

CHAPTER 2021-75

House Bill No. 1523

An act relating to corporate espionage; providing a short title; amending s. 812.081, F.S.; revising definitions; prohibiting theft of a trade secret; prohibiting trafficking in trade secrets; providing penalties; reclassifying the penalty and increasing the offense severity ranking for an offense committed with specified intent; requiring a court to order specified restitution for a violation; providing for civil actions for violations; providing an exception to criminal and civil liability for certain disclosures; amending s. 921.0022, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; ranking the severity of offenses; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. This act may be cited as the “Combating Corporate Espionage in Florida Act.”

Section 2. Section 812.081, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

812.081 Theft of or trafficking in trade secrets; theft, embezzlement; unlawful copying; definitions; penalties; providing to foreign entities; restitution penalty.—

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) ~~“Article” means any object, device, machine, material, substance, or composition of matter, or any mixture or copy thereof, whether in whole or in part, including any complete or partial writing, record, recording, drawing, sample, specimen, prototype model, photograph, microorganism, blueprint, map, or copy thereof.~~

(a) “Endeavor” means to attempt or to try.

(b) “Foreign agent” means any officer, employee, proxy, servant, delegate, or representative of a foreign government.

(c) “Foreign instrumentality” means any agency, bureau, ministry, component, institution, association, or any legal, commercial, or business organization, corporation, firm, or entity that is substantially owned, controlled, sponsored, commanded, managed, or dominated by a foreign government.

(d) “Obtain or use” has the same meaning as provided in s. 812.012(3).

(e) “Person” means a natural person, corporation, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, association, joint venture, government, governmental subdivision or agency, or any other legal or commercial entity.

(b) ~~“Representing” means completely or partially describing, depicting, embodying, containing, constituting, reflecting, or recording.~~

(f)(e) ~~“Trade secret” means the whole or any portion or phase of any formula, pattern, device, combination of devices, or compilation of information which is for use, or is used, in the operation of a business and which provides the business an advantage, or an opportunity to obtain an advantage, over those who do not know or use it. The term includes any scientific, technical, or commercial information, including financial information, and includes any design, process, procedure, list of suppliers, list of customers, business code, or improvement thereof, whether tangible or intangible, and regardless of whether or how it is stored, compiled, or memorialized physically, electronically, graphically, photographically, or in writing. Irrespective of novelty, invention, patentability, the state of the prior art, and the level of skill in the business, art, or field to which the subject matter pertains, a trade secret is considered to be:~~

1. Secret;
2. Of value;
3. For use or in use by the business; and
4. Of advantage to the business, or providing an opportunity to obtain an advantage, over those who do not know or use it

when the owner thereof takes measures to prevent it from becoming available to persons other than those selected by the owner to have access thereto for limited purposes.

(g) “Traffic” has the same meaning as provided in s. 812.012(8).

~~(d) “Copy” means any facsimile, replica, photograph, or other reproduction in whole or in part of an article and any note, drawing, or sketch made of or from an article or part or portion thereof.~~

(2) It is unlawful for a Any person to willfully and without authorization, obtain or use, or endeavor to obtain or use, a trade secret who, with the intent to either temporarily or permanently:

(a) Deprive or withhold from the owner thereof the control or benefit of a trade secret; or with an intent to

(b) Appropriate a trade secret to his or her own use or to the use of another person not entitled to the trade secret., steals or embezzles an article representing a trade secret or without authority makes or causes to be made a copy of an article representing a trade secret

A person who violates this subsection commits theft of a trade secret, a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, or s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

(3) A person who traffics in, or endeavors to traffic in, a trade secret that he or she knows or should know was obtained or used without authorization commits trafficking in trade secrets, a felony of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

(4) Whenever a person is charged with a violation of this section which was committed with the intent to benefit a foreign government, a foreign agent, or a foreign instrumentality, the offense for which the person is charged shall be reclassified as follows:

(a) In the case of theft of a trade secret, from a felony of the third degree to felony of the second degree.

(b) In the case of trafficking in trade secrets, from a felony of the second degree to a felony of the first degree.

For purposes of sentencing under chapter 921 and determining incentive gain-time eligibility under chapter 944, a felony offense that is reclassified under this subsection is ranked one level above the ranking under s. 921.0022 of the offense committed.

(5) A court shall order a person convicted of violating this section to pay restitution, which shall include the value of the benefit derived from the offense, including any expenses for research and design and other costs of reproducing the trade secret that the person has avoided by committing the offense.

(6) In a prosecution for a violation of this section, the fact that the person so charged returned or intended to return the unlawfully obtained or used trade secret ~~article so stolen, embezzled, or copied~~ is not a defense.

(7) A person who owns a trade secret that is unlawfully obtained or used may bring a civil action to enjoin the continued improper use of such trade secret, and a court may require affirmative actions to protect the trade secret. Where exceptional circumstances render an injunction inequitable, a court may condition future use of the trade secret on the payment of a reasonable royalty for no longer than the period of time for which such use could have been prohibited.

(8) A person may not be held criminally or civilly liable under this section for the disclosure of a trade secret when such disclosure is:

(a) Made confidentially to an attorney, law enforcement officer, or other Federal, state, or local government official for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law; or

(b) Made in a complaint or other document filed under seal in a lawsuit or other proceeding.

Section 3. Paragraphs (a), (c), and (e) of subsection (3) of section 921.0022, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

921.0022 Criminal Punishment Code; offense severity ranking chart.—

(3) OFFENSE SEVERITY RANKING CHART

(a) LEVEL 1

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
24.118(3)(a)	3rd	Counterfeit or altered state lottery ticket.
212.054(2)(b)	3rd	Discretionary sales surtax; limitations, administration, and collection.
212.15(2)(b)	3rd	Failure to remit sales taxes, amount \$1,000 or more but less than \$20,000.
316.1935(1)	3rd	Fleeing or attempting to elude law enforcement officer.
319.30(5)	3rd	Sell, exchange, give away certificate of title or identification number plate.
319.35(1)(a)	3rd	Tamper, adjust, change, etc., an odometer.
320.26(1)(a)	3rd	Counterfeit, manufacture, or sell registration license plates or validation stickers.
322.212 (1)(a)-(c)	3rd	Possession of forged, stolen, counterfeit, or unlawfully issued driver license; possession of simulated identification.
322.212(4)	3rd	Supply or aid in supplying unauthorized driver license or identification card.
322.212(5)(a)	3rd	False application for driver license or identification card.
414.39(3)(a)	3rd	Fraudulent misappropriation of public assistance funds by employee/official, value more than \$200.
443.071(1)	3rd	False statement or representation to obtain or increase reemployment assistance benefits.
509.151(1)	3rd	Defraud an innkeeper, food or lodging value \$1,000 or more.
517.302(1)	3rd	Violation of the Florida Securities and Investor Protection Act.
713.69	3rd	Tenant removes property upon which lien has accrued, value \$1,000 or more.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
812.014(3)(c)	3rd	Petit theft (3rd conviction); theft of any property not specified in subsection (2).
812.081(2)	3rd	Unlawfully makes or causes to be made a reproduction of a trade secret.
815.04(5)(a)	3rd	Offense against intellectual property (i.e., computer programs, data).
817.52(2)	3rd	Hiring with intent to defraud, motor vehicle services.
817.569(2)	3rd	Use of public record or public records information or providing false information to facilitate commission of a felony.
826.01	3rd	Bigamy.
828.122(3)	3rd	Fighting or baiting animals.
831.04(1)	3rd	Any erasure, alteration, etc., of any replacement deed, map, plat, or other document listed in s. 92.28.
831.31(1)(a)	3rd	Sell, deliver, or possess counterfeit controlled substances, all but s. 893.03(5) drugs.
832.041(1)	3rd	Stopping payment with intent to defraud \$150 or more.
832.05(2)(b) & (4)(c)	3rd	Knowing, making, issuing worthless checks \$150 or more or obtaining property in return for worthless check \$150 or more.
838.15(2)	3rd	Commercial bribe receiving.
838.16	3rd	Commercial bribery.
843.18	3rd	Fleeing by boat to elude a law enforcement officer.
847.011(1)(a)	3rd	Sell, distribute, etc., obscene, lewd, etc., material (2nd conviction).
849.09(1)(a)-(d)	3rd	Lottery; set up, promote, etc., or assist therein, conduct or advertise drawing for prizes, or dispose of property or money by means of lottery.
849.23	3rd	Gambling-related machines; “common offender” as to property rights.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
849.25(2)	3rd	Engaging in bookmaking.
860.08	3rd	Interfere with a railroad signal.
860.13(1)(a)	3rd	Operate aircraft while under the influence.
893.13(2)(a)2.	3rd	Purchase of cannabis.
893.13(6)(a)	3rd	Possession of cannabis (more than 20 grams).
934.03(1)(a)	3rd	Intercepts, or procures any other person to intercept, any wire or oral communication.

(c) LEVEL 3

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
119.10(2)(b)	3rd	Unlawful use of confidential information from police reports.
316.066 (3)(b)-(d)	3rd	Unlawfully obtaining or using confidential crash reports.
316.193(2)(b)	3rd	Felony DUI, 3rd conviction.
316.1935(2)	3rd	Fleeing or attempting to elude law enforcement officer in patrol vehicle with siren and lights activated.
319.30(4)	3rd	Possession by junkyard of motor vehicle with identification number plate removed.
319.33(1)(a)	3rd	Alter or forge any certificate of title to a motor vehicle or mobile home.
319.33(1)(c)	3rd	Procure or pass title on stolen vehicle.
319.33(4)	3rd	With intent to defraud, possess, sell, etc., a blank, forged, or unlawfully obtained title or registration.
327.35(2)(b)	3rd	Felony BUI.
328.05(2)	3rd	Possess, sell, or counterfeit fictitious, stolen, or fraudulent titles or bills of sale of vessels.
328.07(4)	3rd	Manufacture, exchange, or possess vessel with counterfeit or wrong ID number.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
376.302(5)	3rd	Fraud related to reimbursement for cleanup expenses under the Inland Protection Trust Fund.
379.2431 (1)(e)5.	3rd	Taking, disturbing, mutilating, destroying, causing to be destroyed, transferring, selling, offering to sell, molesting, or harassing marine turtles, marine turtle eggs, or marine turtle nests in violation of the Marine Turtle Protection Act.
379.2431 (1)(e)6.	3rd	Possessing any marine turtle species or hatchling, or parts thereof, or the nest of any marine turtle species described in the Marine Turtle Protection Act.
379.2431 (1)(e)7.	3rd	Soliciting to commit or conspiring to commit a violation of the Marine Turtle Protection Act.
400.9935(4)(a) or (b)	3rd	Operating a clinic, or offering services requiring licensure, without a license.
400.9935(4)(e)	3rd	Filing a false license application or other required information or failing to report information.
440.1051(3)	3rd	False report of workers' compensation fraud or retaliation for making such a report.
501.001(2)(b)	2nd	Tampers with a consumer product or the container using materially false/misleading information.
624.401(4)(a)	3rd	Transacting insurance without a certificate of authority.
624.401(4)(b)1.	3rd	Transacting insurance without a certificate of authority; premium collected less than \$20,000.
626.902(1)(a) & (b)	3rd	Representing an unauthorized insurer.
697.08	3rd	Equity skimming.
790.15(3)	3rd	Person directs another to discharge firearm from a vehicle.
806.10(1)	3rd	Maliciously injure, destroy, or interfere with vehicles or equipment used in firefighting.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
806.10(2)	3rd	Interferes with or assaults firefighter in performance of duty.
810.09(2)(c)	3rd	Trespass on property other than structure or conveyance armed with firearm or dangerous weapon.
812.014(2)(c)2.	3rd	Grand theft; \$5,000 or more but less than \$10,000.
812.0145(2)(c)	3rd	Theft from person 65 years of age or older; \$300 or more but less than \$10,000.
812.015(8)(b)	3rd	Retail theft with intent to sell; conspires with others.
<u>812.081(2)</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>Theft of a trade secret.</u>
815.04(5)(b)	2nd	Computer offense devised to defraud or obtain property.
817.034(4)(a)3.	3rd	Engages in scheme to defraud (Florida Communications Fraud Act), property valued at less than \$20,000.
817.233	3rd	Burning to defraud insurer.
817.234 (8)(b) & (c)	3rd	Unlawful solicitation of persons involved in motor vehicle accidents.
817.234(11)(a)	3rd	Insurance fraud; property value less than \$20,000.
817.236	3rd	Filing a false motor vehicle insurance application.
817.2361	3rd	Creating, marketing, or presenting a false or fraudulent motor vehicle insurance card.
817.413(2)	3rd	Sale of used goods of \$1,000 or more as new.
831.28(2)(a)	3rd	Counterfeiting a payment instrument with intent to defraud or possessing a counterfeit payment instrument with intent to defraud.
831.29	2nd	Possession of instruments for counterfeiting driver licenses or identification cards.
838.021(3)(b)	3rd	Threatens unlawful harm to public servant.
843.19	2nd	Injure, disable, or kill police, fire, or SAR canine or police horse.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
860.15(3)	3rd	Overcharging for repairs and parts.
870.01(2)	3rd	Riot; inciting or encouraging.
893.13(1)(a)2.	3rd	Sell, manufacture, or deliver cannabis (or other s. 893.03(1)(c), (2)(c)1., (2)(c)2., (2)(c)3., (2)(c)6., (2)(c)7., (2)(c)8., (2)(c)9., (2)(c)10., (3), or (4) drugs).
893.13(1)(d)2.	2nd	Sell, manufacture, or deliver s. 893.03(1)(c), (2)(c)1., (2)(c)2., (2)(c)3., (2)(c)6., (2)(c)7., (2)(c)8., (2)(c)9., (2)(c)10., (3), or (4) drugs within 1,000 feet of university.
893.13(1)(f)2.	2nd	Sell, manufacture, or deliver s. 893.03(1)(c), (2)(c)1., (2)(c)2., (2)(c)3., (2)(c)6., (2)(c)7., (2)(c)8., (2)(c)9., (2)(c)10., (3), or (4) drugs within 1,000 feet of public housing facility.
893.13(4)(c)	3rd	Use or hire of minor; deliver to minor other controlled substances.
893.13(6)(a)	3rd	Possession of any controlled substance other than felony possession of cannabis.
893.13(7)(a)8.	3rd	Withhold information from practitioner regarding previous receipt of or prescription for a controlled substance.
893.13(7)(a)9.	3rd	Obtain or attempt to obtain controlled substance by fraud, forgery, misrepresentation, etc.
893.13(7)(a)10.	3rd	Affix false or forged label to package of controlled substance.
893.13(7)(a)11.	3rd	Furnish false or fraudulent material information on any document or record required by chapter 893.
893.13(8)(a)1.	3rd	Knowingly assist a patient, other person, or owner of an animal in obtaining a controlled substance through deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent representations in or related to the practitioner's practice.
893.13(8)(a)2.	3rd	Employ a trick or scheme in the practitioner's practice to assist a patient, other person, or owner of an animal in obtaining a controlled substance.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
893.13(8)(a)3.	3rd	Knowingly write a prescription for a controlled substance for a fictitious person.
893.13(8)(a)4.	3rd	Write a prescription for a controlled substance for a patient, other person, or an animal if the sole purpose of writing the prescription is a monetary benefit for the practitioner.
918.13(1)(a)	3rd	Alter, destroy, or conceal investigation evidence.
944.47 (1)(a)1. & 2.	3rd	Introduce contraband to correctional facility.
944.47(1)(c)	2nd	Possess contraband while upon the grounds of a correctional institution.
985.721	3rd	Escapes from a juvenile facility (secure detention or residential commitment facility).

(e) LEVEL 5

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
316.027(2)(a)	3rd	Accidents involving personal injuries other than serious bodily injury, failure to stop; leaving scene.
316.1935(4)(a)	2nd	Aggravated fleeing or eluding.
316.80(2)	2nd	Unlawful conveyance of fuel; obtaining fuel fraudulently.
322.34(6)	3rd	Careless operation of motor vehicle with suspended license, resulting in death or serious bodily injury.
327.30(5)	3rd	Vessel accidents involving personal injury; leaving scene.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
379.365(2)(c)1.	3rd	Violation of rules relating to: willful molestation of stone crab traps, lines, or buoys; illegal bartering, trading, or sale, conspiring or aiding in such barter, trade, or sale, or supplying, agreeing to supply, aiding in supplying, or giving away stone crab trap tags or certificates; making, altering, forging, counterfeiting, or reproducing stone crab trap tags; possession of forged, counterfeit, or imitation stone crab trap tags; and engaging in the commercial harvest of stone crabs while license is suspended or revoked.
379.367(4)	3rd	Willful molestation of a commercial harvester's spiny lobster trap, line, or buoy.
379.407(5)(b)3.	3rd	Possession of 100 or more undersized spiny lobsters.
381.0041(11)(b)	3rd	Donate blood, plasma, or organs knowing HIV positive.
440.10(1)(g)	2nd	Failure to obtain workers' compensation coverage.
440.105(5)	2nd	Unlawful solicitation for the purpose of making workers' compensation claims.
440.381(2)	3rd	Submission of false, misleading, or incomplete information with the purpose of avoiding or reducing workers' compensation premiums.
624.401(4)(b)2.	2nd	Transacting insurance without a certificate or authority; premium collected \$20,000 or more but less than \$100,000.
626.902(1)(c)	2nd	Representing an unauthorized insurer; repeat offender.
790.01(2)	3rd	Carrying a concealed firearm.
790.162	2nd	Threat to throw or discharge destructive device.
790.163(1)	2nd	False report of bomb, explosive, weapon of mass destruction, or use of firearms in violent manner.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
790.221(1)	2nd	Possession of short-barreled shotgun or machine gun.
790.23	2nd	Felons in possession of firearms, ammunition, or electronic weapons or devices.
796.05(1)	2nd	Live on earnings of a prostitute; 1st offense.
800.04(6)(c)	3rd	Lewd or lascivious conduct; offender less than 18 years of age.
800.04(7)(b)	2nd	Lewd or lascivious exhibition; offender 18 years of age or older.
806.111(1)	3rd	Possess, manufacture, or dispense fire bomb with intent to damage any structure or property.
812.0145(2)(b)	2nd	Theft from person 65 years of age or older; \$10,000 or more but less than \$50,000.
812.015 (8)(a) & (c)-(e)	3rd	Retail theft; property stolen is valued at \$750 or more and one or more specified acts.
812.019(1)	2nd	Stolen property; dealing in or trafficking in.
<u>812.081(3)</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>Trafficking in trade secrets.</u>
812.131(2)(b)	3rd	Robbery by sudden snatching.
812.16(2)	3rd	Owning, operating, or conducting a chop shop.
817.034(4)(a)2.	2nd	Communications fraud, value \$20,000 to \$50,000.
817.234(11)(b)	2nd	Insurance fraud; property value \$20,000 or more but less than \$100,000.
817.2341(1), (2)(a) & (3)(a)	3rd	Filing false financial statements, making false entries of material fact or false statements regarding property values relating to the solvency of an insuring entity.
817.568(2)(b)	2nd	Fraudulent use of personal identification information; value of benefit, services received, payment avoided, or amount of injury or fraud, \$5,000 or more or use of personal identification information of 10 or more persons.

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
817.611(2)(a)	2nd	Traffic in or possess 5 to 14 counterfeit credit cards or related documents.
817.625(2)(b)	2nd	Second or subsequent fraudulent use of scanning device, skimming device, or reencoder.
825.1025(4)	3rd	Lewd or lascivious exhibition in the presence of an elderly person or disabled adult.
827.071(4)	2nd	Possess with intent to promote any photographic material, motion picture, etc., which includes sexual conduct by a child.
827.071(5)	3rd	Possess, control, or intentionally view any photographic material, motion picture, etc., which includes sexual conduct by a child.
828.12(2)	3rd	Tortures any animal with intent to inflict intense pain, serious physical injury, or death.
839.13(2)(b)	2nd	Falsifying records of an individual in the care and custody of a state agency involving great bodily harm or death.
843.01	3rd	Resist officer with violence to person; resist arrest with violence.
847.0135(5)(b)	2nd	Lewd or lascivious exhibition using computer; offender 18 years or older.
847.0137 (2) & (3)	3rd	Transmission of pornography by electronic device or equipment.
847.0138 (2) & (3)	3rd	Transmission of material harmful to minors to a minor by electronic device or equipment.
874.05(1)(b)	2nd	Encouraging or recruiting another to join a criminal gang; second or subsequent offense.
874.05(2)(a)	2nd	Encouraging or recruiting person under 13 years of age to join a criminal gang.
893.13(1)(a)1.	2nd	Sell, manufacture, or deliver cocaine (or other s. 893.03(1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(d), (2)(a), (2)(b), or (2)(c)5. drugs).

Florida Statute	Felony Degree	Description
893.13(1)(c)2.	2nd	Sell, manufacture, or deliver cannabis (or other s. 893.03(1)(c), (2)(c)1., (2)(c)2., (2)(c)3., (2)(c)6., (2)(c)7., (2)(c)8., (2)(c)9., (2)(c)10., (3), or (4) drugs) within 1,000 feet of a child care facility, school, or state, county, or municipal park or publicly owned recreational facility or community center.
893.13(1)(d)1.	1st	Sell, manufacture, or deliver cocaine (or other s. 893.03(1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(d), (2)(a), (2)(b), or (2)(c)5. drugs) within 1,000 feet of university.
893.13(1)(e)2.	2nd	Sell, manufacture, or deliver cannabis or other drug prohibited under s. 893.03(1)(c), (2)(c)1., (2)(c)2., (2)(c)3., (2)(c)6., (2)(c)7., (2)(c)8., (2)(c)9., (2)(c)10., (3), or (4) within 1,000 feet of property used for religious services or a specified business site.
893.13(1)(f)1.	1st	Sell, manufacture, or deliver cocaine (or other s. 893.03(1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(d), or (2)(a), (2)(b), or (2)(c)5. drugs) within 1,000 feet of public housing facility.
893.13(4)(b)	2nd	Use or hire of minor; deliver to minor other controlled substance.
893.1351(1)	3rd	Ownership, lease, or rental for trafficking in or manufacturing of controlled substance.

Section 4. This act shall take effect October 1, 2021.

Approved by the Governor June 7, 2021.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 7, 2021.