (i) Any employee, including any person employed under  
38 contract, of a utility company as defined in section 2 of P.L.1971,  
39 c.224 (C.2A:42-86) or a cable television company subject to the  
40 provisions of the "Cable Television Act," P.L.1972, c.186  
41 (C.48:5A-1 et seq.) while clearly identifiable as being engaged in  
42 the performance of the employee's duties in regard to connecting,  
43 disconnecting, or repairing or attempting to connect, disconnect, or  
44 repair any gas, electric, or water utility, or cable television or  
45 telecommunication service; or
- 46 (j) Any health care worker employed by a licensed health care  
47 facility to provide direct patient care, any health care professional  
48 licensed or otherwise authorized pursuant to Title 26 or Title 45 of

1 the Revised Statutes to practice a health care profession, except a  
2 direct care worker at a State or county psychiatric hospital or State  
3 developmental center or veterans' memorial home, while clearly  
4 identifiable as being engaged in the duties of providing direct  
5 patient care or practicing the health care profession; or

6 (k) Any direct care worker at a State or county psychiatric  
7 hospital or State developmental center or veterans' memorial home,  
8 while clearly identifiable as being engaged in the duties of  
9 providing direct patient care or practicing the health care  
10 profession, provided that the actor is not a patient or resident at the  
11 facility who is classified by the facility as having a mental illness or  
12 developmental disability; or

13 (l) Any sports official<sup>1</sup> for a school- or community-sponsored  
14 youth sports event<sup>1</sup> while clearly identifiable as being engaged in the  
15 performance of the duties of a sports official or because of the  
16 '[official's] person's<sup>1</sup> status as a sports official. As used in this  
17 subparagraph, "sports official" means any person who serves as a  
18 referee<sup>1</sup> [or] ,<sup>1</sup> umpire, <sup>1</sup>timer, scorer, coach, athletic trainer,  
19 manager,<sup>1</sup> or <sup>1</sup>[serves in] assistant for<sup>1</sup> a <sup>1</sup>[similar capacity but  
20 may be known by a different title, and is duly registered with]  
21 school-<sup>1</sup> or <sup>1</sup>[a member of a local, State, regional, or national  
22 organization engaged in part in providing education and training to]  
23 community- sponsored youth<sup>1</sup> sports <sup>1</sup>[officials] event, or serves in a  
24 similar capacity but may be known by a different title, whether the  
25 person is compensated or a volunteer<sup>1</sup>.

26 (6) Causes bodily injury to another person while fleeing or  
27 attempting to elude a law enforcement officer in violation of  
28 subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:29-2 or while operating a motor vehicle in  
29 violation of subsection c. of N.J.S.2C:20-10. Notwithstanding any  
30 other provision of law to the contrary, a person shall be strictly  
31 liable for a violation of this paragraph upon proof of a violation of  
32 subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:29-2 or while operating a motor vehicle in  
33 violation of subsection c. of N.J.S.2C:20-10 which resulted in  
34 bodily injury to another person; or

35 (7) Attempts to cause significant bodily injury to another or  
36 causes significant bodily injury purposely or knowingly or, under  
37 circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of  
38 human life recklessly causes such significant bodily injury; or

39 (8) Causes bodily injury by knowingly or purposely starting a  
40 fire or causing an explosion in violation of N.J.S.2C:17-1 which  
41 results in bodily injury to any emergency services personnel  
42 involved in fire suppression activities, rendering emergency  
43 medical services resulting from the fire or explosion or rescue  
44 operations, or rendering any necessary assistance at the scene of the  
45 fire or explosion, including any bodily injury sustained while  
46 responding to the scene of a reported fire or explosion. For  
47 purposes of this paragraph, "emergency services personnel" shall

1 include, but not be limited to, any paid or volunteer firefighter, any  
2 person engaged in emergency first-aid or medical services and any  
3 law enforcement officer. Notwithstanding any other provision of  
4 law to the contrary, a person shall be strictly liable for a violation of  
5 this paragraph upon proof of a violation of N.J.S.2C:17-1 which  
6 resulted in bodily injury to any emergency services personnel; or

7 (9) Knowingly, under circumstances manifesting extreme  
8 indifference to the value of human life, points or displays a firearm,  
9 as defined in subsection f. of N.J.S.2C:39-1, at or in the direction of  
10 a law enforcement officer; or

11 (10) Knowingly points, displays or uses an imitation firearm, as  
12 defined in subsection v. of N.J.S.2C:39-1, at or in the direction of a  
13 law enforcement officer with the purpose to intimidate, threaten, or  
14 attempt to put the officer in fear of bodily injury or for any unlawful  
15 purpose; or

16 (11) Uses or activates a laser sighting system or device, or a  
17 system or device which, in the manner used, would cause a  
18 reasonable person to believe that it is a laser sighting system or  
19 device, against a law enforcement officer acting in the performance  
20 of the officer's duties while in uniform or exhibiting evidence of the  
21 officer's authority. As used in this paragraph, "laser sighting  
22 system or device" means any system or device that is integrated  
23 with or affixed to a firearm and emits a laser light beam that is used  
24 to assist in the sight alignment or aiming of the firearm; or

25 (12) Attempts to cause significant bodily injury or causes  
26 significant bodily injury purposely or knowingly or, under  
27 circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of  
28 human life, recklessly causes significant bodily injury to a person  
29 who, with respect to the actor, meets the definition of a victim of  
30 domestic violence, as defined in subsection d. of section 3 of  
31 P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-19); or

32 (13) Knowingly or, under circumstances manifesting extreme  
33 indifference to the value of human life, recklessly obstructs the  
34 breathing or blood circulation of a person who, with respect to the  
35 actor, meets the definition of a victim of domestic violence, as  
36 defined in subsection d. of section 3 of P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-  
37 19), by applying pressure on the throat or neck or blocking the nose  
38 or mouth of such person, thereby causing or attempting to cause  
39 bodily injury.

40 Aggravated assault under paragraphs (1) and (6) of subsection b.  
41 of this section is a crime of the second degree; under paragraphs  
42 (2), (7), (9) and (10) of subsection b. of this section is a crime of the  
43 third degree; under paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection b. of this  
44 section is a crime of the fourth degree; and under paragraph (5) of  
45 subsection b. of this section is a crime of the third degree if the  
46 victim suffers bodily injury, otherwise it is a crime of the fourth  
47 degree, except that any aggravated assault under subparagraph (g)  
48 of paragraph (5) of subsection b. of this section shall be a crime of

1 the third degree. Aggravated assault under paragraph (8) of  
2 subsection b. of this section is a crime of the third degree if the  
3 victim suffers bodily injury; if the victim suffers significant bodily  
4 injury or serious bodily injury it is a crime of the second degree.  
5 Aggravated assault under paragraph (11) of subsection b. of this  
6 section is a crime of the third degree. Aggravated assault under  
7 paragraph (12) of subsection b. of this section is a crime of the third  
8 degree but the presumption of non-imprisonment set forth in  
9 subsection e. of N.J.S.2C:44-1 for a first offense of a crime of the  
10 third degree shall not apply. Aggravated assault under paragraph  
11 (13) of subsection b. of this section is a crime of the second degree.

12 c. (1) A person is guilty of assault by auto or vessel when the  
13 person drives a vehicle or vessel recklessly and causes either  
14 serious bodily injury or bodily injury to another. Assault by auto or  
15 vessel is a crime of the fourth degree if serious bodily injury results  
16 and is a disorderly persons offense if bodily injury results. Proof  
17 that the defendant was operating a hand-held wireless telephone  
18 while driving a motor vehicle in violation of section 1 of P.L.2003,  
19 c.310 (C.39:4-97.3) may give rise to an inference that the defendant  
20 was driving recklessly.

21 (2) Assault by auto or vessel is a crime of the third degree if the  
22 person drives the vehicle while in violation of R.S.39:4-50 or  
23 section 2 of P.L.1981, c.512 (C.39:4-50.4a) and serious bodily  
24 injury results and is a crime of the fourth degree if the person drives  
25 the vehicle while in violation of R.S.39:4-50 or section 2 of  
26 P.L.1981, c.512 (C.39:4-50.4a) and bodily injury results.

27 (3) Assault by auto or vessel is a crime of the second degree if  
28 serious bodily injury results from the defendant operating the auto  
29 or vessel while in violation of R.S.39:4-50 or section 2 of P.L.1981,  
30 c.512 (C.39:4-50.4a) while:

31 (a) on any school property used for school purposes which is  
32 owned by or leased to any elementary or secondary school or school  
33 board, or within 1,000 feet of such school property;

34 (b) driving through a school crossing as defined in R.S.39:1-1 if  
35 the municipality, by ordinance or resolution, has designated the  
36 school crossing as such; or

37 (c) driving through a school crossing as defined in R.S.39:1-1  
38 knowing that juveniles are present if the municipality has not  
39 designated the school crossing as such by ordinance or resolution.

40 Assault by auto or vessel is a crime of the third degree if bodily  
41 injury results from the defendant operating the auto or vessel in  
42 violation of this paragraph.

43 A map or true copy of a map depicting the location and  
44 boundaries of the area on or within 1,000 feet of any property used  
45 for school purposes which is owned by or leased to any elementary  
46 or secondary school or school board produced pursuant to section 1  
47 of P.L.1987, c.101 (C.2C:35-7) may be used in a prosecution under  
48 subparagraph (a) of paragraph (3) of this subsection.

1 It shall be no defense to a prosecution for a violation of  
2 subparagraph (a) or (b) of paragraph (3) of this subsection that the  
3 defendant was unaware that the prohibited conduct took place while  
4 on or within 1,000 feet of any school property or while driving  
5 through a school crossing. Nor shall it be a defense to a prosecution  
6 under subparagraph (a) or (b) of paragraph (3) of this subsection  
7 that no juveniles were present on the school property or crossing  
8 zone at the time of the offense or that the school was not in session.

9 (4) Assault by auto or vessel is a crime of the third degree if the  
10 person purposely drives a vehicle in an aggressive manner directed  
11 at another vehicle and serious bodily injury results and is a crime of  
12 the fourth degree if the person purposely drives a vehicle in an  
13 aggressive manner directed at another vehicle and bodily injury  
14 results. For purposes of this paragraph, "driving a vehicle in an  
15 aggressive manner" shall include, but is not limited to,  
16 unexpectedly altering the speed of the vehicle, making improper or  
17 erratic traffic lane changes, disregarding traffic control devices,  
18 failing to yield the right of way, or following another vehicle too  
19 closely.

20 As used in this subsection, "vessel" means a means of  
21 conveyance for travel on water and propelled otherwise than by  
22 muscular power.

23 d. A person who is employed by a facility as defined in section  
24 2 of P.L.1977, c.239 (C.52:27G-2) who commits a simple assault as  
25 defined in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection a. of this section upon  
26 an institutionalized elderly person as defined in section 2 of  
27 P.L.1977, c.239 (C.52:27G-2) is guilty of a crime of the fourth  
28 degree.

29 e. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2001, c.443) **[.]**

30 f. A person who commits a simple assault as defined in  
31 paragraph (1), (2) or (3) of subsection a. of this section in the  
32 presence of a child under 16 years of age at a school or community  
33 sponsored youth sports event is guilty of a crime of the fourth  
34 degree. The defendant shall be strictly liable upon proof that the  
35 offense occurred, in fact, in the presence of a child under 16 years  
36 of age. It shall not be a defense that the defendant did not know  
37 that the child was present or reasonably believed that the child was  
38 16 years of age or older. The provisions of this subsection shall not  
39 be construed to create any liability on the part of a participant in a  
40 youth sports event or to abrogate any immunity or defense available  
41 to a participant in a youth sports event. As used in this act, "school  
42 or community sponsored youth sports event" means a competition,  
43 practice or instructional event involving one or more interscholastic  
44 sports teams or youth sports teams organized pursuant to a  
45 nonprofit or similar charter or which are member teams in a youth

1 league organized by or affiliated with a county or municipal  
2 recreation department and shall not include collegiate, semi-  
3 professional or professional sporting events.

4 (cf: P.L.2021, c.352, s.1)

5

6 2. This act shall take effect <sup>1</sup>**【immediately】** on the first day of the  
7 fourth month following enactment<sup>1</sup>.