

## 2026 Regular Session Laws

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# Other Laws of Interest to the Commission

**May 28, 2026**

After each session, the Commission reviews “crime[s] created or amended by the legislature in the preceding session” for possible related modifications to the Sentencing Guidelines. In accordance with Minn. Stat. § 244.09, subd. 11, the Commission may make such modifications without advance submission to the Legislature. This paper reviews crime legislation from the 2026 Regular Session that are likely to be of interest to the Commission, but, in the opinion of staff, do not require Sentencing Guidelines changes.

Absent from this paper are the two big items of interest that didn’t happen: The Legislature did not block the significant Sentencing Guidelines changes that the Commission proposed in January; and the Legislature took up none of its Commission recommendations submitted in January.

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*This document was prepared by the staff of the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission for the Commission’s review. This document has not been adopted by the Commission and does not necessarily represent its views.*

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### 1. Modifies School Bus Safety Law

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 41.](#)

**Description:** Modifies the elements of misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor school bus stop-arm violations under Minn. Stat. § 169.444, to eliminate the stop-arm requirement; flashing red lights are sufficient.

### 2. Establishes Age 21 as the Legal Age to Possess Kratom

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 63.](#)

**Description:** Amends Minn. Stat. § 152.027, subd. 7, changing the age from 18 years old to 21 years old for sale or possession of kratom or a substance that contains mitragynine or 7-hydroxymitragynine. A person who sells to a person under age 21 is guilty of a gross misdemeanor. A person under age 21 who possesses is guilty of a misdemeanor.

### 3. Updates Safe at Home Program and Creates New Gross Misdemeanor for Causing Bodily Harm While Violating Program Rules

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 67.](#)

**Description:** Modifies various provisions of the Safe at Home program and enacts a new gross misdemeanor under Minn. Stat. § 5B.13, if a person's performance of an act prohibited by this chapter causes bodily harm.

**Note:** The new gross misdemeanor is subject to the Guidelines because a prior unexpired gross misdemeanor conviction counts as one unit in a person’s criminal history score (4 units=1 criminal history point).

#### **4. Reclassifies BCA Payments, Modernizes Criminal-Record Procedures, and Expands Access to Protective Orders by Law Enforcement**

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 70.](#)

**Description:** Clarifies that certain grants from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) are reimbursements and not grants; updates law related to recording of crimes; establishes process for determining how certain criminal records are ineligible for sealing; and requires the court to provide orders for protection for access by law enforcement.

#### **5. Prohibits Nudification Technology**

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 72.](#)

**Description:** Prohibits nudification technology software that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to create realistic fake nude images or videos of real people. A person who violates is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$500,000. Victims depicted may sue for damages and the Attorney General’s Office may enforce under Minn. Stat. § 8.31.

#### **6. Modifies Various Telecommunications Provisions**

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 73.](#)

**Description:** Relates to telecommunications, telephone company regulations, and reporting requirements. Amends Minn. Stat. §§ 237.07 (Filing Requirements); 237.035 (Telecommunications Carrier Exemption); 237.035 (Coin-Operated or Public Pay Telephones); 237.069 (Tracer; Harassing Telephone Call; Rules); 237.11 (Inspecting Records and Property; Reports Required); 237.164 (Universal Service Discount for School or Library); 237.626 (Promotion Activities); 237.66 (Disclosure of Local Service Options); and 237.70 (Development of Telephone Assistance Plan). Minn. Stat. § 237.46, currently contains a gross misdemeanor for a violation of any provision in chapter 237.

#### **7. Adds Gift Card Fraud to the Definition of Organized Retail Theft**

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 74.](#)

**Description:** Amends the definitions for organized retail theft (ORT), under Minn. Stat. § 609.522, subd. 1, to add a new paragraph (b) for “closed-loop gift card,” a new paragraph (c) for “gift card,” and a new paragraph (d) for “open-loop gift card.” Amends ORT by adding a new act for “tampers with the stolen retail merchandise for the purpose of obtaining anything of value from the retailer or any retail customer.”

#### **8. Creates a Uniform Firearm-Transfer Process**

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 75.](#)

**Description:** Provides a uniform firearm-transfer process for a person who loses firearms rights due to a conviction.

## 9. Establishes the Office of Inspector General

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 92.](#)

**Description:** Establishes the Office of the Inspector General and provides the office with powers and duties. Give the Inspector General auxiliary powers possessed by courts of law to issue and have subpoenas served. A person who swears falsely concerning any matter stated under oath is guilty of a gross misdemeanor. Enacts Minn. Stat. § 15E.35 (Identification of Fraud Reporting Tool) which requires each agency to prominently highlight on the agency's website the fraud reporting tools administered by the Office of the Inspector General and the Office of the Legislative Auditor under chapter 3, effective January 1, 2027.

## 10. Adds "Use of Minors in Sexual Performance" Child Victims to List of Confidential Records

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 1, § 23.](#)

**Description:** Provides that no data contained in records or reports relating to petitions, complaints, or indictments, which specifically identifies a child victim shall be accessible to the public, except by order of the court.

## 11. Providing that Victims Must be Asked about Impact Statements and Objections to Plea Agreements

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 1, § 26 & 27.](#)

**Description:** Requires the court to ask the prosecutor about the victim's election of rights to object to a plea agreement and to make a statement at sentencing.

## 12. Adds Stalking to Definition of Violent Crime

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 1, § 28.](#)

**Description:** Add stalking under Minn. Stat. § 609.749, subd. 5, to the violent crime definition in subdivision 7 of Minn. Stat. § 611A.036 (Prohibition Against Employer Retaliation). Harassment under Minn. Stat. § 609.749, subd. 2, already appears on this list.

## 13. Changes the Term "Battered Women" throughout Minnesota Statutes

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 1, § 33.](#)

**Description:** Throughout Minnesota Statutes, the term "battered women" is changed to "domestic abuse victims" or a similar term wherever the term or similar terms appear in Minnesota Statutes.

#### 14. Adds "Forged Digital Likeness" to Definition of Identity Theft

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 3, § 3.](#)

**Description:** For purposes of identity theft, "identity" includes a forged digital likeness. "Forged digital likeness" means any video recording, motion-picture film, sound recording, electronic image, or photograph.

#### 15. Extends Statute of Limitations for Certain Theft of Public Funds Offenses

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 3, § 4.](#)

**Description:** Extends the statute of limitations to 7 years for indictments or complaints for violation of chapter 80A, or a rule adopted or order issued under that chapter, made as provided in Minn. Stat. § 80A.75 or for violation of Minn. Stat. §§ 508.80; 609.465; 609.52, subdivision 2, paragraph (a), clause (4); 609.53; or 609.645.

#### 16. Expands Protective-Order Jurisdictions for Second-Degree Murder by Assault

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 97, art. 6, § 3.](#)

**Description:** For second-degree murder by assault in violation of a protective order, the jurisdictions whose protective orders are recognized is expanded to include the District of Columbia, tribal lands, United States territories, Canada, or a Canadian province.

#### 17. Changes Voting Procedures, Absentee Voting, and Election Administration

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 102, § 1–8; 16 & 17.](#)

**Description:** Various changes to voting procedures and administration including Ch. 203B and Ch. 204C.

**Note:** Felony penalties for violations are contained in Minn. Stat. §§ 203B.03, subd. 1; subd. 2; and 204C.41.

#### 18. Prohibits Elected Officials and Candidates from Betting on Elections

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 102, § 12.](#)

**Description:** A candidate is guilty of a petty misdemeanor under the newly codified Minn. Stat. § 211B.25, if the candidate places a wager with a prediction market on the outcome of an election in which the candidate is running.

## 19. Changes to Office of Cannabis Management

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 123.](#)

**Description:** Various changes to Minn. Ch. 342, making amendments to the Office of Cannabis Management and cannabis statutes including licensing, endorsements, regulations, monitoring requirements, reporting requirements, and technical and conforming amendments.

## 20. Changes to Paddlewheel Prizes

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 124, art. 7, § 35.](#)

**Description:** Amends Minn. Stat. § 349.211, to put limits on the value of merchandise prizes. The maximum value of a merchandise prize that may be awarded for a paddle ticket must not exceed a fair market value of \$200. The maximum ticket price is raised from \$2 to \$5. "Merchandise prize" does not include gift cards that can be redeemed for cash. Felony gambling regulations are contained in Minn. Stat. § 349.2127, subds. 2 and 6.

## 21. Allows Single County Prosecution in Multi-County Revenue Cases

[2026 Minn. Laws ch. 128, art. 11, § 6.](#)

**Description:** Amends Minn. Stat. § 270C.055, by adding subdivision 4, where, unless otherwise provided in chapter 289A, if two or more criminal offenses under the state revenue laws or chapter 349 are committed by the same person in more than one county, the accused may be prosecuted for all the offenses in any county in which one of the offenses was committed. Felony gambling regulations are contained in Minn. Stat. § 349.2127, subds. 2 and 6. Felony tax evasion laws are contained in Minn. Stat. § 289A.63.