

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §119 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, §63, 35 Stat. 1100).

Section was rewritten to apply to all customs documents or writings. The Treasury Department advises that certificates of entry are obsolete.

Mandatory punishment provision was rephrased in the alternative.

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$10,000”.

§ 497. Letters patent

Whoever falsely makes, forges, counterfeits, or alters any letters patent granted or purporting to have been granted by the President of the United States; or

Whoever passes, utters, or publishes, or attempts to pass, utter, or publish as genuine, any such letters patent, knowing the same to be forged, counterfeited or falsely altered—

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

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 712; 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., §71 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, §27, 35 Stat. 1094).

Mandatory punishment provision was rephrased in the alternative.

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

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

§ 498. Military or naval discharge certificates

Whoever forges, counterfeits, or falsely alters any certificate of discharge from the military or naval service of the United States, or uses, unlawfully possesses or exhibits any such certificate, knowing the same to be forged, counterfeited, or falsely altered, shall be fined under this title¹ or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 712; 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., §136 (Mar. 4, 1917, ch. 180, 39 Stat. 1182).

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

At the end of this section words “in the discretion of the court” were omitted as unnecessary, as the punishment provisions, being framed in the alternative by the use of the disjunctive “or,” vest in the court the power to impose a fine or prison sentence in its discretion.

Changes in phraseology were made.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322, which directed the amendment of this section by substituting “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$5,000”, was executed by mak-

ing the substitution for “fined not more than \$1,000”, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

§ 499. Military, naval, or official passes

Whoever falsely makes, forges, counterfeits, alters, or tampers with any naval, military, or official pass or permit, issued by or under the authority of the United States, or with intent to defraud uses or possesses any such pass or permit, or personates or falsely represents himself to be or not to be a person to whom such pass or permit has been duly issued, or willfully allows any other person to have or use any such pass or permit, issued for his use alone, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 712; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(I), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §132 (June 15, 1917, ch. 30, title X, §3, 40 Stat. 228).

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$2,000”.

§ 500. Money orders

Whoever, with intent to defraud, falsely makes, forges, counterfeits, engraves, or prints any order in imitation of or purporting to be a blank money order or a money order issued by or under the direction of the Post Office Department or Postal Service; or

Whoever forges or counterfeits the signature or initials of any person authorized to issue money orders upon or to any money order, postal note, or blank therefor provided or issued by or under the direction of the Post Office Department or Postal Service, or post office department or corporation of any foreign country, and payable in the United States, or any material signature or indorsement thereon, or any material signature to any receipt or certificate of identification thereof; or

Whoever falsely alters, in any material respect, any such money order or postal note; or

Whoever, with intent to defraud, passes, utters or publishes or attempts to pass, utter or publish any such forged or altered money order or postal note, knowing any material initials, signature, stamp impression or indorsement thereon to be false, forged, or counterfeited, or any material alteration therein to have been falsely made; or

Whoever issues any money order or postal note without having previously received or paid the full amount of money payable therefor, with the purpose of fraudulently obtaining or receiving, or fraudulently enabling any other person, either directly or indirectly, to obtain or receive from the United States or Postal Service, or any officer, employee, or agent thereof, any sum of money whatever; or

Whoever embezzles, steals, or knowingly converts to his own use or to the use of another, or without authority converts or disposes of any blank money order form provided by or under the authority of the Post Office Department or Postal Service; or

¹ See 1994 Amendment note below.

Whoever receives or possesses any such money order form with the intent to convert it to his own use or gain or use or gain of another knowing it to have been embezzled, stolen or converted; or

Whoever, with intent to defraud the United States, the Postal Service, or any person, transmits, presents, or causes to be transmitted or presented, any money order or postal note knowing the same—

(1) to contain any forged or counterfeited signature, initials, or any stamped impression, or

(2) to contain any material alteration therein unlawfully made, or

(3) to have been unlawfully issued without previous payment of the amount required to be paid upon such issue, or

(4) to have been stamped without lawful authority; or

Whoever steals, or with intent to defraud or without being lawfully authorized by the Post Office Department or Postal Service, receives, possesses, disposes of or attempts to dispose of any postal money order machine or any stamp, tool, or instrument specifically designed to be used in preparing or filling out the blanks on postal money order forms—

Shall be fined under this title¹ or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 712; Pub. L. 91-375, §6(j)(5), Aug. 12, 1970, 84 Stat. 777; Pub. L. 92-430, Sept. 23, 1972, 86 Stat. 722; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(L), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §347 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, §218, 35 Stat. 1131).

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

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322, which directed the amendment of this section by substituting “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$10,000”, was executed by making the substitution for “fined not more than \$5,000” in last par., to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

1972—Pub. L. 92-430 substituted “a blank money order or a money order issued by or under the direction of” for “a money order issued by” and struck out “, or by any officer or employee thereof” in first par.; substituted “or initials of any person authorized to issue money orders” for “of any officer or employee of the Postal Service,” in second par.; inserted “or attempts to pass, utter or publish” before “any such forged” and substituted “material initials, signature, stamp impression” for “material signature” in fourth par.; inserted “or Postal Service” after “the United States” in fifth par.; inserted sixth and seventh pars.; inserted “, the Postal Service” after “the United States”, and substituted “presents, or causes to be transmitted or presented, any money order” for “or presents to any officer or employee, or at any office of the United States, any money order” and designated material after “knowing the same” as cls. (1) to (3) with minor changes and added cl. (4) in eighth par.; inserted ninth par., and enacted provisions of former seventh par. as tenth par.

¹ See 1994 Amendment note below.

1970—Pub. L. 91-375 inserted reference to Postal Service and substituted “officer or employee” for “postmaster or agent” in first par. and substituted “officer or employee of the Postal Service” for “postmaster, assistant postmaster, chief clerk, or clerk” and “Post Office Department or the Postal Service, or post office department or corporation of any foreign country” for “Post Office Department of the United States, or of any foreign country” in second par.

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 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.

AMENDMENTS

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